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Supporting NQTs and early career teachers

In this 12-page bi-annual Best Practice Focus, a number of experts offer a range of practical advice to help both NQTs and early career teachers excel in their roles. We focus on issues including wellbeing, teaching and pedagogy, CPD, induction, mentoring & more



Hang in there! Surviving and thriving as a new teacher

The NQT year is commonly accepted to be one of the most challenging in teaching. However, despite the challenges that many of you are facing – especially at a time of Covid-19 – now is not the time to think about quitting. You must hang on in there. Here's why...

I have received lots of messages from NQTs recently who, having crawled to October half-term feeling exhausted, have returned to school contemplating quitting the classroom.

Many told me they are disillusioned with teaching and are finding it harder than they had expected.

Cold days and long nights do not help, of course, and it is usual to

struggle at first. Even seasoned teachers find this half-term the most difficult of the year.

But this year is different, of course: many NQTs have expressed particular concern about their preparedness for teaching because their initial teach training (ITT) was cut short by the first coronavirus lockdown. What is more, continued disruption caused by Covid-19 this term has left them feeling unsupported by their mentor and

other colleagues who, understandably, are themselves struggling to cope due to staff shortages and the added pressures of providing remote learning. If you feel shaky because of this or due to your training being cut short, I have one thing to say...

Don't worry – you are ready for this!

In many ways, you are even more prepared than your predecessors

because the lockdown last term and the tumultuous start to this term have given you a baptism of fire.

Of course, teaching is not for everyone and I would not want you to stay in the classroom if you are having a wholly dreadful time and are convinced that you have made a big mistake.

Nor would I try to twist your arm if your job is having a profound and damaging effect on your health and wellbeing. But I would caution



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against making a hasty decision because, believe me, it does get easier. The run-up to the end of term one is always the hardest, in part due to the weather and because the autumn term is usually the longest, but this year because of Covid-19 as well. So, what you are feeling is normal and natural in the circumstances.

Although, I did not have a global pandemic to contend with when I started teaching, I did consider quitting in December. So I speak from experience when I say...

Hang in there – life gets better

I went into teaching a little later than most. I started out as a cub reporter on a local newspaper. Then, with undergraduate debts to repay, and unable to afford the mandatory journalism postgraduate qualification, I had to quit the paper and fell into a job in telecoms. After a few years, I was in my mid-20s and I had risen to senior management: the pay was good, as was the lifestyle.

All seemed right with the world. But it wasn't. Cue existential crisis. One day, at the dawn of this millennium, I woke up and realised I needed purpose; I needed to rebrand! I was going to be a teacher.

But then I started my PGCE and my dreams of "O Captain! My Captain!" fell apart at the seams. It didn't help that I went from earning a decent salary to paying for the privilege of teaching. I had saved enough money to scrape through the course, but it was tough living like a student again. Nor did it help that I was several years older than most of my fellow trainees. But the worst of it was my first school placement and thus my first foray into the classroom...

To be fair, I was warned. My course tutor told me that the university had considered taking the school off its books because it was in special measures and they

had had complaints. But, because I was older and had leadership experience, they thought I would be able to cope.

The school had been in special measures for a while and staff turnover was high. As a result, many post-16 classes were cancelled and other classes were combined, with students often left to watch television in the canteen.

Hence, at the end of my first week, my school-based mentor and head of department (who quit before the end of my placement) said she thought I was ready to fly solo rather than "waste my time" observing her and team-teaching with more seasoned colleagues.

And thus, I found myself, two weeks into my "training" and after just one week in a school, teaching almost a full timetable without any help or support. Of course, I should not have been left alone in the room, but a flagrant flouting of ITT rules was the least of my worries.

Student behaviour was "challenging", to employ an old euphemism. The canteen was like a scene from *Fight Club*. Staff cars were routinely damaged. And the fire alarm sounded about 15 times a day – not because some cheeky young scamp had smashed the glass, but because some cheeky young arsonist had set fire to something.

Yes, my early teaching experience was literally a baptism of fire.

It did not help when winter started to draw in, the nights grew

“ The canteen was like a scene from *Fight Club*. Staff cars were routinely damaged. And the fire alarm sounded about 15 times a day ”

long and dark – plus, it was nearly always raining and snow fell early and deep meaning weeks of indoor breaks and lunches.

At this time, I thought about quitting teaching every single day. I remember struggling out of bed feeling sick to my stomach, and the lonely commutes home, feeling lost and alone, out of my depth, utterly exhausted.

Though I told no-one, I deeply regretted my risky change of career and yearned for a return to my cushy corner office and expenses account. But I was scared to admit that I'd got it wrong. This might be you now (albeit I hope to a much lesser degree!), half a term into your NQT year.

Don't despair. Against all odds, I persevered and survived to the end of that placement. And you will too. Trust me.

My university tutor wrote a glowing report based not, I suspect, on my teaching abilities but on the simple fact that I was not dead. The school even offered me a job. Perhaps unsurprisingly, I turned them down.

And life kept on getting better. My second placement was a different world entirely. I was well-supported and actually got to do some teaching rather than simple crowd-control. It was still tough learning the ropes and frequently feeling unprepared or unskilled, barely staying one step ahead of my students. But I was learning and that is what counts.

I passed my ITT year and I got a job in a school I stayed at for eight happy years, rising from NQT to assistant head. I only left to become a deputy headteacher, otherwise I think I'd still be there now.

Mistakes, glorious mistakes

That is not to say that my NQT year was any easier than my ITT one, however. It too was hard as you are now discovering. There was so much to learn, and I made countless mistakes, each and every day.

Being an NQT is exhausting – emotionally, mentally and physically – because you are performing most tasks for the first time and that takes a lot of mental effort. Nothing is familiar and you cannot rely on ingrained habits and routines.

But the more you do something, the easier it becomes simply because you develop automaticity

and free up mental capacity. You become more able to anticipate students' misunderstandings and misconceptions, to pre-empt their questions and difficulties.

And the more you explain something, the easier it gets and the clearer those explanations become. What is more, the more familiar you become with your school's systems and structures, and policies and procedures, the easier you find it working with them.

