

FAYE OWEN - SCHOOL DIRECT ALUMNI



From as soon as you start on your INSET day, CHS made you feel like a fully integrated member of staff. I never felt like I was made to feel or be seen as a trainee. Starting Block A, you feel overwhelmed with having to teach your first lesson but the pace gradually increases, as does your confidence, and with the support of your professional mentor, subject mentor and department, you quickly adapt to the role of being a teacher.

The school and university provide ample CPD sessions during the induction phase, which massively helps to improve your teaching practice, which you notice when you enter your contrasting placement and the consolidation phase. The CPD sessions prepare you for entering a new context and new challenges, just take it in your stride!

From the offset, I completed at least one whole school observation each week to observe outstanding teaching practice from across the school. This is great for picking up more teaching and learning strategies, behaviour management techniques and also just to find out how students are in other lessons. I also attended weekly curriculum development meetings with the Science department, where we discussed changes in the curriculum, especially the new 1-9 GCSE specification, exam preparation and KS3/KS4 schemes of work. On a Monday afternoon, I would also attend a whole school meeting along with SLT, teaching staff and support staff to discuss the half-termly focus e.g. positive behaviour, praise and rewards or tutor reports, which have just been implemented giving form tutors the opportunity to give personalised feedback on how students are developing in school.

The biggest achievement that stands out throughout my entire PGCE year was when one Year 8 student was so proud of their work, they were parading it around the class, showing my mentor their high mark. This, for me, meant that I had differentiated my work well and made it accessible for this student, which made a difference to his attitude towards Science, it felt extremely rewarding. I am thrilled to have finished my PGCE on “Outstanding” and have acquired my NQT role here at Chorlton High School.

I’m really excited to become an NQT in September as I have already made some great relationships with students and staff. My department is very supportive and I know that no matter what challenges I have to face; they will be there to give me that extra boost along the way!

My best piece of advice would be to take everything with a pinch of salt! If a lesson goes badly, don’t dwell on it. Just pick yourself up and dust yourself off! There will be many more lessons that make up for it. Also, make sure to make time for yourself. In the beginning, it seems difficult, but your wellbeing matters.



HUMZA CHAUDRY - SCHOOL DIRECT ALUMNI



Upon finishing my undergrad at university I spent a term covering in schools through an agency. Then over the course of the summer, I undertook some CPD (SEN Level 3, Level 2 and Level 3 TA) courses before working the 2016/17 academic year as a SEN TA. This experience confirmed I want to apply for teacher training.

My induction period at CHS was a really good introduction, everything was made clear regarding what I could expect from the training year and what support I would have. My Block A was really enlightening as I learned so much thanks to the help of my peers and mentors.

My second placement was tougher than my Block A, however I was given a strong induction and my department were amazing. They were super supportive and helped me with my CDA assignment that I was really struggling with. The actual teaching was really interesting as I had to take a completely different approach to my Block A. The most important thing I found was to quickly build strong relationships with the students as I was not there for a long time and it made my life so much easier doing so.

For my enrichment phase I decided to do a Dance enrichment at my Block A school. This was a really good experience, which worked out well as I then secured a job covering dance for the last 5-6 weeks of term. Looking back, if I wrote a letter to my future self at the start of the year, then I would tell him to plan enrichment a lot earlier!

Before starting my placement, I spent a couple of weeks at university undergoing some intense training. I learned about behaviour management, how to differentiate my lessons, how to make lessons inclusive to all learning styles and assessment for learning, which all improved my subject knowledge drastically before even starting any teaching.

My biggest challenge was to manage my time. There were periods of time where I had so much going on, especially early on. In my Block A, I had two assignments to do whilst trying to manage my folder, plan my lessons and complete my reviews with my mentor. The best way I dealt with this was to eventually start prioritising things rather than following my set routine that I had. So organising my folder and doing my weekly reflections became less of an immediate priority and were done once lesson planning was completed.

Some of my biggest successes were building relationships with other teachers and trainees. This helped me develop professional relationships with people who support you during the training year. My bigger achievements came towards the end of my training year by getting 'outstanding' and securing temporary full time work for rest of the academic year at my host school.



