

Challenges

Securing high-quality teachers in a challenging recruitment climate is difficult, especially in shortage subjects. Secondary schools undergoing significant improvement particularly struggle to recruit teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge. Beckfoot Oakbank, Keighley, has found an effective strategy to support their recruitment of excellent teachers who share the values and ethos of the school.

Solutions

As part of the Beckfoot Trust, Beckfoot Oakbank has a dedicated ITT Lead at their school, supported by a Trust ITT Lead. ITT is actively promoted across the Trust and they work closely with Bradford Birth to 19 SCITT to offer placements across their secondary and primary schools in a wide range of subjects. Trainees are valued, well-supported and their ITT curriculum gives them the skills they need to teach in sometimes challenging settings.

Matthew - Maths Bradford Birth to 19 SCITT

Matthew came to Oakbank on his alternate 6-week placement and loved it. He has secured a job starting in July 2024.

'My placement at Oakbank was challenging but also rewarding, and with the support of the maths department alongside the work senior leadership are doing, I felt a sense of belonging there'.

Through working closely with the ITT provider, the Trust ITT Lead can match the needs of the trainees with the expertise and capacity available in schools.

Benefits

Trust values are woven through the ITT provision so that trainees understand the culture and context of the schools they work in. As a result, many decide to apply for roles in their placement schools. The Trust knows that the trainees have had high-quality provision that sets them in good stead for the ECF programme.

Adam - Business BB19 SCITT ITT

Adam spent a year working in the pastoral team at Oakbank before starting to train to teach in September 2023. Oakbank is his main placement school all year and he has secured an ECT job here to start in July 2024.

'Being on placement in a school such as Beckfoot Oakbank has had its challenges. These challenges have made me realise how rewarding it is to work with students and families within this demographic and has helped support my decision to work there'.

At Beckfoot Oakbank, trainees are inspired by the impact great teachers have on the life chances, progress and outcomes of pupils. New ECTs to the school benefit from their shared training history and a supportive network moving forward in their careers.

Tom - English LTU ITT

Tom started his placement in September 2023 and was recruited in October as his potential was clear to see.

From the first moment on placement, any trepidation was instantly assuaged. The ITT coordinator met me and made me feel incredibly welcome, she then introduced me to my mentor who was to oversee my development over the course of my placement.

A fear I had before starting (which I know is shared by many other trainees) was 'imposter syndrome', again however, this feeling disappeared when I met the rest of the English department, from the first lesson I taught, I was treated like a colleague, a trusted and valued member of the team whose opinions and insights were listened to and considered alongside subject experts who had worked in the school for many years. My mentor willingly shared her vast expertise in the subject and teaching in general. She was also always on hand to lend an ear and a friendly word when things got tough.

Considering all this, when I was encouraged to interview for a position in the English department I jumped at the opportunity. I was lucky enough to be offered the job and didn't hesitate to tell the headteacher that I would gladly accept her offer.

I am delighted to be beginning my teaching career in a school which is such a fertile environment for development, I have felt supported at every juncture and know that that will continue into my ECT years and my future career beyond.

Experienced teachers have the opportunity to develop their careers through mentoring, whilst also investing in their potential future team. Beckfoot Trust works with providers who have mentors' well-being and workload in mind.

'We welcome and support the ITT students to Beckfoot Oakbank and ensure that they have everything they need for a positive start to their teaching career. They receive the highest quality of mentoring from our more experienced teachers, who are keen to share their experience and knowledge as well as learn from the ITTs themselves, who bring new ideas and positivity to each department. We have been so lucky over the recent years to have recruited the ITTs who have trained within the Trust and who are now part of the community at Beckfoot Oakbank School'.

Patricia Hemsley (Beckfoot Oakbank ITT Lead)