






Case study: Flexible training routes in Initial Teacher Training

Saffron Walden County High School Background Saffron Walden County High School, part of Saffron Academy Trust, is located in Saffron Walden, Essex and educates pupils aged 11-18. Saffron County High School works with CTSN SCITT as one of its Lead Partners to deliver high-quality teacher training.

Saffron Walden County High School has worked alongside CTSN SCITT over the last 5 year to respond to the need for a more flexible teacher training route for potential applicants. Together, the part time teacher training route has been established and improved over the years.

 Challenges	 Solution	 Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Previously operated with only a full-time training route yet had several requests from potential trainee teachers who only wanted part time training and then subsequently part-time work as a teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Took part in the DfE’s flexible route pilot programme through CTSN SCITT- as a Lead School. ○ Learnt lessons on the need to think more carefully about the parameters around flexibility and curriculum sequencing. ○ Also learnt the need for a bespoke tutor who understood the flexible route’s requirements to support trainees and mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The small-scale pilot allowed us to learn valuable lessons before launching the part-time course more broadly. ○ We were able to work with CTSN SCITT to look at successes and areas of risk from both a provider, trainee, and school viewpoint before launching the programme formally.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Great teaching assistants embedded in the school who wanted to train to be teachers in a subject with no bursary funding and who needed to continue to earn while training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Settled on a part-time route with CTSN SCITT as the provider which offered the teacher training course over two years, with 2.5 days on the course each year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Saffron Walden County High School now has teaching assistants that work part time in school and then train with us as a trainee. This allows up to keep experienced support staff for



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decided on the subjects we would offer part-time in. This started off small and is now offered for most subjects alongside the full-time route. <i>The model is:</i> ○ Year 1 - 1 day core training alongside the full-time routes and 1.5 days in school. ○ Year 2 - 2 days in their placement school and 0.5 days working on their PGCE. ○ 1 placement in year 1 and second placement in year 2. ○ All core curriculum covered in year 1 - with the option to revisit this in year 2. ○ PGCE curriculum covered in year 2. ○ Working through the curriculum focus over a fortnight rather than through weekly curriculum topics. ○ Amended deadlines to ensure equitability of time to collect evidence for key reporting/assessment points. ○ Created a bespoke section to the handbook to support these trainees and their mentors navigate the curriculum and different deadlines. ○ Created a personal tutor who was familiar with the route differences to support these trainees and their mentors. 	<p>longer and grow our own teachers in subject areas we need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We now have a curriculum model that is equitable, clear to all and strong support mechanisms in place for trainees and mentors working on this route.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No obvious training routes for people wanting to train part time, despite the school having a well-established and effective part time working model for our teachers. We knew we could make part time work with our timetable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Created some flexibility for the part-time trainee to negotiate their days with their two placement schools, but clarity on the need for one of those days to be the core training day/PGCE day to ensure access to the full curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We now often have part-time trainees who go on to be recruited for part time teacher roles in our school or in our local schools. This works well for both the trainee and the school who



<p><i>when teachers were employed with us, but we could find a training route to suit this type of candidate, so fell at the first hurdle.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>As a school we were required to show our timetable model for each part-time trainee to ensure we have met CTSN's requirements.</i> ○ <i>It was easier to find a mentor for these trainees, as we could use part-time teachers who were in on the same days as the trainee. This meant we could use different staff to mentor than we had previously.</i> 	<p><i>may have a part time gap to fill in their timetable.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>We have been approached by several career changers who were looking for part-time teacher training routes to enable them to complete a handover in their current role.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Gave these potential candidates the ability to continue to work as a teaching assistant, be employed part time elsewhere or continue their studies whilst training to be a teacher.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Often these part time trainees bring a diverse and rich set of skills and experience which support them and others in their training.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>We have also been approached by several potential teaching candidates who wanted to train part time whilst completing their Masters/PHD studies.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>As we have been doing this for several years now, our data shows that our part-time trainees do well in terms of their final assessment and often end up working in one of their placement schools.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>We think the success of our part-time trainees are partly due to their ability to have more time between learning and implementing this in the classroom - part timers have more processing time.</i> ○ <i>We also think having a year in one school, even as a part timers, makes the trainee seem part of the school team and more likely a valued colleague the school may wish to employ.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>No clarity from ITT providers on how the curriculum led model would work on a part-time route. How would we ensure equity across all routes whilst offering a robust and integrated curriculum/experience for our part-time trainees?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Significant work was done alongside CTSN SCITT on the curriculum to map the weekly/fortnightly focus for the full time and part time routes, with different weekly/fortnightly plans for part timers. Bespoke part-time mentor notes were also created to ensure the curriculum was implemented consistently and fairly for our part time trainees.</i> ○ <i>We also offered bespoke training for part-time mentors to ensure they understood the different</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>We know have a consistent approach to this route which our school and other schools in our partnership are now familiar with and can signpost to candidates who can only train in this way. This ensures we are not losing good quality candidates.</i>



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assessment points and that they had realistic expectations for our part-time trainees who were not in the same place as the full timers.

- *Concern around how much flexibility there could be in this route to ensure this worked for the trainee, us as a school and for the provider. We didn't want the trainees to all be on such bespoke routes there would be no consistency.*

- *We worked with CTSN SCITT to create a part time handbook which was clear on where flexibility was possible for schools and where it was non-negotiable. This was key to ensure all part-timers were given the same entitlement and not asked to do too much in schools.*

- *A great partnership with CTSN SCITT which offer both flexibility for the candidate and the school, whilst ensuring a high-quality training programme.*

*For more information on this route – visit [Saffron Teaching School Hub's Train to Teach pages](#).
Contact us at tshubadmin@swchs.net to talk to an ITT specialist about implementing this route.*



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Part-time

In keeping with the thinking on flexible working, most of the CTSN SCITT training routes are available on a part-time basis, spread over two years (although for salaried options, this would also depend on the employing school).

Typically:

- In Year 1, Trainees will spend 1.5 days in school, and attend the core training on Thursdays (Primary) or Fridays (Secondary)
- In Year 2, Trainees will spend 2.5 days in school, with more occasional training as needed. The PGCE is taken in Year 2.

The part-time routes are designed to be flexible, built around each trainee's particular needs. In essence it would involve exactly the same course as the full-time options, but spread over twice the time.



Mentor meetings, the key focal point of the school based training, which happen every week for full-time trainees, will happen fortnightly for part-timers.



If the school placement for the full-time routes is for one term, then for part-timers it will be two, etc.



Salaried part-time trainees will be in their employing school throughout, except for the Summer term in Year 1, which will be in the contrasting school placement.