

Macmillan Academy

PEOPLE



Inspiring every student to succeed



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
RECRUITMENT (AND RETENTION)	7
EARLY CAREER FRAMEWORK (ECF)	9
EXPERT TEACHER PROGRAMME (ETP)	10
OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT (NPQS/MASTERS)	11
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	12
TALENT MANAGEMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING	13
SUPPORT STAFF	14
STAFF WELLBEING	15
HOW DO WE DO THIS?	15



INTRODUCTION

Members of staff are the foundation of the academy and they are our greatest asset. It is not possible to develop a great school without great staff. Recruiting, developing and retaining talented staff is fundamental to the ethos of the academy. At the core of our people strategy is a commitment to creating an evidence based professional development culture for teachers which we know will elevate the quality of teaching and learning and ultimately improve student outcomes.



RECRUITMENT (AND RETENTION)

At Macmillan we believe that it is part of our moral purpose to support trainee teachers to become the best possible teachers that they can be for the benefit of young people in the North East and beyond. To this end we take many more Initial Teacher Trainees (ITTs) than most secondary schools (between 30 – 40 ITTs per year) from a variety of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and training routes every year (across all subjects) and fully support them in their training. This support includes subject mentors who give at least one hour (and often much more) of dedicated time to the progress and development of the trainee each week, a professional mentor who delivers weekly bespoke training to the ITT cohort, observations, Quality Assurance (QA) of assessment documents and also additional weekly training sessions delivered by in-house experts to supplement the training offered by the HEIs/SCITTs.

We also deliver a successful School Direct ITT route into teaching as a Lead School. Our school direct provision incorporates 4 days a week at Macmillan Academy (observation/training and teaching experience) and 1 day a week at York Saint John University (academic studies). There are 3 placements involved in the PGCE year. Placement 1 – September to December at Macmillan Academy (host school), placement 2 – January to March (6 weeks) in a partner school, placement 3 – March to June at Macmillan Academy. To date all of our School Direct ITTs have successfully passed their PGCE training year and have moved onto positions as ECTs in local schools, more than 70% being employed by Macmillan Academy.

We believe by putting so much emphasis on the ITT year and supporting the trainees in the way that we do, we not only boost the recruitment and retention in our academy but also in schools in the local area. Our training school has demonstrated a considerable impact on recruitment and retention. As of February 2022, 32% of our teachers trained with us (39 out of 121 teachers). In addition, we have 22 former students on our staff body, 13 of whom are teachers.



EARLY CAREER FRAMEWORK (ECF)

As part of the Early Career Framework (ECF) pilot scheme in the academic year 2020 to 2021 we were able to gain valuable insight into the requirements of this support framework for early career teachers and familiarize ourselves with the various support packages on offer. This has enabled us to choose the most applicable provider for our staff and students, carefully considering the expertise of mentors and professional mentors in the academy as well as the demographic of our students.

Thanks to this we changed the provider for our ECTs in Year 1 (academic year 2021 to 2022) and they now follow the full support programme offered by Ambition Institute, supported by Mrs Jacky Glancey as professional mentor, who is highly-experienced and has an excellent track record in supporting teachers at the beginning of their career. We made this change as we feel that the Ambition programme allows more flexibility in its approach, takes into consideration the needs of students in our local area/demographic and also provides sufficient challenge for advanced ECTs and support for those who are finding the first year of teaching more challenging.

Our ECTs find the majority of the support provided by the Ambition programme beneficial to their progress and can put it into practice in their teaching. We have had mixed reviews of the face to face sessions (it is very difficult to retain and implement a whole day's worth of online training – shorter sessions would be better (and provide many less cover implications), sessions were too focused on primary colleagues/practice and more subject specific examples/models would be very useful) but the programme cycle and instructional coaching elements are highly thought of. We ensure that every ECT 1 teaches a maximum of 19 hours per week (often less), has a one hour scheduled mentor session every week, 6 developmental observations at least, and does not take on any additional responsibilities.

