

## Case Study: St Winefride's Engagement with ITT



### Spotlight on nurturing talent for long-term school capacity

At St Winefride's Catholic Primary School, a remarkable journey of dedication and support has led to the cultivation of an exceptional teaching talent, Allison Henry. This case study highlights how the school has effectively engaged with Initial Teacher Training (ITT) to identify and nurture talent, ultimately increasing their capacity for the long term. The story of Allison's progression from dinner supervisor to a highly respected teacher exemplifies the school's commitment to growing their own expert educators.

#### Allison Henry's journey

Allison Henry's path to becoming a teacher is a testament to her determination and the unwavering support of St Winefride's Catholic Primary School. Here's a detailed look at her inspiring journey:

- **Volunteering and becoming a Teaching Assistant:** Recognising her aspirations, Allison volunteered at the school, which soon led to a position as a teaching assistant.

*'Before beginning my volunteer work at St. Winefride's, I worked full time for the Post Office, so I knew very little about school life other than my children attending the school. Volunteering opened my eyes to what school life was all about and I was hooked! After accepting the role as a teaching assistant my love for the job and the school grew. Over the many years I worked at St Winefride's I have had the privilege to work alongside many outstanding teachers who have had the faith in me to pursue my dreams of becoming a teacher. Being a qualified teacher now is my dream job and it is a privilege every day to go into school and have a positive impact on all learners!'*

- **Achieving HLTA status:** After 8 years as a teaching assistant, Allison was funded by St Winefride's to become a HLTA and during this time wanted to pursue her teaching dreams.
- **Achieving the necessary qualifications:** Allison worked tirelessly to obtain the required GCSEs to be accepted on a Learning and Teaching degree. Her commitment to education was evident as she balanced her studies with her responsibilities at the school and home.
- **Part-time studies:** Allison enrolled at Leeds University in a five-year part-time degree programme. Allison had support from St. Winefride's during this time, and they afforded their approval by allowing Allison time off to attend lectures.
- **Unqualified teacher:** After gaining her degree, St Winefride's employed Allison as an unqualified teacher. In this time school allowed her to gain practical experience while she continued her studies to gain QTS through the Assessment Only Route. The school also partially funded this route showcasing their investment in her future.
- **Gaining QTS:** Allison completed the Assessment-Only route and gained her Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The school's full support throughout this process was instrumental in her success.

***'Throughout my years of study, St. Winefride's has provided me with invaluable support to enable me to realise my dream of becoming a classroom teacher. Their unwavering faith in me and their support have helped me get through some particularly difficult moments. Without their financial support, encouragement, and close connections, I would not have been able to make it through this journey. I feel incredibly fortunate and honoured that they recognised my skills and teaching potential'.***

- **A respected member of the team:** Today, Allison is a highly experienced and respected teacher at St Winefride's. Her journey from teaching assistant to HLTA to then a qualified teacher has given her unique insights into building effective relationships with teaching assistants and maximizing their potential.

***'I have had the pleasure of working with Allison throughout her journey from an outstanding HLTA to an outstanding and inspirational class teacher. Allison plays a huge role in our KS1 team and is highly respected by staff, children and parents.***

***Her kind and caring nature, superb organisational skills, professionalism as well as fabulous sense of humour have enabled her to make a huge difference to so many people's lives throughout her journey. Allison has always been creative, and this is evident as soon as you walk into her classroom. Her lessons are always exciting, engaging, fun and her differentiation allows children of all abilities to achieve their full potential.***

***I am so proud of how far she has come, and it has been my absolute pleasure to see her transform into such an experienced and professional teacher who is admired by so many people at St Winefride's.***

***She is an absolute credit to our school, and I feel extremely blessed to work with her every day'.***

Katie Marcinczak, KS1 Phase Leader

### **The school's vision and support**

St Winefride's Catholic Primary School's long-term vision of nurturing talent and growing their own expert teachers is evident in their support for Allison. The school recognised the potential benefits of investing in Allison's development and provided continuous support, both financially and professionally. This approach has not only resulted in a skilled and dedicated teacher but also fostered a culture of growth and development within the school.

***'Since 2020, when I became Headteacher, Allison has shown complete commitment to St Winefride's community, the children and her own development. Her outstanding attitude and caring personality were evident in her practice in class. She attended all CPD and staff meetings, when she didn't have to, and worked closely with experienced staff to develop her knowledge and availability to plan different lessons.***

***She uses her own work ethic to take on lessons with challenging differentiation and completes tasks with vigour and excellence. Her whole attitude to school life has been outstanding and her patience and determination have always been a major factor in why she is so successful in her teaching, but also as a valued member of the school team'.***

Ben Lavin, Executive Headteacher

### **Benefits for the school:**

- **Increased school capacity:** By nurturing Allison's talent, the school has gained a committed and capable teacher who understands the school's ethos and values.
- **Positive role model:** Allison's journey serves as an inspiration to other staff and pupils, demonstrating the possibilities that come with hard work and support.
- **Enhanced team dynamics:** With her background as a teaching assistant, Allison excels in building strong relationships with support staff, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the teaching team.

### **Conclusion**

Allison Henry's story is a shining example of how St Winefride's Catholic Primary School successfully engages with ITT to identify and nurture talent. By taking a long-term view and investing in their staff, the school has fulfilled Allison's dreams of becoming a teacher and reaped significant benefits. This case study serves as a testament to the power of support, dedication, and vision in building a stronger, more capable teaching team for the future.