

Recruitment and Retention: A Practical Toolkit

Good News Stories – Testimonials

*These testimonials range from the experiences of trainee teachers in different contexts and from different routes into teaching, to senior leaders and executives sharing the recruitment benefits they have felt from engaging in ITT. **Use them to promote teacher training and for insights into the different options that exist, for future teachers.***

If your school wants to get more involved in ITT by hosting placements and working with an accredited ITE provider, you can access 19 providers across the West Midlands by completing our Get Involved tool: [ITT Partnerships | Get Involved](#)

Short Form Testimonials

Assessment Only Route – Harborne Academy

*Assessment Only QTS is a great way to support your experienced unqualified teachers or other suitably experienced and expert staff to become fully qualified. It is a much **shorter form of teacher training**. It leads candidates to the point of being an Early Career Teacher economically and efficiently. It can be transformative for the individual teacher and can support schools to **recruit from within**.*

When I joined Harborne Academy, I started as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA), supporting in classrooms and covering lessons, primarily in the English department. Before this I had worked as a drama teacher at a secondary school in Malaysia where they do not require a teaching degree. During the time that I was working as a GTA, I was asked to take on a long-term cover teaching role, which I gladly accepted as I was developing a passion for teaching. This experience confirmed my desire to pursue a teaching career.

After discussing options with my line manager, we discovered the Assessment Only (AO) Route to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Since I had prior teaching experience at another school, I was eligible to apply. The 12-week course involved weekly observations by my school mentor, who provided feedback on successes, areas for improvement, and strategies for development. Once a half term, a mentor from BCU joined to observe my lessons, review my reflections, and assess my progress.

This route worked well for me as it allowed me to continue working full-time while advancing my career. The regular feedback and short course duration helped me focus on my growth as a teacher without the need to take time off which is needed for other training routes like Teach First or a PGCE. I am especially grateful to the school for covering the course costs, they didn't ask for anything from me in return and that level of support was there throughout my time on the course and during my time as an ECT.



Recruitment and Retention: A Practical Toolkit

SCITT Physical Education – West Coventry Academy

One of the key options schools must explore to improve recruitment is to be involved in school centred teacher training, or SCITT. This usually involves offering longer placements, hosting trainee teachers at your school for a term or more. Providers are generally flexible and will be glad to receive offers of placements in any subject, phase or specialism – if they run a suitable course.

I love sport and have played from an early age. Unfortunately, becoming a professional athlete became unrealistic. However, teaching has provided me with the opportunity to have a fantastic career and, with its subject specific nature, a career which allows me to continue my passion for sport everyday.

After A levels I went to university and got a first-class honours degree in Sport and Exercise Science. I followed this with my teacher training last academic year with the Arthur Terry SCITT and, once qualified, got a job at West Coventry Academy, staying within the ATLP.

My teacher training year was fantastic. After three years studying for a degree at university, the school centered approach of the SCITT course provided a break from lectured education and was ideal in gaining invaluable hands-on experience. I learned a wealth of knowledge during the year because of the excellent provision in place in the form of a learning coach on placement and an incredibly knowledgeable subject specific pedagogy lead.

My main placement was at The Coleshill School, which was an amazing experience. Not only my learning coaches but the whole PE department gave such positive and detailed feedback. They were all incredible teachers and more importantly great people who were so welcoming, making me feel part of the department from the start. It felt like they really valued me being there as one of the team, giving me responsibility and the correct level of independence allowing me to be perceived as a normal teacher by the students and myself alike.

My teacher training journey supplied me with the necessary skills to excel in my job as a qualified teacher. Additionally, obtaining this job was aided greatly by the excellent application process for Arthur Terry SCITT trainees looking to remain within the ATLP.



Recruitment and Retention: A Practical Toolkit

Career Changer – William MacGregor Primary School

Changing careers is a major life step. It can be reassuring for candidates to know they will be supported and trained through the transition.

After my psychology degree at university, I became an occupational therapy assistant working with the elderly. It was in this job that I realised I wanted to help aid people at the start of their life journey and inspire the next generation to achieve their full potential and be the best they can be.

