

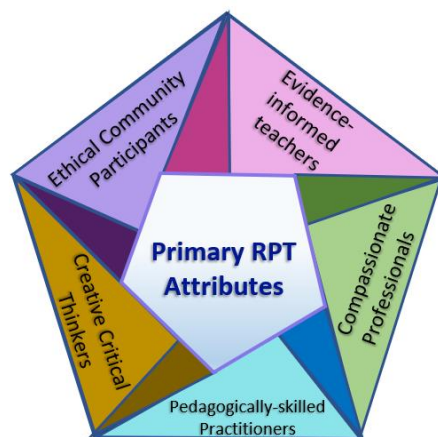
## Primary School Direct 2023-2024: pre-programme work

Congratulations on being accepted to train as a primary teacher on the School Direct route. The information that follows will give you more detail about what you need to do before you begin training in September. Read it carefully before you begin.

### Becoming a Teacher

The Primary School Direct ITE curriculum nurtures beginning teachers who work in partnership with their training schools and the University to become:

- Evidence-informed teachers
- Compassionate individuals
- Pedagogically-skilled practitioners
- Creative critical thinkers
- Ethical community participants



*Figure 1 Primary RPT Attributes (see Appendix A for full details)*

A key feature of the School Direct programme is an individualised approach to training within a carefully constructed core curriculum. You come with a range of experiences and levels of understanding and your journeys towards QTS will differ. By the end of the programme, you should always be able to articulate:

- **Why** we teach what we do, in the way that we teach it
- **What** you are teaching, with deep and confident subject knowledge
- **How** you are teaching it, and the reasons for the decisions you make
- **Who** you are teaching, and what you bring to their learning

## Initial Needs Assessment: Getting started

In order to make your training truly personal, there are three things you need to do.

1. **Identify your starting point and personal targets:** in order to do this, you are required to reflect on and record your experiences, knowledge and understanding of teaching and school life to date. Use the questions below as prompts to help you complete the '**Identification of Initial Needs**' form:
  - What knowledge and expertise am I bringing with me that will be relevant to teaching?
  - What personal qualities do I already have that will help me?
  - What action do I intend to take, or have taken, by way of preparing myself?
  - What areas of subject knowledge do I feel I need to develop in order to prepare me for a career in teaching?
  - What opportunities do I expect there to be on the course to utilise and develop existing knowledge and expertise?
  - What are my current expectations of, attitudes towards and feelings about the forthcoming training programme?
  - What personal targets am I setting myself at the start of the year?
2. **Complete the 'Identification of Initial Needs' form:** Please save this file as Surname\_forename\_INA2023 and have it in your file for the start of the programme, sharing it with your mentor. You will also be asked to upload this to your e-portfolio when you begin the course in September.
3. **Become familiar with the Teachers' Standards.** Trainee teachers must demonstrate certain standards before they can be recommended for Qualified Teacher Status:

### [Teachers' Standards](#)

As you read the Teachers' Standards, relate them to your starting point and personal targets. As we come to the end of your training year we will return to these to assess how you can show you are meeting them, so it is useful to be aware of them at the start of the programme.

### Subject Knowledge

Primary trainee teachers need to demonstrate certain standards of subject knowledge. There is overwhelming research evidence to show that **secure subject knowledge is essential for teachers to support children's learning**. Teachers feel more confident about questioning children effectively if they themselves are secure in their own knowledge.

A good starting point is to take responsibility for improving your own subject knowledge in English, mathematics and science so that you feel confident in your ability to teach the curriculum in those subjects. Look at the National Curriculum requirements for these three subjects via:

### [National Curriculum](#)

Focus upon two representative year groups, e.g., year 2 and year 5, and annotate them to reflect on your own knowledge and understanding. Highlight any content where you have questions you need

to investigate – for example unfamiliar terms or vocabulary. This will show you your areas for development and help you to begin to revise any areas where you need to spend time in private study before the programme begins. You will also find it useful to review the glossary for the programmes of study for English at this point:

### [English Glossary](#)

If you have time begin to look at other subjects in the curriculum as well.

Those of you who are also preparing to teach in the Foundation Stage will also need to look at the EYFS curriculum, which can be found at:

### [Early Years Foundation Stage Framework](#)

During your training you will keep a **subject knowledge development file**: begin this process by keeping a record of your work on subject knowledge.

## Reading

This is a postgraduate programme and we expect you to relate central and school-based experiences to recent research and literature. Trainees make progress by reflecting upon how practice relates to theory; throughout the programme you will be referred to books and other sources. Some prior reading will stand you in good stead. Use it to inform your observations in schools and use the school experiences to guide your reading.

Throughout the programme we will draw on wider reading taken from the Core Content Framework reference list and beyond before and after central training sessions to explore and reflect upon ‘why’ things are as they are, which allows you to develop as a professional. Please familiarise yourself with the Core Content Framework in preparation for September as this sets out the minimum entitlement for your training:

### [Core Content Framework](#)

In addition, the Education Endowment Foundation is a charity established to break the link between family income and educational achievement which publish reports informing education policy. Please take time to investigate their poster summaries as an introduction to practice:

### [Education Endowment Foundation](#)

During your time at the University of Reading you will have full access to the Learning Hub and the University’s library. The following texts will be available to you on your enrolment and will be drawn on throughout the course:

- Carden, C. (Ed.). (2022). (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) *Primary Teaching: learning and teaching in primary schools today*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

## English

- Joliffe, W. & Waugh, D. (2022). *Teaching Systematic Synthetic Phonics in Primary Schools* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Learning Matters