Our ECT mentors, on the other hand, are finding keeping up with the demands of the ECF very challenging. Understandably, we want our mentors to provide the best start to the careers of our ECTs, so these are often staff who teach 22 hours per week and have additional responsibilities. Juggling the mentor demands of the ECF with the everyday demands of their teaching roles is proving challenging and most are only managing to engage with between 50 and 75% of the ECF mentor training/support. We are however, not concerned about this level of engagement and are 100% confident that our ECT 1 cohort is receiving expert support and guidance for their mentors. The mentors are also conscious of the fact that the ECF cohort of Early Career Teachers did not have a full ITT year because of the pandemic, many in fact only taught a maximum of 10-12 hours per week before starting their ECT 1 year and additional bespoke support, guidance and coaching (delivered by both mentors and professional mentor) has been put into place to support progression and well-being.

Our ECT 2 teachers are still following the Teach First ECF support programme. Most have less than 21 hours per week (ECF guidelines) on their timetable, and engage in weekly rather than fortnightly mentor meetings. They have also 10 twilight sessions designed to support their practice and progress, which will run alongside the Teach First ECF programme. These are led by Mrs Amy Tumelty, Director of the Teaching School and will be centred around professional discussion and educational research. We decided to add these training opportunities to the ECT 2 calendar to support this cohort of promising teachers, who not only had a disrupted ITT year but also ECT 1 year. We will aim to plug any gaps in pedagogical knowledge and ensure that all Teaching Standards are secure, thus giving this cohort of Early Career Teachers the best start to their teaching career.

Our ECT 2 mentor are also struggling with the demands placed on mentors by the ECF (see comments for ECT 1 mentors) and are managing to engage with about 50% of the mentor programme. Once again, this is not of a concern as the support that they offer to their ECT 2 colleagues is of an excellent calibre and they go over and above to support them.

EXPERT TEACHER PROGRAMME (ETP)

Our Expert Teacher programme aims to support and challenge our teachers in the first 6 years of their teaching career to become expert practitioners. Our objective is to ensure that our early career teachers have access to bespoke training and opportunities to improve their classroom practice and a positive introduction to the career of teaching to ensure retention and progression. The programme, which is supported by our OPTIC teaching and learning model is as follows:

Year 1 – ECT 1 (Newly qualified teachers) – following the Early Career Framework support programme through Ambition Institute
Year 2 – ECT 2 – following the ECF support programme through Teach First
Year 3 – Expert Student Behaviours
Year 4 – Language and Literacy
Year 5 – Feedback and Assessment
Year 6 – Greater Depth Teaching

Each year of the programme includes bespoke small group training, opportunities for mentoring and instructional coaching, developmental observations and access to the latest educational research. We also provide colleagues who are involved in the ETP with opportunities to shadow more senior members of staff who work in areas of the academy that they are potentially interested in moving onto later in their careers e.g. HOD/HOY/SEN/T&L etc.

The impact of the programme can be seen when looking at retention figures. Over the last 5 years we have employed 18 NQTs, as far as we aware 16 are still in teaching and 12 are still here at the academy. This academic year we have 7 NQTs who are all doing well.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT (NPQS/MASTERS)

Working with our local Teaching School Hub we have been able to give our Heads of Year the opportunity to embark upon the new NPLBC, which will provide them with the opportunity to drive forward the behaviour and conduct of their year groups. We also have members of staff with key involvement in teaching and learning who are engaged with the NPQLT and also 5 staff who are completing legacy NPQSL and NPQML courses. The CEO of Endeavour Academies Trust (Mr Phil Latham) and Director of Training School (Mrs Amy Tumelty) are training with St John Vianney Teaching School Hub to deliver on the NPQH and NPQLTD respectively, this will provide further opportunities to enhance the provision for staff development within the academy and ensure that we remain current in the professional development we plan and deliver.

In addition, we have successfully used our apprenticeship levy to support masters level qualifications linked to leadership and instructional coaching. Thanks to this we now have a cohort of 15 instructional coaches and 15 coaches who have chosen to work with individual coaches to improve their teaching practice. This will no doubt prove to be invaluable PD and is given gravitas as sessions are built into our training and meetings calendar, to ensure success and commitment.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As well as the expert teacher programme and external opportunities, we run a comprehensive whole school CPD programme within the academy. There are 5 training days and weekly training slots. This training is linked to the OPTIC teaching and learning model, focusing on the underpinning elements of the model as well as the expert teacher behaviours. This is supplemented with training at departmental level on curriculum development and planning and pedagogical subject knowledge.

