

Case Study

Are you thinking of becoming a mentor?

Hope SENTAMU
LEARNING TRUST

Read Sue's story...

Undergraduate degree: BA HONS University of York - French, German and Linguistic Science.

Teaching subject: Modern Foreign Languages

Why did you decide to become a mentor?

After spending so many years committed to the teaching profession, a couple of years ago I decided that in order to make the best of my experiences, I would like to provide support and guidance to our ITT training teachers. I felt my presence and input could bring significant value to them at the start of their careers. As a mentor, you play a crucial role in the professional development of a teacher at the start of their career and you act as a role model, setting the example for effective teaching practice. It is a chance to really define the start of someone's experience as a classroom teacher.



What do you personally get from being a mentor?

I have been the ITT Mentor for the MFL department at Manor CE Academy for a number of years now and have worked closely with our training teachers on various aspects of their PGCE School Direct course. I joined our school's staff mentoring scheme and worked closely with other members of staff. I have also recently achieved a Coaching and Mentoring certificate from York St John University after completing a 2 year course.

Coaching and supporting a new teacher also makes you critically reflect on your own practice, seeking new ways to demonstrate best practice. ITT students also often bring with them a wealth of new ideas and teaching techniques which help to continually improve even experienced teachers work.

What is the value of being a mentor when working with training teachers?

I learnt a great deal about the art of working with teaching colleagues to coach them through any worries or difficulties they may be facing, by instigating the opportunity to talk through issues and develop their own process of thought to find solutions. It is important not just to tell training teachers what to do, but to allow them time to reflect and think of their own solutions. Of course, sometimes it is suitable to provide more mentoring support and offer advice based on wider experiences and more in depth knowledge and expertise. I adapt each mentoring session to meet the needs of the training colleague.

What has your experience been like working with Hope Sentamu Learning Trust and York St John University when mentoring training teachers?

Mentoring within this partnership has been very rewarding. There is a really close and professional working relationship between colleagues and both mentors and training teachers feel fully supported. There are regular mentor meetings provided to offer advice and to keep colleagues up to date with any new guidance there may be. It is wonderful to be part of the shaping of early career teachers who are entering our profession and to feel as though I have contributed in a helpful and valuable way.

Great teaching changes lives.