Also, you get to know the staff and know who to go to for help, and as your "newbie" status fades, students become less inclined to test the boundaries and so behaviour improves. In fact, if there is one nugget I would like to have known back then, it is this: the reason students seemed to behave much better for my head of department and senior leaders was not because of something I was not doing, nor because of something they did. It was simply because of who they were. When I became a headteacher, students behaved because of who I was, not what I did. There is no secret strategy, so don't punish yourself.

My NQT year got easier with time, as will yours. Because with time comes familiarity, with time comes routine, and with time comes knowledge and skills and confidence.

The impact you have

We find teaching tough because teaching is tough, but it is tough because it matters; it is tough because you are doing something important, you are improving the world around you, one person at a time. Never forget, especially on your hardest days, the impact you have on young people's lives. Teaching is a superpower. And you are a superhero.

Furthermore, never forget that you are not alone. Teaching is a profession, after all. You are one of us now. And we look after our own. So, above all, if you are finding it tough, do not suffer in silence. Talk to your mentor or a trusted colleague. Talk to your family and friends. With this help, you will get through and you won't regret it – I promise.

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Meeting the Teachers' Standards and other tips: More from Matt Bromley over the page...

Completing your induction

Continuing his advice, Matt Bromley looks at what you, as an NQT, can do to ensure you successfully complete your induction period and meet the Teachers' Standards

First, let's define our terms. The government describes the NQT statutory induction as "the bridge between initial teacher training (ITT) and a career in teaching" (DfE, 2020a). It should combine "a personalised programme of development, support and professional dialogue with monitoring and an assessment of performance" against the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011).

Your NQT year should, therefore, support you in demonstrating that your performance against the Teachers' Standards is satisfactory by the end of the year and equip you with the tools to be an effective and successful teacher thereafter.

Some NQTs will be part of the early roll-out of the Early Career Framework reforms (DfE, 2020b), entitling them to two years of induction and structured support. But the advice here is aimed at the majority of NQTs still following a one-year induction.

Before I begin, it is worth noting a piece of additional government guidance as a result of Covid-19. Normally, absences totalling 30 days or more will extend induction by the aggregate number of days absent. This year, however, any absences related to Covid, including school closures, sickness or self-isolation, will not count towards this limit.

Teachers' Standards

The Standards are used to assess your performance at the end of your induction period. The decision about whether your performance is satisfactory should take into account your work context and must be made on the basis of what can be reasonably expected of you by the end of your induction period.

I would suggest that the phrase "reasonably expected" is particularly important this year, because if an NQT's induction has been affected by Covid, heads can take a view on whether they have still met the Teachers' Standards, including by looking at previous assessment records, discussions

with induction tutors and consideration of "non-routine teaching practice" when schools are partially or fully closed.

This year, as previously, judgements should reflect the expectation that you have effectively consolidated your ITT and demonstrated your ability to meet the relevant Standards consistently over a sustained period.

Below I outline which are, to my mind, the most relevant Standards, what they mean in practice, and how you can demonstrate that you are meeting them. I then signpost to previous *SecEd* articles that provide further advice relating to each area.

High expectations

Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils. This Standard says that you should establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect. Set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions and demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

Related & further reading

- The Pygmalion Effect (2014): <https://bit.ly/3kclayr>
- Motivating students (2018): <https://bit.ly/2TJmeJ5>
- The habits of a good teacher (2015): <https://bit.ly/2HUIMUm>
- The eight steps of excellence (2014): <https://bit.ly/3oJYTVX>

Promote good progress

Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils. This Standard says that you should be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes, be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these. You should guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs, demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching, and encourage pupils to take a

responsible and conscientious attitude to their work and study.

Related & further reading

- A Best Practice Focus on using research evidence to improve the impact of teaching (2019): <https://bit.ly/381zBMU>
- Remote learning (2020): <https://bit.ly/3dFef8d>
- How pupils learn (a series of articles from 2017): <https://bit.ly/3mGmHYM>

Subject knowledge

Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge. To meet this Standard you must have a secure knowledge of the subject/s and curriculum areas you teach, foster and maintain pupils' interest in these subject/s, and address misunderstandings, demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum, and promote the value of scholarship. You should take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, no matter what your subject.

Related & further reading

- Curriculum intent (2019): <https://bit.ly/2Gk4q3X>
- Curriculum implementation: (2019): <https://bit.ly/3hBRCDE>
- Curriculum impact (2020): <https://bit.ly/351YRBo>

Lesson-planning

Plan and teach well-structured lessons. To meet this Standard, you must impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time, promote a love of learning and intellectual curiosity, set homework and plan out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend knowledge. Reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching and contribute to curriculum design and provision.

Related & further reading

- The four-part teaching sequence (2018): <https://bit.ly/3243ubE>

💡 *If an NQT's induction has been affected by Covid, heads can take a view on whether they have still met the Teachers' Standards* 💡

- Lesson-planning (2017): <https://bit.ly/324E8dC>
- Effective homework (2016): <https://bit.ly/3oNozkd>

Adapt your teaching

Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils. To meet this Standard, you need to know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively, have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these. You need to demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development, and have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils (including SEND, high ability, English as an additional language).

Related & further reading

- Working with teaching assistants (2018): <https://bit.ly/3jVTx6o>
- Supporting pupils with SLCN (a best practice series from 2019): <https://bit.ly/3egxf6e>
- A Best Practice Focus on more generic forms of differentiation (2019): <https://bit.ly/2Gnif1G>

Marking and feedback

Make accurate and productive use of assessment. Thus, you will need to know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory

assessment requirements, make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress, and use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets and plan subsequent lessons. You need to give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

Related & further reading

- Best Practice Series on effective feedback practices (2018): <https://bit.ly/3jPtcqg>
- Best Practice Focus (with Professor Dylan William) on formative assessment (2020): <https://bit.ly/2FaUN72>
- Teaching exam classes (2019): <https://bit.ly/3mHqzJ4>

Safe learning environment

Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment. This Standard is important when gathering evidence. You should have clear rules and routines for behaviour and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour in class and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy. Key are high expectations of behaviour and establishing a framework for discipline with a range of strategies (using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly). Approaches should involve and motivate pupils and maintain good relationships. Exercise appropriate authority and act decisively when necessary.

