

Welcome to the Solent SCITT's newsletter. We will keep you up to date with news from across the partnership, exciting opportunities for teacher training and topical updates from our team.



Trainees, mentors, subject experts & SCITT team celebrate the 2016/17 SCITT cohort achieving QTS with PGCE at the graduation ceremony

Subject Expert's Corner

'What do you need to be a successful English teacher in 2017?'



Subject Expert Profile

Jane Wood

Jane won the regional final of 'Outstanding New Teacher of the Year' in her second year of teaching and has now been teaching English for 20 years. Jane has been a Hampshire Lead Teacher of English for 5 years and is currently Assistant Head teacher for Teaching & Learning at Warblington School and one of three SCITT Coordinators.

I don't know how I've done it, but I've done it. I've survived as an English teacher for 20 years without knowing what a fronted adverbial is! But, the government has waged a war of words and unleashed a brutal and inelegantly named SPAG Test for eleven year olds. A number of adults – including the Schools Minister responsible for introducing the new tests - attempted some of the questions and duly got them wrong, parents reported that children were left traumatised by the punishing difficulty of the questions.

I believe that grammar is important but there is more to English than mechanics and I've tried hard to be the kind of teacher who doesn't view grammar as a useful stick to beat people with.

"I know grammar by ear only, not by note, not by the rules."
Mark Twain

To be a successful English teacher, you need to be passionate about your subject, the progress of your students and inspiring them to be decent human beings. That matters more than how all the acronyms add up. 'And' English is as much about breaking rules as it is in conforming to grammatical, spelling and punctuation dictates.

If you are going to succeed as an English teacher, you must love your subject in all its 'infinite variety'. I love teaching English: I love writing: "Write like you tie your shoes – don't think about it, just do it." I love discovering new ways of expressing something old and tired. I love reading and being inspired to: "Live one day at a time and make it a masterpiece."

Lastly, I love teaching the grammar and punctuation that will help students to communicate more powerfully and precisely, and to encourage them to love language for its creativity, as well as its structures.

"English is a funny language. A fat chance and a slim chance means the same thing."
Jack Herbert

If you would like more information about teaching and how to apply through UCAS, contact Phil Seery at info@thesolentscitt.co.uk

Tel: 02392 489 819
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The Solent
ScITT
School Centred Initial Teacher Training



The Solent
Teaching
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Alliance

News

We are working alongside The Solent Teaching School Alliance (TSTSA) to deliver primary & secondary training

Applications are now open through UCAS for a September 2018 start

We have 18 trainees across 10 schools for the first school experience in 2017/18

We have launched a new user-friendly interactive website www.thesolentscitt.co.uk

Mentor Profile— Elisa Buckley

Elisa studied BA Hons in Primary Education & Teaching at Chichester University and has been teaching for a decade. Elisa is Year 2 Leader at Horndean Infants School and a current primary mentor in 2017/18.



Talking Point

This week we've been talking about high expectations. A recent article in The Guardian explores a study carried out by [Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson](#) looking at the impact expectations can have on performance. The article explores the notion of the Pygmalion effect and how setting high expectations at the start of the year can be vital for pupil progress. To read more visit: <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2017/nov/10/what-every-teacher-should-know-about-expectations>



Mentor Reflections

'How can mentors use precise target setting to improve the classroom practice of trainee teachers?'

When you are a mentor of a trainee teacher, you can sometimes forget they have little classroom and teaching experience and it is unlikely they can change the world in one day! They need their targets broken down into manageable chunks and most importantly, they are clear in how to go about achieving them.

To set precise targets for the trainee teachers that I mentor, I use a few methods which, in turn, improves their practice over time.

The first is one I call 'parrot on the shoulder'. When the trainee is teaching a session, although I am in the classroom as support for the children, this method allows me to guide the trainee through the lesson at the same time, but also allowing them to be completely in control! This involves making a suggestion or an observation quietly in their ear so they can deal with it there and then. This is more beneficial than getting to the end of the lesson and saying 'it would have been better if...' or 'you could have said...'. This method empowers the trainee as the class teacher and the mentor keeping a low profile ensures the trainee gains more respect from the children they are teaching.

Linking targets closely to the Teachers' Standards allows me to see which standards the trainee is achieving well and which ones they need targeting to improve. For example, if they need support with assessment, you may plan for them to teach a sequence of lessons so they can prove and track progression over time or they may need to be pointed in the direction of progression documents so they can understand children's levels more clearly.

It is important that the trainee understands how the Teachers' Standards link to each other and work as a cycle. 'Plan, teach, assess'. For example, if their planning and delivery of a lesson is not yet up to standard, setting assessment targets would be much harder for a trainee to achieve.

Above all, mentors need to recognise that setting precise and manageable targets will support the trainee in making more rapid and sustained progress in their classroom practice. If targets are set and reviewed regularly, then levels at which trainee teachers are functioning should increase significantly.

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