

Introduction

Bingley Grammar School has established itself as a model for effectively engaging with initial teacher training (ITT). This case study explores the motivations behind their commitment to ITT and the strategies they have implemented to successfully induct trainee teachers into the school environment.

1. Motivations for engaging with ITT: supporting the 'greater good'

Securing great teachers for the future

Bingley Grammar School engages with ITT to secure high-quality teachers not only for their school but for the wider educational profession. This approach aligns with their moral and professional imperative to contribute positively to the future of teaching.

'At Bingley Grammar School we feel that it is important to support ITT provision to make sure that we are doing all we can to contribute to getting great entrants into the profession, wherever that teaching role may be.'

Alex Dean, Senior Deputy Headteacher

Expert mentoring

The school emphasises expert mentoring by experienced and enthusiastic teachers who are dedicated to nurturing the next generation of educators. These mentors play a pivotal role in the professional development of trainees and colleagues by:

- **Bolstering departments:** Trainee teachers bring fresh ideas and perspectives, which can invigorate the existing departments.
- **Developing constructive relationships:** Mentors find joy and satisfaction in making a significant impact on the careers of trainees through positive, constructive interactions.
- **Professional growth:** Mentors themselves continue to learn and grow, benefiting from the two-way exchange of knowledge and practices. This keeps their own classroom practice fresh and innovative.
- **Access to resources:** Engaging with trainees gives mentors access to new, evidence-based teaching methods and resources.

'In a school comprising over 140 teachers, approximately 10% are actively involved in mentoring roles on an ongoing basis. Additionally, around 5-10% serve as reserve mentors or have previously participated in mentorship programs. Host teachers across all departments also embrace working with our trainees. This engagement spans a diverse array of subjects, reflecting the schools' commitment and culture for cultivating the next generation of educators. Mentors derive significant satisfaction from fostering the relationships, development and success of their trainees. Moreover, they appreciate the opportunity to gain new perspectives and maintain the vitality of their own teaching practices.'

Steven Riley, Associate Assistant Headteacher, ITT Induction Lead.

2. Successful induction of trainee teachers

Comprehensive induction programme

Bingley Grammar School ensures that trainees feel integrated into the wider school community from the outset. Key elements of their induction programme include:

- **Dedicated ITT coordinator:** The school has a dedicated ITT coordinator to oversee the ITT programme. This coordinator ensures that trainees receive consistent support and guidance, aligning their development with the school's standards and expectations.
- **Welcome pack:** Trainees receive a welcome pack that provides essential information about the school, such as the location of photocopiers and other facilities, reducing initial stress and helping them settle in quickly.
- **Staff badges and planners:** Trainees are given staff badges and school planners, symbolising their inclusion and equal status with other staff members. This fosters a sense of belonging and professionalism.
- **Access to CPD:** Trainees have access to the same continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities as staff, allowing them to grow and develop alongside their mentors.
- **Comprehensive support network:** The school provides a clear outline of whom trainees can approach for various concerns, including safeguarding, ensuring they feel supported and secure.

Integration into school life

- **Professional status:** From day one, trainees are seen and treated as professionals. They are welcomed into staffrooms and departmental meetings, ensuring they are part of the school's professional community.
- **Employment opportunities:** Bingley Grammar School sometimes employs trainees from the end of their course until the start of the summer holiday, benefiting both the newly qualified teachers and the school.
- **Induction day:** An induction day helps trainees get acquainted with the school layout, systems, and their mentors. This includes receiving maps, logins, and other essential tools.
- **Gradual integration:** Trainees are given half a term to acclimatise, preventing them from becoming overwhelmed and ensuring a smooth transition into their roles.

'From day one of my placement I was treated as any other staff member, I was made to feel very welcome by all colleagues. Upon induction I had a tour around school and was provided with access to all school logins. I was then able to meet with my mentor to discuss the upcoming year. All staff in school were friendly, supportive and always happy to help and I instantly felt like one of the team. I was given adequate time to observe and settle into the school before I started teaching, I gradually took on more lessons which helped me transition into my role. I thoroughly enjoyed my placement at Bingley Grammar School and I couldn't have asked for anything more. I was delighted to be offered employment after my course and can't wait to start teaching in September.'

April Townsend, ITT teacher

Conclusion

Bingley Grammar School's engagement with ITT showcases the significant benefits of investing in the professional development of trainee teachers. By providing expert mentoring and a comprehensive induction programme, the school not only enhances the quality of education within their setting but also contributes to the wider teaching profession. Their approach serves as a valuable model for other schools aiming to foster a supportive and enriching environment for trainee teachers.