HUMZA CHAUDRY - SCHOOL DIRECT ALUMNI



ADVICE: BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR PEERS AS MUCH AS STUDENTS!
You will learn much more from your department and even other trainee teachers, than you will from actually teaching and/or from your students. Also, make sure you plan effectively and get into the habit of managing time well. Finally, and probably most importantly, get some school experience to make sure that teaching is for you and you are doing it because you have a passion for it!



JEN TRAFFORD - SCHOOL DIRECT ALUMNI



Before applying for my PGCE year I had been working as a Learning Support Assistant in a secondary school for 5 years. The role involved working with Year 7 to Post 16 and supporting pupils with a variety of learning needs. Having this experience gave me an invaluable insight into the world of teaching and working with young people and confirmed that this was the career path that was right for me. As an LSA I was able to support in a variety of classes with different teachers and this gave me exposure to a variety of teaching styles and techniques.

On starting the PGCE I was excited but also extremely nervous. However, I spent three days in Chorlton High School getting to know the other trainees, my department and the classes I would be teaching. This was followed by two weeks at university where we met our personal tutor, other subject trainees and enhanced our subject knowledge. The whole introduction experience was supportive and eased me in gently.

My contrasting placement was fantastic and as I didn't drive my Professional Mentor at Chorlton High School ensured I was placed somewhere with accessible transport links. I was supported by both my Block B mentor and Professional Mentor throughout this placement and came back to CHS each week for training sessions, which was very helpful and informative. Returning back to Chorlton High School for Block A2 I was welcomed back by my department and pupils and realised just how far I had come as a teacher. Teaching during block A2 gave me real confidence for my NQT year and I was able to build upon and strengthen everything I had learnt so far.

Throughout my placement I have been able to teach a variety of classes and abilities and have also enhanced my subject knowledge throughout with KS3/KS4. Whole school and trainee CPD sessions have been invaluable and I have incorporated many of the strategies and techniques I learnt into my teaching practice.

Due to the support and guidance I have received through this year in becoming a qualified teacher I was offered a position to teach at Chorlton High South and feel this is a fantastic opportunity and I couldn't think of a better place to continue my teaching career and put in to practice all I have learnt this year.



KATIE BENNISON - SCHOOL DIRECT ALUMNI



To prepare for the year, I had worked as a TA and Cover Teacher at two different schools in Manchester: Reddish Vale High School and Bramhall High School. The TA experience allowed me to work with students who had a wide range of Special Educational Needs. Cover teaching allowed me to build my confidence in working with a class of students and prepared me to start my training year with confidence.

Block A was both exciting and nerve wrecking to begin the teacher training process. The support I received was great and I enjoyed learning different ways to teach. The training experience included CPD Wednesdays, Inset Days and many opportunities to learn good teaching practice. As I moved through block A it was nice to see the changes in how I taught and by the end my confidence was much higher. I also had the opportunity to complete my primary placement.

Moving to a Block B school with new pupils and staff members was a scary process. Learning how to teach, plan and assess at a contrasting school was a big adjustment and proved a challenge after spending such a large amount of time in my Block A school. However, learning to make these adjustments and plan to the new needs of a school was helpful as it meant that my planning improved. The other challenges allowed me to improve areas such as building relationships, behaviour management and working with a department closely.

I was involved in various aspects of training, including:

- CPD training (both SD and Whole school)
- University days – These included various aspects of subject pedagogy and teaching practice that was specifically subject related
- Opportunity to attend department meetings and understand the roles and responsibilities that staff members have while working closely with them.
- Primary Placement across the autumn term
- Extra-Curricular activities e.g. being involved in the school musical/going on school trips

On reflection, Block B was my biggest challenge – there was such a big difference in my contrasting placement that I found it very challenging. As I mentioned, this eventually improved my teaching but it was stressful at first adapting to a new school setting.

My biggest successes include, being employed by CHS! My final teaching grade ‘outstanding’ and pupil observation – gaining really positive feedback from the pupils themselves.



KATIE BENNISON - SCHOOL DIRECT ALUMNI



My advice, now I am at the end of my training year, would be don't let the stress get to you! Yes, you will be busy, yes you will be tired, yes you will have days where there aren't enough hours to get everything done. But stay calm, the planning will have to be done anyway, no point stressing about it, so enjoy the challenge as the rewards are worth it!