Related & further reading

- Tips for new teachers on managing behaviour (2019): <https://bit.ly/3kVBgra>
- Developing your presence in the classroom (2017): <https://bit.ly/2HOX2yu>
- Rules and routines (2019): <https://bit.ly/3jNfbth>

“ Take minutes of your mentor meetings yourself and keep track of the feedback you are given and what you do with it ”

An evidence summary

So, I would suggest that you start to gather evidence of:

- Your high expectations and the classroom environment.
- Student outcomes (in their widest sense).
- Your subject knowledge – existing and developing.
- Lesson planning and curriculum design.
- Differentiation, including stretch and challenge.
- Marking and feedback.
- Behaviour management.

For each of the above, you may find it useful to structure your evidence using the STARR model:

- Situation: Describe a situation that relates to this Standard.
- Task: Explain how you identified what needed to be done.
- Action: Explain, stage-by-stage, what you did.
- Result: Explain what the outcome was.
- Reflection: Explain what you learnt and what you will do differently in future.

You may use a lever-arched folder with dividers for each Standard. I would urge you to start gathering your evidence immediately, if you have not already, rather than wait until you have a mentor meeting or, worse, until the end of the year.

Gather, magpie-like, supporting documentation such as lesson plans, resources, copies of marked work, feedback from colleagues, students and parents, progress data, meeting minutes, and so on. Getting into the habit of saving documents now is far easier than scrambling around in a panic later.

Other NQT expectations

You are also expected to meet with your induction tutor/mentor to discuss and agree the priorities for your induction and to keep these priorities under review. It may be necessary in these strange times to take the lead and ensure the meetings are scheduled and go ahead. It is helpful if you take minutes of your mentor meetings yourself and keep track of the feedback you are given and what you do with it.

You are expected to participate in an agreed development programme, and this includes CPD. I suggest you keep a record of what CPD you engage in. You may even write a reflection diary noting what you did with the training and what

impact it has had on your professional practice. The same applies to classroom observations, progress reviews and formal assessment meetings – take a lead in making them happen, taking notes and gathering evidence of how you responded to feedback.

What to expect from others

Your induction is a two-way process and you too are entitled to support. In particular, your head should:

- Ensure the induction tutor is appropriately trained and has sufficient time for their role.
- Ensure an appropriate and personalised induction programme is in place.
- Ensure your progress is reviewed regularly, including through observations and feedback on your teaching.
- Ensure that termly assessments are carried out and reports completed and sent to the appropriate body.
- Maintain and retain accurate records of employment for the induction period.
- Make a recommendation to the appropriate body on whether your performance against the Standards is satisfactory or requires an extension.
- Participate appropriately in the appropriate body's quality-assurance procedures and retain all relevant documentation and evidence on file for six years.

Your mentor, meanwhile, should:

- Provide or co-ordinate guidance and effective support including coaching and mentoring for your professional development.
- Carry out regular progress reviews throughout the induction period.
- Undertake three formal assessment meetings during the total induction period, co-ordinating input from other colleagues as appropriate (normally three termly, or pro-rata for part-time staff).
- Inform you during the assessment if you are meeting the judgements to be recorded in the formal assessment record and invite you to add comments.
- Ensure that your teaching is observed and feedback provided.
- Ensure you are aware of how, both within and outside the institution, you can raise any

concerns about your induction programme or your personal progress.

- Take prompt, appropriate action if you appear to be having difficulties.

Final words...

Here are a few other tips to help you adjust to life as a teacher:

- Become familiar with the key policies that will affect you, such as behaviour, homework, child protection, and health and safety. Review your practices to ensure you are meeting these policies.
- Make a note of the general work ethic in the school. Arrive on time and leave when the majority of staff do.
- Discuss your job description with your head of department and/or induction mentor. Make sure you know what is expected of you.
- Be courteous and attentive to others and always listen to advice from colleagues.
- Talk a little about yourself, but not too much, and do not keep going on about what you did in your last school, during your teaching practice, or before you became a teacher.
- Do not rock the boat too soon. Even if you have an innovative idea, wait until you have established a good reputation and some positive rapport with colleagues before proposing a change, no matter how small.
- Mind your meeting manners. There are unofficial guidelines that dictate decorum during meetings – read the runes quickly or ask someone to give you the inside track.
- Protect your work/life balance. It is far too easy to say yes to everything – try to take a measured approach. SecEd



FURTHER INFORMATION

- ▶ DfE: Statutory guidance: Induction for NQTs, last updated April 2020a: <https://bit.ly/2TM2sfK>
- ▶ DfE: Collection: Early Career Framework reforms, June 2020b: <https://bit.ly/384jle6>
- ▶ DfE: Teachers' standards, July 2011: <https://bit.ly/3egw6Dv>

A-Z: Things NQTs must know

Effective teaching for SEND students can be challenging for those new to the profession. Here are 26 pieces of practical advice, many of which will be relevant to all students

Acknowledgement: Building relationships with pupils is key. By acknowledging how they are feeling you can lessen anxiety and prevent outbursts: “I can see you are feeling frustrated, let’s make a plan.”

Behaviour: Start strict so you create firm boundaries which make your pupils feel safe. You can always ease up, but they will act up if you suddenly clamp down. Only raise your voice in dangerous situations.

Concentration: Nobody can concentrate 100 per cent of the time. Analyse the reason for poor concentration: lack of interest, distractions, not understanding, tiredness or always wanting to move on to the next thing? Plan regular, short brain breaks.

Difficulties: Adapting your teaching and supporting the development of coping strategies will enable learners to make progress. Reframe them as learning “differences” and set up buddying pairs or even a trio.

Environment: Tailor the environment for learning. Reduce visual and auditory distractions. Uncluttered classrooms and organised work spaces make it easier to learn, especially for SEN pupils.

Functional skills: When teaching new topics, start by making links with their life experience as this will aide comprehension and ability to retain new facts.

Goals: It is hard to be motivated to learn if you have no goals. Setting goals will vary, with the youngest children just thinking what they will achieve before playtime and older children looking further ahead with short, medium and long-term goals.

Hidden curriculum: By setting up cooperative learning groups and assigning different roles, you can monitor pupil interaction and use peers to model acceptable behaviour and explain the unwritten social rules to those who “get it

wrong”. See Jen Schmidt’s work on PEERspective teaching.