- Medwell, J., Wray, D., Minns, H., Griffiths, V. & Coates, E. (2021). *Primary English: teaching theory and practice* (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Learning Matters.
- Medwell, J., Wray, D., Moore, G. & Griffiths, V. (2021). *Primary English: knowledge and understanding* (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Learning Matters.
- Waugh, D. Warner, C. & Waugh, R. (2022). (4<sup>th</sup> ed) *Teaching Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation in Primary Schools*. Learning Matters

### Mathematics

- Haylock, D. (2018). *Mathematics explained for primary teachers* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Mackle, K. (2020). *Thinking deeply about primary mathematics*. Woodbridge: John Catt Educational Ltd.
- Montague-Smith, A., Cotton, T., Hansen, A. & Price, A. (2017). *Mathematics in early years education* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). London: Fulton.
- Witt, M. (Ed.). (2014). *Primary mathematics for trainee teachers*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

### Primary Mathematics Specialists

- Foley, C., McNeil, J. & Suter, S. (2019). *Leading Primary Mathematics*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

### Science

- Harlen, W. & Qualter, A. (2018). *The Teaching of Science in Primary Schools* (7<sup>th</sup> Edition). London: Taylor and Francis
- Peacock, G., Sharp, J. Johnsey, R. & Wright, D. (2021). *Primary Science: knowledge and understanding*. (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Learning Matters.
- Sharp, J. (2021). *Primary Science: teaching theory and practice*. (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Learning Matters.

### Child development

- Mooney, C. (2013). (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) *Theories of Childhood*. St Pauls: Redleaf Press.
- Doherty, J. & Hughes, M. (2014). (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) *Child Development: Theory and Practice 0 -11*. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Keenan, T. & Evans, S. (2016). (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) *An Introduction to Child Development*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

### Children's books

As a primary teacher it is really important that you have an up-to-date knowledge of children's books and do not rely on memories of books you enjoyed as a child. Start reading books now and keep a record of those you have read, annotated with notes on why you enjoyed them and how they could be used in the classroom. Look out for books that can be used to inspire children's learning across the curriculum, including in mathematics, as well as inspire their love of reading.

The following websites can be used as a source of information about current children's books:

- [BookTrust](#)
- [The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education](#)
- [Reading Zone](#)

- [Books for keeps](#)
- [National Literacy Trust](#)

### Further weblinks

There are many educationalists who publish material online. Browse the following links as a starting point:

- [TeacherToolkit](#)
- [Learningspy](#)
- [The confident teacher](#)
- [TeacherHead](#)

### Podcasts

These can be a great way to start getting familiar with aspects of primary education. 'Thinking deeply about primary education' hosted by Kieran Mackle is a good starting point: [TDaPE Podcast | Thinking Deeply about Primary Education](#) in addition to those produced by the Education Endowment Foundation: [Education Endowment Foundation podcast](#)

### Observation

One of the best ways of finding out about children and teaching is to observe them and talk to them. If possible, we would like you to make some observations before you start, to analyse what you see and to come to some tentative conclusions.

- If possible, observe some lessons in a primary school – if not, try to reflect on your own experiences, or watch a clip of a lesson or part lesson, for example on the NCETM 'In the classroom' website [In the Classroom | NCETM](#) (look for 'Classroom videos'. Your notes should be so detailed that a reader can 'see' the lesson in their mind's eye. Focus on what the teacher is doing. After the lesson read through your notes carefully. Write your ideas in response to the following question:
  - What was the teacher doing to ensure that learning was taking place?

There is no correct answer to this. It will not be taken in and marked but it will be the basis of discussion during the first days of central training.

## Relationships

Some of you have spent quite some time working in your training school and are familiar with 'how things work' in that school, although from a different perspective for example that of a teaching assistant. Others of you are coming from different work environments, business, medicine, university and have not spent a lot of time in primary schools. Most primary schools are very different from business environments. You need to become really familiar with your school, so you know the expectations of behaviour, dress, relationships, use of language, time-keeping, etc.

Before or at the start of your training year, book in meetings with both the headteacher and your mentor to discuss this. Ask them to make expectations very explicit and don't be afraid to ask direct questions. For example:

- What time do most teachers arrive in the morning?
- What do I do if my child is taken ill?
- Is there a dress code for the school?
- How do members of staff address each other in the staffroom and throughout the school?
- Do I have to attend collective worship?
- What sort of relationship am I expected to have with parents?

You will think of other questions: nothing is too silly to ask. Do not assume anything; it is better to be absolutely clear about these expectations at the very start as it can avoid difficulties in the future. You should also consider very carefully your presence on social media: ensure you have appropriate security settings and look carefully at what parents of children in your future class would encounter by looking for you online. Right at the beginning of your training you will need to arrange a safeguarding induction to make sure that you can keep yourself and the children safe.

## Conclusion

As you prepare for your training programme, be very honest about what your needs are. Your school and the University are here to help you so never be afraid to ask. Finally, enjoy the summer and spend time with your friends and family. Prepare both them and yourself for the year you have ahead of you – it will be hard work but enjoyable. We look forward to working with you.

## Checklist

This is a summary of the things you need to do before you begin your training in September. Please make sure that you tick and date when you have addressed each activity and come prepared to share your filed notes with your peers and tutors from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September onwards.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Addressed (√)</b>	<b>Date</b>
1. Complete the Identification of Initial Needs form	Friday 07/07/23		
2. Read the Teachers' Standards and relate them to your starting point	Friday 07/07/23		
3. Assessment of your own subject knowledge in English, Science and Mathematics	Monday 04/09/23		
4. Explore all weblinks in this pre-programme document	Monday 04/09/23		
5. Read a Child Development textbook	Monday 04/09/23		
6. Begin to read children's books and keep an evaluative bibliography of your reading	Monday 04/09/23		
7. Talk to the head teacher at your main training school about expectations	Friday 07/09/23		