

## **Primary school personal statement**

A continual thirst for knowledge and understanding of world history led me to complete an undergraduate honours degree in history. My desire to impart my knowledge and love of learning to children led to completion of the PGCE in Primary Education. My experience teaching across the curriculum in Key Stage 2 (KS2) has widened my understanding of progression in these subjects, and the importance of relational understanding to support children's future learning.

During my PGCE I taught a year four class for twelve weeks at St Anne's School and a year five class for six weeks at Newtown School. During my placements I worked collaboratively with KS2 colleagues in all areas of the curriculum. This included:

- planning for individual children based on their personal needs;
- effectively using resources;
- creating assessment opportunities that enhance future learning;
- ensuring adequate curriculum coverage for all pupils;
- the effective use of the teaching assistants;
- allowing for equal opportunities.

I plan for many exciting opportunities for the children to ensure they are stimulated and interested in what they are being taught. My PGCE placements have given me the opportunity to develop valuable experience, such as planning alone and team planning, split year group teaching and developing a wide range of assessment opportunities. I have gained skills in building effective and constructive relationships with children in difficult socio/economic conditions in an inner city situation. These involved using consistent behaviour management strategies.

My ethos for the classroom strongly encourages children to express their ideas and suggestions as I believe it is extremely important for them to have control over their learning. It is important to create an atmosphere which encourages children to ask questions and I believe children learn best through first-hand experiences and stimulating environments, including the appropriate use of the outside environment. I enjoyed Forest School training and look forward to using this in your school where I appreciate your holistic approach to education. Classes I have taught have produced displays and 'working walls' that are brightly coloured, durable, engaging and interactive, and a project linked to the Shark Trust was particularly inspiring. These provide an ideal opportunity for the collaboration and celebration of the children's work. I also display the children's targets, allowing them to be mindful of their goals and achievements, which I find helps them to celebrate success.

At the start of each topic, I ask open-ended questions to allow me to gauge what they already know, enabling me to plan the areas of learning to be developed.

As a reflective practitioner, I regularly evaluate lessons to analyse improvement, progress and achievement. Reflection on lesson plans and observations help to identify misconceptions and allow me to adapt my teaching strategies and plans for future lessons. Using the Assessment for Learning (AfL) cycle, I have become more aware of the importance of observation and the role it has in gaining greater understanding of children's learning and behaviour.

During lessons I ensure that my plans contain activities which cater for all learning styles. This includes making learning very visual for English as an Additional Language (EAL) children and allowing higher ability children to investigate topics in greater depth and with greater autonomy. I believe a cross-curricular approach can be extremely beneficial to pupils, in order to make their learning relevant and to formulate their own connections. In my experience, creating a 'working wall' where the pupils can have an active role in what is displayed has helped to consolidate their learning. Incorporating ICT into some lessons is also important in my view, for instance through use of the interactive white board, the internet, digital cameras and video recording. During my first placement I took part in an 'E-Safety' afternoon, teaching children how to be safe when using the internet and preparing them to enter today's technology fuelled world. I know I can offer these valuable learning experiences to the children of your school.

I have high and realistic expectations of every pupil, to enable them to reach their full potential and to behave in a suitable manner. This can be achieved by providing good quality first-hand experiences which are both stimulating and interesting. I have developed effective behaviour management

strategies, with positive results, during my teaching experience. It is with excellent behaviour in and out of the classroom and the development of strong interpersonal relationships that children are encouraged to reach their full potential.

I am committed to equal opportunities in my class and throughout the school environment. I plan my teaching to individuals' learning needs, taking into account special needs, cultural backgrounds and emotional considerations. My last teaching placement involved a class project on India, embracing the enrichment of a multicultural society.

Parental involvement is a key element in a child's learning, as both parent and teacher need to support the child's learning. I invite the parents into the classroom as much as possible as this allows the child to feel supported. I often write notes in homework diaries and include samples of children's work, as well as talking to parents in the playground just to check on progress.

Extracurricular activities are very important in all children's development. I coached the tag rugby and football team at St Anne's which involved the children having fun developing skills and working together. I would really like to continue running clubs in the future and I am flexible to meet the school's needs for extracurricular activities. I have many interests outside of the teaching profession. For example, I have a strong interest in all aspects of music. I have also travelled extensively through Asia and Australia, gaining an awareness and appreciation for many diverse cultures.

For me, school is not just about individual classes and teachers. To this end, I made it a priority to get involved with the school community whilst on both placements, helping to run afterschool events (such as World Book Day, school discos and dance club), as well as accompanying and having responsibility for children on school trips. I have also developed professional relationships through participating in staff meetings, parent's evenings and planning and assessment meetings. I believe that it is important for school staff to support each other and I am keen to share ideas, teaching resources and best practice with other staff members. I believe that this collaborative approach to work acts in the best interests of the children and school, promoting good teaching practices that impact positively on children's learning. I have a firm belief in fostering and maintaining strong home-school links, working with parents/guardians to encourage a holistic process of care and support for their children.

I would be an asset to your school, contributing greatly to its caring and community spirited ethos. As a highly motivated, skilled and enthusiastic individual, I feel that I would integrate well into your establishment and bring with me a positive attitude, new ideas and the enthusiasm and humour to benefit the children, staff and the wider community.