Independence: An independent learner is one who can monitor their learning and alter their approach to be more successful. These are the principles of metacognition, which can be taught and developed. Make it part of your lessons and model it in your teaching. The Education Endowment Foundation has a useful seven-step guide (EEF, 2018).

Justice: An over-developed sense of justice is often found in pupils with ADHD/ASD. Encouraging their peers to understand that we all find different things difficult will lessen the cries of “it’s not fair” when discipline is enforced.

Kinaesthetic learning: If the lesson did not go as well as you hoped, it may be because you did not include enough practical, “hands-on” activities.

Language: Pitch your language a little above that which the children bring to the classroom and use short sentences. We have a crisis of language impairment and pupils zone out when they hear unfamiliar words. They often struggle to find the words to express themselves.

Memory: Make sure that you set up a number of routines, as this lessens the demands on pupils’ working memories, which are often weak. Never rush a plenary – a vital part of the lesson enabling learners to revisit and embed new learning.

Neurodiversity: It is important to recognise that specific learning difficulties are rarely found in isolation. We need a broader understanding of the whole child, their weaknesses and their strengths.

Opportunity: Keep expectations high and if they find something hard give pupils the opportunity to problem-solve in the Learning Pit, a method to help develop challenge, resilience and a Growth Mindset

(Nottingham, 2010). Finding the solution independently will consolidate their learning.

Parents: Share successes however small (phone call or postcard). Have regular communication. Keep a written record of any meeting. Use the GROW model: What is the Goal? What is the Reality (the situation)? Explore the Options. Decide What is going to be done and by When.

Questioning: Make questioning inclusive. Anxiety reduces a learner’s ability to think, so use inclusive and “low-stakes” questioning styles such as “discuss with a partner”. Always provide thinking time – the benefits are far-reaching.

Responsive and adaptive teaching: Avoid adapting individual or group tasks by outcome. Rather, recognise the barrier and offer support in that area so the learner can achieve the learning objective and achieve their potential. Recognise that you may need to modify your lesson plan according to needs on the day.

Study skills: Study skills need to begin at an early age to ensure the learner can organise their work and complete tasks in the most effective way. Encourage time-awareness, which will help time-management.

Teaching assistants: Teaching assistants provide valuable support to classroom teaching and learning, as well as having a good understanding of individual learner’s needs. Timetable a weekly meeting so you can share information about learners and their needs and plan strategies.

Unique: Every child is unique with their own patterns of strengths and challenges. What works well for one may not work for another. For example, multi-sensory teaching might be effective and fun for many, but may disorientate a pupil with autism.

Vocabulary: Fundamental to comprehension and expression.

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Build in time to explicitly teach the three tiers of words (Beck et al, 2002). Tier 1: everyday conversation words. Tier 2: words written in texts and synonyms. Tier 3: topic-specific words.

Whinge: It is natural to off-load if you experience anti-social behaviour. But if you tell too many colleagues about it, a climate of negative energy develops. Try a three-minute whinge to one person (at school or home) before then focusing on solutions.

eXaminations: Anxiety blocks higher order thinking skills. Practise exam skills and rhythmic breathing.

Yourself: You, the teacher, are the best learning resource. Create a work/life balance that enables you to have “me” time and relieve stress.

Zzzz: Sleep is vital for emotional regulation. Teens need about eight to 10 hours a night, but few achieve that (SecEd, 2019). If you suspect a problem, talk to the parents. **SecEd**



FURTHER INFORMATION

- ▶ Beck et al: *Bringing words to life*, The Guilford Press, 2002: <https://bit.ly/2Hdgc0C>
- ▶ EEF: Metacognition and self-regulated learning, April 2018: <https://bit.ly/3aiZjKk>
- ▶ Nottingham: The Learning Pit, YouTube video, 2015: <https://bit.ly/38TvW4p>
- ▶ PEERspective teaching: <https://peerspectivelearningapproach.com/>
- ▶ SecEd: *The importance of sleep*, November 2019: <http://bit.ly/3aUF2LM>

The habits of good wellbeing

New teachers must look after their wellbeing if they are to avoid burn-out and enjoy long, successful careers. So, what are the key good habits you should be forming this year?

Well done! Not only on making it this far through the hardest term of the year, but doing so in unprecedented times when even the most experienced of teachers have been pushed to the limit.

One positive in the Covid-19 pandemic is the spotlight that has been shone on just how important self-care is for us all. It is more crucial than ever to make our mental and physical wellbeing a priority. Every NQT should take steps to make it so for themselves, forming good career-lasting habits.

With this in mind, below are some general wellbeing and survival tips that will stand you in good stead.

Remember: most NQTs are likely to say they feel overwhelmed at this stage. This is normal and you must not lose sight of this. It will get better.

A key thing to remember is that stress and working long hours are closely linked. Our 2019 Teacher Wellbeing Survey found that 74 per cent of education professionals consider the inability to switch off and relax to be the major contributing factor to a negative work/life balance. Our research also shows that NQTs are most likely to struggle with this.

So, if you have not put a clear framework or timetable in place, lay down some basic rules for in and out of school. It will go a long way to keeping yourself mentally and physically healthy and robust.

Taking regular breaks

Breaks are an important aspect of both time management and wellbeing. Proper breaks can ensure we are better able to deliver and perform at maximum capacity.

Teaching is a profession that requires energy, stamina and resilience. Staying at school longer to do marking and working through every break time, evenings and weekends are not the best use of your time if you are already exhausted. As an NQT, you may feel like you have the energy to do this, but remember you must focus on building career-long habits.

If the day has been stressful and you are anxious about something, talk about it to someone or write your worries down – this may help you begin to problem-solve as you think things through. However, set a limit and once that time has come to an end, then stop and try not to talk or worry about the situation for the rest of the evening.

Stay physically healthy

This winter it will be even more important that we eat well, get fresh air, exercise and plenty of rest. It might sound hard, but it can be as simple as building in a daily walk, cooking quick healthy meals or planning a relaxing weekend.

Education Support

Any teacher who is feeling overwhelmed, fearful, worried, anxious or disinterested in life should call the Education Support helpline on 08000 562 561. The 24/7 service offers free, confidential support. Visit www.educationsupport.org.uk

Use your mentor well

Don't be afraid to ask for help. Your mentor is there to support and guide you, so establishing a good relationship with them and enough contact time is crucial to a successful year. You should have scheduled time together, face-to-face or online, and the more you are able to prepare for these meetings, the more control you will have to get what you need from them.

