

Saltaire Primary School has a well-established history of engaging with Initial Teacher Training (ITT) programmes. This involvement has enabled them to identify and cultivate teaching talent within their own staff, successfully transitioning capable individuals from support roles to qualified teaching positions.

A notable example of this is Chris Evans, who began his career at Saltaire Primary School as a Learning Mentor. He was then given a salaried opportunity to train with a local ITT provider, eventually becoming a class teacher and progressing to the role of Deputy Headteacher.

The benefits of such engagement are significant. Headteacher Rob Whitehead emphasises the advantages: recruitment of individuals who are already aligned with the school's vision and values, the opportunity to enrich the careers of experienced teachers through mentoring roles, and an overall increase in the school's capacity.

To achieve these benefits without detracting from the school's core educational mission, selecting the right ITT provider is essential. For schools looking to engage with an ITT programme, it is crucial to ask the right questions to ensure the partnership will meet their specific needs and maintain high standards for all.

Here are some suggested questions for schools to consider when selecting an ITT provider:

### **1. Accreditation and qualifications:**

- Is your program accredited and by which organisation?
- What qualifications or certifications do your graduates receive?

### **2. Programme structure and content:**

- What does the curriculum include, and how does it align with current educational standards?
- How do you integrate new research and teaching strategies?
- Can the program be tailored to specific needs such as STEM education or special education?

### **3. Practical experience:**

- What amount of practical teaching experience is included?
- How do you ensure a diverse range of teaching experiences?
- What type of support and supervision do trainees receive during placements?

### **4. Mentorship and Support:**

- How is the professional development of mentors supported?
- What support systems are in place for both trainee and mentor during the placement?
- How are mentors and trainees matched?

#### **5. Assessment and evaluation:**

- How do you assess trainee progress and competence?
- What feedback mechanisms are in place for trainees and schools to provide input on experiences?
- How are challenges with trainee performance addressed?

#### **6. Outcomes and success rates:**

- Can you provide testimonials or case studies from past participants?
- How many trainees gain employment in their placement schools?

#### **7. Logistics and costs:**

- What are the logistical arrangements including timelines and schedules?
- Are there costs involved for the school or trainees?
- How is funding structured, and are there grants or subsidies available?
- How do schools claim mentor funding?

#### **8. Partnership and communication:**

- How do you envision the partnership with our school?
- What are the expectations and responsibilities of each party?
- Is there a formal partnership agreement?
- How is ongoing communication managed during trainee placements?
- How are issues resolved if they arise?

Asking these questions can help a school determine the benefits of working with a potential ITT provider, ensuring a productive partnership that enhances the development of high-quality teachers and brings value to the school.