I therefore joined Arthur Terry SCITT in September 2021 to train as a primary school teacher. Having only had experience of working with primary-aged children through volunteering during my own school years with scouting and local primary schools, this meant that by jumping straight into the teaching profession was a big risk, but one that I am so glad I have taken.

The training year was jam-packed, full of on-the-job learning, which I think is the best way to learn. Being thrown straight into teaching a class was daunting but with the expertise of my amazing learning coach, I learnt so much more than I could have imagined. Through weekly observations, feedback sessions and specific targets set each week, me and my learning coach were able to reflect and this enabled me to keep improving to be the best I could be. This weekly reflection continued into my 2 years of ECT (early career teacher) where I was lucky enough to continue my development journey with the same learning coach who I owe so much of my knowledge to.

I am now in my third year of my teaching journey, having taught in Year 4 and Year 6. I have definitely been through tough times and long hours with the classes I have taught, but I have also experienced the rewarding highs of seeing your class enjoy learning and be proud of themselves for the things they have achieved. Seeing the smiles and joy on children's faces everyday, and the laughs and giggles between friends, really does make your day and is what teaching is all about. I have also had the opportunity to incorporate my love of music into my profession, leading choirs and music opportunities within school, something that again always puts a smile on my face.

One thing that has really helped push me through the teaching profession is the amazing group of staff I work with who are always on hand to support and share experiences with. Only teachers really understand what it is like to live the life of a teacher and having colleagues you know you can rely on everyday that have the same life values really does make a huge positive difference in a profession that is so full-on.



Recruitment and Retention: A Practical Toolkit

Teaching is a vocation and does require lots of time and energy from you, but ultimately the little positive moments the children provide you every single day are what the profession is all about.

Recruitment and Retention Strategies – A Trust leader’s perspective

Like all strategies, making gains in recruitment and retention requires clarity of vision, careful co-ordination and a connection to school and trust priorities. A trust leader has shared their insights into what has worked for them, starting with ITT and developing to encompass their whole school approach. This is a fantastic model to emulate when building and fostering a positive school culture.

Providing placements for the SCITT trainees in a variety of schools across the MAT, leads to recruitment of ECTs that have been trained from the very beginning with us. This is a win-win – the trainees feel valued, and our schools get ECTs who know and understand the teaching and learning principles of the MAT.

How the Trust supports retention of teachers we provide:

- ECTs then have opportunities to observe practice across the Trust.
- New recruits that join us including ECTS receive a MAT induction so they hear about all the support and opportunities they can access as part of our family of schools - for example the opportunity to develop as a specialist practitioner across our Trust bringing career progression and secondment opportunities, enabling them to grow professionally across a range of settings.
- A Mentoring programme for all staff to support teaching and learning development.
- Coaching - additional layer of pure coaching to support well-being.
- VIVUP - wellbeing platform that provides 1-1 personal coaching session, doctors’ appointments, and a range of discounts across many stores.
- Provide an annual whole Trust conference with world class guest speakers and a wide range of evidence-based workshops for staff to select from that will help them gain knowledge in areas they are interested in.
- An annual MAT awards evening so staff feel part of the wider family and appreciated for their hard work and dedication.



Recruitment and Retention: A Practical Toolkit



- We provide suite of networks where best practice is disseminated. These include EYFS/ safeguarding/ attendance/ all curriculum areas.
- Trust CPD opportunities
- A range of digital resources and opportunities to collaborate - video clips of great practice, digital writing portfolio, shared planning models to reduce workload.
- A MAT curriculum providing well sequenced curriculum planning to reduce workload.
- Regular surveying of staff to take feedback and support well-being, workload.

Considering the evidence:

Our partners in Research Schools and the wider education research community are regularly exploring what works and what doesn't to find and keep the best possible colleagues.

For a more evidence-driven article, read this article from our partners at Billesley Research School:

[Turning the Tide on the Teacher Retention... | Billesley Research School](#)

You can view and download all our short form testimonials on our website:

<https://arthurterryteachingschool.atlp.org.uk/good-news-stories-itt-short-testimonials/>