Behaviour

Feeling under-prepared and ill-equipped to manage disruptive behaviour can be a major frustration for new teachers that can easily threaten or affect your wellbeing.

In our Teacher Wellbeing Index (2019), 43 per cent of experienced education professionals who said they had experienced mental health symptoms cited student behaviour as the cause.

It is important to talk through and seek advice and strategies from your mentor, peers and colleagues who will have come up against similar scenarios and experiences. It is also important to remind yourself that you are not expected to have

immediate solutions, especially considering that you will have missed out on much classroom experience during your initial teacher training due to the Covid-19 lockdown. Try different approaches to find what works best for you.

A self-care plan

Make good sleep a priority. Neuroscientist Matthew Walker in *Why We Sleep* (2017) and clinical psychologist Vicki Culpin in *The Business of Sleep* (2018) warn that regularly sleeping less than seven hours a night is a disaster for our mental and physical wellbeing. Tempting as it may be to get up and do a couple of hours' work before

school, work all day and start it all again the following day, it is unsustainable and far from healthy.

Sleep problems have also reportedly become more common during the Covid-19 crisis, so make sure you get time to relax before going to bed, even if it is just half-an-hour. Try not to use devices before bed as they disrupt your natural sleep patterns. Instead read a book, have a bath, listen to music or a favourite podcast. Reading fiction for just six minutes has been shown to reduce stress more than a walk or drinking tea (MHFA, 2018).

Resources on the BBC

We have recently partnered with BBC Teach, contributing our advice and tips as part of their teacher wellbeing support webpages. This includes the film *Confessions of a teacher – Being the newbie*, which offers words of support and wisdom from experienced teachers and fellow NQTs.

There is also an article from Dr Emma Kell, author of *How to Survive in Teaching* (2018), focused on developing resilience (see further information).

Sophie Howells

...is from Education Support, a UK charity dedicated to improving the mental health and wellbeing of the education workforce. Read her previous articles for SecEd via <https://bit.ly/2S5CZxi>

You are not alone

Do not struggle alone. Our research shows that NQTs and early career teachers are more than 25 per cent more likely to experience mental health problems compared with their colleagues. Free and confidential, our telephone helpline is run by trained and accredited counsellors. It provides access to in-the-moment support, structured counselling, as well as help with referrals for longer term support.

One trainee told us: "The helpline was very supportive in just listening to my worries. (It) has helped me cope better with my workload and balance it with my personal life."

Of those who used the helpline last year, 86 per cent said that it had had a positive impact on their situation. Remember: it's good to talk.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

- ▶ BBC Teach: Teacher support webpages: www.bbc.co.uk/teach/teacher-support
- ▶ BBC Teach: *Confessions of a Teacher – Being the newbie*: <https://bbc.in/3l2uS1n>
- ▶ BBC Teach: *Lessons in resilience: Earning your stripes*, Dr Emma Kell: <https://bbc.in/2MomYAN>
- ▶ Education Support: Teacher Wellbeing Index 2019: <https://bit.ly/32RTvGW>
- ▶ MHFA England: *Why reading can be good for mental health*, 2018: <https://bit.ly/2lBixZT>
- ▶ SecEd: *Back to School: Staff wellbeing and support*, July 2020: <https://bit.ly/2H3HkPG>

Quality first teaching: A practical guide

The most important factor in achieving good pupil outcomes is quality first teaching. It has been shown to be true time and again. But what does this look like in practice?

We have all sat in meetings, looking at data tables and graphs showing the discrepancies between “disadvantaged groups” and all other learners. But there are strategies that can be put into action and which have a measurable effect on the quality of learning that occurs in the classroom and which can help narrow the disadvantage gap.

This was the purpose of “Quality First Teaching”, first mentioned in

National Strategies documents in 2010. The idea was to increase the level of personalisation that learners received in the classroom in order to help all students, but especially those who were falling behind. Key characteristics include:

- Focused lesson design with clear objectives.
- High demands of pupil involvement and engagement.
- Appropriate use of teacher questioning, modelling and explaining.
- Learning through dialogue,

with regular opportunities for pupils to talk individually and in groups.

- High levels of interaction for all pupils.
- Expectation that pupils accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently.

Since then, numerous ways of implementing quality first teaching have been tried and tested, but with mixed results, often due to misunderstanding of the guidance and the associated pedagogical

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research. Here are some strategies that can work in most, if not all contexts.



High level of challenge

One purpose of quality first teaching is to narrow the gap between disadvantaged groups and their peers. In my experience, schools who manage to narrow the gap, have one thing in common – they set high expectations for all of their students, regardless of who they are.

This is not to say that they expect equality of outcome. That would be impossible to achieve, or would at least involve some perverse incentive to push the high-fliers less than you ordinarily would.

But quality first teaching promotes that all students should put maximal effort into their studies and it expects teachers to hold these students to account if they fall below that expectation.

As teachers, we must put aside any biases (conscious or unconscious) that we have and we must expect more from all of our students.

A final note on SEN. In many schools, SEN students are, in practice at least, made the responsibility of teaching assistants. The teacher is sometimes left out of the equation. However, the 2015 SEND Code of Practice, states: “Additional intervention and SEN support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.” This puts the responsibility for SEN students with the teacher, as they are the one who directs and guides the learning of the whole class.

Use high-quality questioning strategies

If you want better answers from your students, then you should ask better questions. If they cannot answer the question you ask, then tailor the wording of your question to the individual, perhaps explaining the vocabulary they struggled with. Or ask a question

“ Teachers who include meta-cognitive strategies routinely employ a range of worked examples, created in real-time in front of the class ”

that underpins the one you originally asked, to ascertain whether they comprehend more basic information.

In maths, you might ask the question: “How many basketballs could you fit in this box?” If they cannot answer, it might simply be that they have forgotten how to calculate volume, or do not understand the difference between circumference and area.

Some students just need to hear the question phrased differently, in order to focus their attention on the knowledge you want them to show. You should plan your questions and think of different ways that students might misunderstand your phrasing – or where they might lack knowledge of the concepts required to answer successfully.