For support staff there are regular opportunities for whole staff training and support staff line managers organise bespoke training that is relevant for their teams. Examples of this can be seen when looking at learning support and intervention. In addition, support staff are encouraged to undertake training in any area they may be interested in, such as mentoring.



TALENT MANAGEMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

The academy has enhanced the Department for Education’s teacher development offer and teachers who stay at the academy for a period of time can experience significant professional development.



In addition to the development opportunities above, the academy identifies high potential members of staff and creates opportunities for them to help them to fulfil their potential. These professional development opportunities are bespoke to the member of staff concerned and could take the following form:

- Mentoring/coaching opportunities
- SLT secondments
- Individual funded projects (TLRs)
- Masters level qualification
- Specialist NPQs (leading behaviour, teaching and learning, teacher development)
- NPQSL/NPQH/NPQEL
- Work shadowing/experience in other settings, e.g. primary, business sector
- Leadership development programmes
- Invitations to attend national conferences.

SUPPORT STAFF

The academy has a high proportion of support staff, reflecting their crucial role in the organisation and the contribution that they can make to the quality of education our students receive.

All support staff receive a full induction programme when they start at the academy and all receive annual safeguarding training. Training and development of support staff is bespoke to their individual needs. A key feature of the academy’s support staff is the additional career development opportunities that many have received and the academy has been committed to internally promoting support staff for more specialist roles within the academy and trust. Over a period of time, support staff at the academy have had the opportunity to develop in the following roles:

- Personal Assistants to Executive Leaders
- Examination Officer
- Data Managers
- Human Resource Officer
- First Aid Practitioners
- Attendance Clerk
- Governance Professional
- Cover Manager
- Admissions Officer



STAFF WELLBEING

Staff wellbeing is very important to us at the academy. We are currently writing our wellbeing strategy. It will not be based on gimmicks but will be based on trying to provide the best working conditions for everybody, ensuring that there is clarity around academy values and our vision, reducing unnecessary work, trying to help everybody to work as smartly as possible as well as ensuring that there is clear communication and that the academy is a place where positive working relationships are formed and all staff feel valued. In addition, we will look at the government's workload reduction toolkit and the education staff wellbeing charter to see if this is something we want to sign up to.

HOW DO WE DO THIS?

- OPTIC (our teaching and learning strategy) is research led and is central to all that we do
- Departments have control over their own feedback policy
- There are a maximum of 3 data drops per year per year group. All data is used to inform intervention
- Deadlines are well publicised and there is annual calendar consultation
- High quality training and professional development opportunities. We have the Expert Teacher Programme and staff undertake professional qualifications such as the NPQs
- Collaborative working and planning is strongly encouraged
- Measured approach to monitoring and evaluation (lesson observations, department reviews, CRPs)
- Staff library with up-to-date resources
- There are staff buddies for new members of staff
- SLT open door policy at all times including urgent email for non-school days
- Reduced meeting times (one 10 minute staff briefing, one department meeting and one hour of staff training time per week). Meetings are developmental not administrative
- Opportunities for staff to get involved in extra-curricular activities such as: annual productions, sport and the Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Opportunities to lead international trips and visits
- Annual flu jabs for all staff
- Complimentary tea and coffee
- Referrals for professional counselling
- We will always try to accommodate part time working. Currently we have 125 members of staff working full time (84 teachers and 41 support staff) and 73 members of our staff work part time (36 teachers and 37 support staff)
- Childcare voucher scheme for those who have children in regular daycare
- We will always try to support staff with individual or family issues by helping to find external support or guidance where we can
- We will try to support staff to be able to attend special occasions or important family events

In addition, we will try to signpost external agencies/support to staff. Last year we trialled 2 initiatives:

- Welfare check ins
- Secret buddies

The main aim of participating in a "welfare check in" is to engage in a conversation about our own wellbeing at work. It is time allocated to consider such matters as how we may work differently (sadly not less), to help manage workloads and the huge amount of changes already experienced. The "check in" is not counselling, but an opportunity for us to review any difficulties that are causing significant discomfort and impacting on our work, and in turn wellbeing. Over 20 staff engaged in a check in last year.

Secret buddies took place throughout December. Staff who were involved staff who were paired with another member of staff who they needed to look out for, spoil with small (very low cost) gifts and/or acts of kindness throughout the month. This really helped to raise morale amongst staff and will definitely make a comeback this year!



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