

ITT Case study

The change and fragility in leadership

How do we get more leaders involved in ITT?

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The Challenges

- Frequent leadership changes in schools impact on the consistency of approach and engagement of schools in ITT.
- ITT providers are not often informed about changes to school leadership teams which impact on ITT provision.
- Capacity of school leaders to focus on ITT – often teacher development is just one 'hat' worn by a school leader. Many smaller schools do not have the capacity to engage or provide mentors.
- Short-termism: school leaders are often focused on the issues in their schools 'in the moment' and immediate future
- Many leaders and Principals are not informed about the reform in ITT.

The Solution?

- To send out a form to each school on a yearly basis so changes in school leadership teams are kept as up to date as possible. Retain information in a central CRM system.
- For ITT providers to encourage a member of SLT in each school to become a 'champion for ITT' or teacher development.
- ITT providers to create a strategic working group amongst placement school leaders to share and find solutions to challenges.
- Provide opportunities for new leaders to support local ITT delivery – for example, leading training sessions and / or hosting ITaP.
- Marketing: webinars, brochures and newsletters keeping school leaders up to date about key news and updates in ITT provision.

Benefits?

- Leaders informed about ITT reform.
- More schools to offer placements and ITaP.
- Keep school leaders onboard and focused on recruitment through ITT.

The Challenges

Being a school leader is challenging. It is difficult to strike the balance between the short-term success and sustainability of your school, whilst also thinking more long-term about strategic decisions such as staff recruitment and retention. There is no doubt that supporting Initial Teacher Training can enrich and develop your existing staff body, as well as providing a talent pipeline to solve recruitment issues. How can leaders strike this balance effectively and work with ITT providers to support teacher training?

As an ITT provider, it can be difficult to keep up with changing leadership models across schools and MATs. A change in leadership, particularly where individuals have held the role of 'Professional Tutor' or 'Managing Mentor' can mean a change of approach from a school, and in many cases, ITT providers are left uninformed of such changes. The challenge goes both ways – ITT reform isn't widely known or understood by Principals and school leaders, and ITT providers have a wider responsibility to support an increasing awareness of the changes through reform.

For these leaders, capacity is often an issue. Often those overseeing teacher development in schools wear many 'hats' and ITT is just one of these. In large secondaries, a challenge exists with mentor capacity when a school hosts across providers and hosts many ECTs. In small primaries, capacity to engage can often be a challenge – hosting a placement to meet the recommendations of reform isn't always possible.

For ITT providers, the challenge is to keep abreast of changes in school leadership in their placement schools and wider school community, whilst also extolling the virtues of offering placements and ITaP opportunities.