Focus on extensive and varied modelling

I do not know a single teacher who doesn’t “model” what they are teaching, in some form or other. We do it every day. But quality first teaching requires that we take it to the next level.

The teachers who are most successful in narrowing the gap, use a variety of metacognition strategies, including modelling, extensively. According to research evidence compiled by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2019), implementation of metacognitive strategies can lead to an additional seven months of progress across the year.

Teachers who include metacognitive strategies routinely employ a range of worked examples, created in real-time in front of the class.

Different ways of solving problems are shown, rather than just one way. They also use models to demonstrate how to apply an argument, a formula, a painting style or a historical source to different contexts or situations.

This constant demonstration and reframing of the taught knowledge helps students to construct a stronger schema, or network of information, about the topic they are studying. After all, you need to be able to use your knowledge in different contexts beyond the limited examples you find in a textbook or scheme of work. Just imagine if you only knew about using “ratio” to share apples between people in a maths puzzle, not realising that it was a key

concept in cooking recipes too.

Teachers should also explain their modelling, carefully and thoroughly, as they add information to their boards. In doing so, students pick up on the reasoning behind the decisions being made in their answers. Without your explanation alongside the model, your students might not understand fully how to solve the next problem you set them.

You should also “plan for error”. It helps when teachers model what the answer should not look like. Showing common mistakes or misconceptions and explaining why they are mistakes and how to avoid or fix them is particularly important.

Effective and personalised feedback

Students who receive feedback that is specific to their needs will find it much easier to make progress in their learning. Unfortunately, this can lead to excessive marking and feedback policies being promoted, as we try to write something unique in each of our student’s exercise books.

Whole-class feedback for common errors and misconceptions could be used, followed by individual comments on those things that are specific to their work.

However, sometimes written feedback is received by the student too late for it to make a difference. Feedback given in-the-moment is far more useful and drives improvement more quickly, over time. Technology can be your best friend here.

Many schools are now embedding Google and Microsoft apps, as well as tools like those provided by Seneca, Quizlet, and others, into their resource base, so that students can self-quiz. No teacher-marking is required, beyond the initial writing of feedback responses, which takes much less time than marking a class set of 30 books or pieces of work. Not only that, the information from students’ quiz results is collated and automatically presented to you.

What is most important, however, is that the feedback given shows students what they need to do next time, in a practical sense.

Telling them to “add more detail” is unhelpful. Describing the types of detail required is far more useful. As Professor Dylan Wiliam puts it in his

book *Embedded Formative Assessment* (2018), “feedback must provide a recipe for future action”. For more on effective formative assessment, see *SecEd’s Best Practice Focus*, which includes a contribution from Prof William (2020).

Strategic deployment of teaching assistants

Quality first teaching advocates that the weakest students should be given the most support. However, problems can be created through poor deployment of teaching assistants – something that the EEF’s research has warned about (2018).

In many schools, teaching assistants are well-qualified and have extensive experience in their area. In other schools, the picture is different, with less-qualified teaching assistants, who are often put in charge of groups of students, with little or no prior training. What we, as teachers, need to remember is that if we are the “expert” (in subject knowledge and pedagogy), then in many cases we should be supporting our weakest students more directly, with teaching assistants tending to the rest of the class.

However, remember too that many teaching assistants are often highly skilled in particular areas of support. Many HLTAs are experts in autism, sign-language, Down’s Syndrome, etc, which enables them to teach and support individuals with specific needs, especially if they are “attached” to a specific student throughout the day or week. Furthermore, some teaching assistants are far more attuned to a given student’s health and wellbeing issues and this could make all the difference in the classroom.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

- ▶ EEF: Metacognition and self-regulation, last updated September 2019: <http://bit.ly/2JBuALE>
- ▶ EEF: Teaching assistants, last updated November 2018: <http://bit.ly/2uZx54V>
- ▶ *SecEd: Formative assessment: Five classroom strategies*, Best Practice Focus, April 2020: <http://bit.ly/2FaUN72>

Sense-check your CPD

Drawing on some of the key criteria within Ofsted’s recently updated initial teacher education inspection framework, how can NQTs ‘sense-check’ their on-going CPD?

Ofsted recently updated its initial teacher education (ITE) inspection framework, with the revised version having now come into effect (as of September 2020).

The new framework applies to all phases of ITE, including early years, primary, secondary and further education (Ofsted, 2020).

Ofsted has introduced a new key judgement called “quality of education and training”, which replaces the two previous judgements of “quality of training across the partnership” and “outcomes for trainees”.

The criteria Ofsted is using for this new judgement is, I think, also handy for newly and recently qualified teachers too – it can be used as a sense-check of your on-going professional development.

So let’s take a look at how Ofsted proposes to define “good practice” and explore what this might look like for you. In so doing, we will focus on six areas of your professional practice:

- 1 Develop your subject knowledge.
- 2 Acquire a range of experiences.
- 3 Engage with research evidence.

- 4 Have high expectations.
- 5 Teach for long-term learning.
- 6 Lead your own professional development.

Subject knowledge

Under “intent”, Ofsted says that ITE programmes should be designed to consistently give trainees the necessary expertise required in the subject or subjects they teach. The ITE curriculum should be designed to ensure that trainees are introduced to the tools to develop their knowledge further, for example through sharing access to professional networks.

The explicit mention of subject expertise here is important because within our brave new world of curriculum thinking where we focus – as chief inspector Amanda Spielman has often said – on the “real substance of education”, teachers need a depth of up-to-date subject specialist knowledge in order to plan an effective programme of study and in order to ensure their choices of curriculum content are appropriate and ambitious.

In the Education Inspection Framework (EIF), Ofsted also notes

the importance of CPD for teachers that serves two functions: developing pedagogical content knowledge, that is to say, generic teaching strategies, and developing subject content knowledge – pedagogies specific to a particular discipline and the body of knowledge that comprises that subject field (Ofsted, 2019).

As well as continuing to access CPD on generic teaching strategies such as feedback and metacognition, therefore, as an NQT and RQT you might also wish to access subject-specific development opportunities including, though not limited to, membership of a subject association and/or network.

Social media might also prove useful as a means of connecting with other teachers in your field, particularly if you are the only teacher of your subject in your own school. External training courses might also be key because they provide access to a subject expert trainer but also enable networking with other subject specialists.

