

Frequently asked questions

- **How much time is spent in schools and how much at University?**

Our course usually starts during September and will be completed during July, you will be placed in schools each week from Monday to Thursday and spend Fridays at Bath Spa University on the Newton Park site. There will also be some planned short blocks of training arranged by TBMPTS across the year. School holidays and half term breaks may vary slightly as hosting schools are in both BANES and Somerset so academic calendars may not always coincide.

- **Is the course full time?**

The course is full time, we do not accept any part-time applications.

- **Does TBMPTS provide any additional training to that provided by the university?**

The Bath & Mendip Partnership School is committed to providing the very best training opportunities to trainees as possible. We provide additional training in a range of important areas such as SEND, Behaviour Management, Working with more able pupils, KS1 & 2 Phonics, Specific areas of the Numeracy curriculum, an Introduction to Autism, Humanities, Design & Technology, Mental Health & Nurture groups, P.E. Report Writing, English as an Additional Language(EAL), Job Application & Interview Protocols & First Aid. Many of the hosting schools open their planned INSET days to TBMPTS trainees in addition.

- **How many school placements will I experience across the academic year?**

We organise three different school placements across the academic year. The first and final placement will be in what we call 'the home school', this is because we wish to provide an opportunity for trainees to observe first-hand the starting point for learners at the beginning of the school year and then to return to the same group and see the progress made across the whole year. The second and third placement will be in different schools. We aim to provide experiences in both large urban primary schools as well as small rural schools.

- **Can I choose which Key Stage I focus my training on?**

To comply with OFSTED expectations we always provide experiences in KS1 & KS2 and where possible in the middle primary years, so that all our trainees are free to apply for a variety of jobs at the end of the PGCE course.

- **I'm interested in accessing a Special Educational Needs specialism, how is this organised at TBMPTS?**

The teaching school is based at Fosse Way Special School & holds an exceptional record of achievement in many areas of SEND. We also enjoy very good working relationships with a number of other special schools across BANES & Somerset. When trainees wish to develop a specialism in SEND we ensure at least one placement is spent in a Special school & that additional training units are opened to them during the PGCE course.

- **What kinds of schools will I be placed in?**

Every school we place our trainees in has a record of 'Good' or 'Outstanding' from OFSTED. The schools may vary in size from under 50 pupils on role to over 400 on role. Each school hosting a trainee has a trained and often very experienced 'mentor' who will be the trainee's key person within each school setting.

- **TBMPTS has relatively small numbers of trainees, how can I meet other SD trainees?**

Firstly you will find that your immediate group of peers become an exceptionally close group of friends and co learners. TBMPTS provide termly meetings just to 'catch up' with one another away from University & school placements. These meetings provide vital feedback for us as to how your training is progressing and allows us to prioritise the in house training offer we deliver. The advantage of attending Bath Spa University is that not only will you meet other School Direct trainees but you will probably meet those trainees that selected the more traditional route to obtaining their PGCE. TBMPTS School Direct staff have built very positive relationships with Bath Spa colleagues over the past few years, we also meet with other teaching school colleagues in the local area

- **How far am I likely to have to travel to my placement schools?**

Our hosting school are spread across a fairly wide geographical area, however when placing trainees we try to do so as sympathetically as possible and with their place of residence in mind. Whilst we will endeavour to limit the travelling time we are not able to guarantee that your journeys will be shorter than 20 minutes.

- **Can I choose my placement schools?**

We are unable to place our trainees in a school that they have existing links with, as we feel this can detract from the quality of the experience.

- **Can I apply if I am still completing my degree?**

Yes, applications are often made by those still studying for the degree, our offer of a place will be made with the condition that your final award is a minimum of 2:2.

- **What qualification will I leave the course with?**

We only offer PGCE (Post Graduate Certificates in Education) courses, incorporating QTS (Qualified Teacher Status) and Master level credits.

- **Should I encounter any difficulties during the course, who would help me TBMPTS or Bath Spa University?**

We enjoy a record of assisting trainees with a range of issues, from accessing their post graduate funding for PGCE training, to providing assistance with dyslexia difficulties & listening to individual requests for specific training opportunities. Trainee's first person to contact will be our School Direct Coordinator. More serious issues may require further support by way of additional financial advice/services or a professional councillor both of which we are able to access via Bath Spa University.