Reflection: What have I done this year, and what do I plan to do next year, to ensure my subject knowledge

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continues to grow and to engage with other experts in my subject?

Acquire a range of experiences

Under “implementation”, Ofsted says that ITE programmes should allow trainees to apply what they have learned from a range of different placement experiences and settings.

Many NQTs are restricted in terms of which classes they get to teach, with some heads of department – rightly or wrongly – seeking to “protect” exam classes and post-16 cohorts from inexperienced teachers.

If you have not been timetabled to teach a broad range of classes during your NQT year, therefore, it is important that you try to seek a breadth of experience in other ways early in your career and this might mean peer-teaching or by observing colleagues.

Try to teach or observe classes in every year group in your school and, where classes are set, observe a range of abilities.

Ask if it is possible to visit other schools in different settings, too, to assess the extent to which your teaching strategies are transferable.

Gaining a breadth of experience early in your career, will not only help you develop your knowledge and skills, it will also help you make informed decisions about your career path.

Reflection: What have I done this year, and what do I plan to do next year, to widen my experience to different contexts and settings?

Engage with evidence

Ofsted says the ITE curriculum should be designed to equip trainees with up-to-date research



findings. It should also ensure that trainees are taught how to apply principles from scholarship relevant to their subject and phase when making professional decisions.

Trainees should also learn how to assess the appropriateness and value of new approaches that they might encounter in the future, by considering the validity and reliability of any research on which the approach depends, by considering its context and by relating it to their professional experience.

Trainees should know about up-to-date research for promoting inclusion and teaching pupils with SEND and are able to apply this knowledge in their subject and phase.

As such, as an NQT or RQT, you should ensure you continue to be a critical consumer of research, both in general pedagogical approaches and in your own subject field. You should continue to read widely and question your own practice. This can be achieved through academic reading, and by engaging with meta-analyses such as the Educational Endowment Foundation's Teaching and Learning Toolkit and John Hattie's Visible Learning, as well as by attending conferences.

You should continue to consider the reliability and validity of any research you study and continue to sense-check it with your own subject and context. In short, you should be influenced by the evidence but informed by your own experiences.

You should also ensure that you engage with research from a wide range of areas, not just within your own subject field. For example, keep up-to-date with the latest thinking on behaviour management, on teaching pupils with SEND, supporting disadvantaged pupils, and so on.

Reflection: What have I done this year, and what do I plan to do next year, to engage in research evidence and how has this informed by own teaching?

Have high expectations

Ofsted says the ITE curriculum should introduce trainees to the scope and richness of the knowledge that pupils can acquire in each subject. The curriculum should be designed to ensure that trainees practise communicating

shared values that improve school culture, sustain excellent behaviour and strengthen pupils' vision of excellence in a subject.

As an NQT or RQT, you might wish to consider how you continue to contribute to establishing, articulating and maintaining your own school's culture of excellence, and be mindful of how your own values, attitudes and behaviours uphold (or might contradict) that culture.

You should continue to engage in CPD aimed at improving your behaviour management skills and observe other teachers to see how they manage behaviour in your school context.

You should also consider how your high expectations of academic outcomes manifest in your classroom – how, through your everyday words and actions, do you articulate a vision of excellence to every pupil in your class and how do you stretch and challenge each pupil?

Reflection: What have I done this year, and what do I plan to do next year, to create a classroom culture of high expectations and to develop my own behaviour management skills? How do I ensure I communicate a vision of excellence within my subject context?

Long-term learning

Ofsted says the ITE curriculum should ensure trainees know how to teach pupils so that they acquire expertise within their subject and phase.

Trainees should be taught how to ensure pupils remember and/or practise components of knowledge and skills that they teach, and how to ensure pupils integrate new knowledge into larger concepts or accounts.

Trainees should also be taught that some pupils experience specific difficulties with acquiring, recalling and using knowledge.

Here, as and NQT and RQT, you should continue to develop your understanding of the learning process – perhaps informed by cognitive load theory – in order to ensure your teaching is conducive to pupils knowing more and remembering more of what they have learned.

In particular, you may wish to consider the extent to which you are continuing to develop your skills in the following areas:

- Developing sufficient subject knowledge to identify and evaluate the content you intend to teach, considering matters of scope, coherence, sequencing and emphasis in your teaching.
- Keeping up-to-date with evidence on effective classroom practice, including how to present subject matter clearly and explicitly, promote appropriate discussion, reflect and question, and how to use relevant pedagogy to enable effective teaching.
- Increasing your understanding of how to resource lesson sequences within your subject and understand how sequences fit into and serve wider goals for that subject.
- Developing an understanding of how to adapt your teaching to promote inclusion, for example by giving access to texts, by allowing participation in discussion, or by ensuring equal readiness for next steps in a curriculum.
- Developing ways of identifying misconceptions and explicitly remediating these through subsequent planning, teaching or feedback.
- Growing an awareness of how to recognise signs that may indicate SEND and knowing how to help pupils overcome barriers to learning.
- Developing your knowledge of how, why and when to assess pupils in your subject, and how to seek and draw conclusions about what pupils have learned.

Reflection: What have I done this year, and what do I plan to do next year, to ensure my teaching helps pupils to achieve long-term learning?

Lead your own CPD

Under "impact", Ofsted says that trainees need to learn the intended knowledge and skills set out in the ITE curriculum and that their secure mastery of knowledge and skills should be evident in any planning. When trainees complete their training, they should be aware of their professional strengths and areas for improvement.

This also holds for NQTs and RQTs, not only as part of your induction but as an on-going exercise in self-reflection. The Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011) are a good way of reflecting on your professionalism and will probably

form part of your school's performance management framework. But it is useful to collate a portfolio of your developing expertise and experience for your own purposes not just to pass an appraisal cycle.

In particular, you might wish to consider the following aspects of your professional development:

- How to manage your workload and to maintain your own health and welfare, as well as how to engage with relevant subject and/or scholarly communities.
- How to promote pupils' safety and welfare, including understanding your statutory safeguarding duties and responsibilities.
- How to uphold high standards of personal and professional conduct, including promoting a positive view of inclusion.
- How to respond appropriately to pupil needs arising from physical and mental health issues and how schools can promote good physical and mental health.

Reflection: What have I done this year, and what do I plan to do next year, to reflect on my own development and to assess my strengths and areas for improvement? What have I done/will I do to address my areas for improvement?

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FURTHER INFORMATION

- ▶ DfE: Teachers' standards, July 2011: <https://bit.ly/3egw6Dv>
- ▶ Education Endowment Foundation: Resources, research and its Teaching & Learning Toolkit: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>
- ▶ Ofsted: Initial teacher education inspection framework and handbook 2020, June 2020: <https://bit.ly/3mKrA2W>
- ▶ Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework, May 2019: <http://bit.ly/2M3ttuj>
- ▶ *Visible Learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses on achievement*, Professor John Hattie, 2009 (updated in 2011 and 2017). For a useful overview of this research, see <https://visible-learning.org>

Early career learners

In this climate, the need to support early career teachers is crucial, as is the need for all teachers to continue to be learners themselves...

In recent years, there has been a mobilised effort to understand how to best retain Early Career Teachers (ECTs).

The problems with retention are well rehearsed. Worryingly, Worth et al (2018) have shown that retention rates for ECTs dropped, particularly between 2012 and 2018. CPD, dialogue to reflect on learned classroom experience, nurture and support are identified as critical in these first few years.

This support is perhaps even more crucial in an era of Covid-19. Below I look at the early roll-out support being offered by the Early Career Framework (ECF) and also get some tips for how schools might support their ECTs this year.

The ECF

The Department for Education recently published the ECF, recognising the need for effective and research-informed approaches to support and development of new teachers (DfE, 2020).

Due to come into force in September 2021, the ECF widens the scope of induction to two years and amplifies the entitlement of support for new teachers. The mentor is a critical part of this framework as it attempts to create a firmer and more consistent diet of support and learning for ECTs across all schools.

Ahead of national roll-out, a number of regions across the country are making use of early access to ECF programmes to support both ECTs and mentors.

Four early-roll out providers – Ambition Institute, Education Development Trust, Teach First, and the UCL Early Career Teacher Consortium – are working with the DfE to embed ECT support.

Each provider's offer is slightly different but carries with it the same DNA of embedding the entitlement of support and learning for ECTs, while also extending an offer of learning and CPD to mentors too.

All schools can review and access resources from each of the four providers. Each set of materials cover five core areas of the ECF: Behaviour management, pedagogy,

curriculum, assessment, and professional behaviours. Each programme contains the same amount of self-directed study time.

Schools can access the materials from each provider free-of-charge on the DfE portal ahead of national roll-out (see further information).

Codifying culture for ECTs and mentors

One of the immediate challenges for this year's NQTs was having to complete their ITT year during the first Covid-19 lockdown. Like many, the Teaching Institute at the Dixons Academies Trust adapted its ITT programme when the lockdown hit and placements were suspended.

Judith Kidd, head of the Teaching Institute, explained: "We extended our programme to include remote coaching and practice around identified targets related to pedagogical subject knowledge. We want our early career colleagues to re-examine the importance of culture and relationships across all year groups alongside that of the operational priorities."

The MAT sought to "codify" their CPD and content into watchable, listenable clips via a YouTube channel (see further information). Each of their sessions begins with an episode capturing the high-level thinking and then drills down into granular detail.

Judith and the team have offered further practical advice to mentors and system-leaders who are supporting ECTs this year amid the Covid-19 pandemic: "We ask our mentors to schedule in weekly checks with their trainees and NQTs with an explicit focus on wellbeing. We also challenge new teachers to develop a social support mechanism of peers and other ECTs in their bubbles."

She advised: "Ensure that early career colleagues are clear about the support network available and who they can go to when support is needed. All of our staff can access an Employee Assistance Programme and benefit from confidential counselling should they need it."

Ensuring NQTs are clear about

their support networks both in and out of school is key: "It's important to provide explicit guidance when explaining different approaches to classroom leadership and learning, but equally important to sense-check understanding of the learned content. Don't forget that some NQTs will have missed out on their final placements and the opportunity to apply their understanding has potentially been disrupted too."

Regular sense-making discussion groups and check-ins have therefore been added to CPD for ECTs to help ensure that trainees and NQTs can readily question the theory and concepts before putting them into practice.

Beyond the early career

A firm foundation to the start of a teacher's career is important. If done correctly, echoes of this support will continue long into your career. Headteacher Dominic Vernon offers the following advice for new teachers and/or ECT mentors:

Listen: Whether you are an ECT, a mentor or an emerging leader, take time to listen and hear what colleagues are saying. For any new starter, it can be daunting and it is vital that colleagues at any level feel that they can trust you and that you value what they have to say. Get to know colleagues. This is just as critical for senior leaders as it is for new teachers.

Don't rush decisions: We want to make an impact, but you need to make sure that your impact is sustainable and positive. Give yourself time to plan, review and revisit your actions. This is a skill that can be developed throughout the early stages of a teacher's practice and one which will stay with you as your career develops.

Lead by example: We hear lots about how school leaders need to "walk the walk", but this applies to mentors and ECTs just as much. Support colleagues by dropping into a lesson, asking them how they are,

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picking up that piece of litter that we witnessed a pupil walk by and supporting with putting up that new display. As much as you are the leader of your own classroom, you also need to be a part of the team. Try not to work in isolation.

Celebrate the wins: We need to take time to reflect on what has been achieved and the progress made. Learn this craft as an ECT because it will serve you well. It is important to recognise the success of your colleagues too – say thank you for the acts of kindness and the small things that often go unnoticed. You can become an architect of this culture as an ECT and mentor.

Enjoy the journey: I will leave the final word to Dominic: "I can't believe how quickly my career has moved. The roles we play in schools are too important not to enjoy. Be busy, be active, give it your all, but make sure that you enjoy the journey too and look after your own wellbeing."

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FURTHER INFORMATION

- ▶ DfE: Collection: Early Career Framework reforms, June 2020: <https://bit.ly/384jle6>
- ▶ DfE: Early Career Framework main portal: www.early-career-framework.education.gov.uk
- ▶ Dixons Academy Trust YouTube Channel: <https://bit.ly/3oQ4r0P>
- ▶ Worth et al: *Teacher Workforce Dynamics in England*, NFER, October 2018: <https://bit.ly/3k0IJYZ>