

As a PE teacher, creating a sense of excitement about sport is something that I am really passionate about. I believe that taking part in, and learning about, sport is crucial for young people as it builds a foundation for a future healthy lifestyle and a positive attitude to wider life and teamwork. I am aware that Country High School is a very caring, supportive and ordered environment, with high expectations of achievement and excellence from students and staff; this is an ethos which I completely agree with and strive for in my practice. My placement mentor commented that *"I create an atmosphere in which students feel they can evolve and where they feel at ease and that they can achieve, whatever their ability."* Your extensive grounds and the emphasis you place on the importance of physical education and extracurricular activities appeals to me very much and I would love the opportunity to start my career in teaching at Country High School.

I have undertaken two teaching placements in very different settings: a grammar school in rural Kent, with a similar catchment area to your own school, and a large comprehensive school in Brixton. This has provided me with an invaluable insight into different teaching styles and assessment strategies, tailored to pupils' differing learning needs and circumstances. It has also given me a solid understanding of the range of curriculum and student support issues faced by schools. I have an up-to-date knowledge of the National Curriculum for PE, and my PGCE included a good foundation, enabling me to understand the principles of teaching BTEC, GCSE and A level PE. During my PGCE I gained knowledge on a wide range of sports from gymnastics to table tennis. I received an overall teacher trainee grading of Outstanding. As an NQT I hope to have the opportunity to learn from more experienced colleagues in a large thriving PE department, such as your own, whilst also contributing to the team with new ideas, enthusiasm and commitment.

I know that your school offers an extensive range of extracurricular activities with the emphasis on encouraging students to find a healthy balance between academic study and physical recreational activity, and I would love the opportunity to contribute to this. I have played cricket at county level myself, undertaken a variety of voluntary sports team coaching activities and achieved coaching certificates in soccer and tennis, giving me the ability to contribute to a wide variety of clubs. In my final placement I was involved in coaching the Year 11 football team and continued with this after my placement came to an end. The team has recently participated in Kent under-18s and reached the semi-finals. My experience of coaching activities has enriched my knowledge of issues around motivation, designing skill acquisition activities, fitness training and preparation for competitions. I have seen how sports activities can increase a young person's confidence and improve their ability to deal with problem-solving and challenges in their day-to-day lives. I strive to be inclusive in my practice, and am aware that some students benefit greatly from non-competitive sports sessions. In my first placement I had the opportunity to introduce a weekly Zumba class. My mentor commented that this attracted a wonderfully diverse range of pupils, including some who had been previously quite unmotivated and inactive.

An enthusiastic tone can get you off to a good start and demonstrates passion for teaching your subject.

Tailor this first paragraph to the role and the school and use the knowledge gained from your research into the school to demonstrate that you are a good fit for them.

Give an overview of your subject knowledge range and gradings.

Demonstrate that you have researched their school and the relevant department – this shows that you are motivated to find out relevant information.

I understand the importance of using a range of tools and evidence, including performance data, to support, monitor, evaluate and improve student progress. Where possible, I like to give immediate feedback and allow my students to respond by correcting any misunderstandings. This approach has proven to be encouraging for my students so far.

I strive to create a constructive atmosphere by praising students while encouraging positive learning behaviours. I am aware of your school's good behaviour and discipline policy, the importance placed on early intervention, understanding underlying causes, and a consistent approach. On placement my classroom management technique was mentioned as '*a strength of my practice*' by my mentor. I also had the opportunity to be involved in an initiative to improve achievement and attendance through a recently developed reward and peer mentoring system. The results of this first year trial will be available in June.

Through my teaching placements, I have been able to teach, plan for and assess young people across the full secondary age and ability range and I have had the opportunity to work with several pupils with SEN. On my first placement I was asked to work with a small group of students who reported neuro atypical conditions and mental health wellbeing issues. I worked with them to set short-term learning goals and led short, daily, informal yoga and meditation sessions. Other staff commented that they had noticed improvements in the concentration levels of these pupils and a marked improvement in attendance.

On my second placement I requested, and was pleased to be given, responsibility for redesigning the PE virtual learning environment resources for the Year 10 and Year 11 students. This allowed me to use material from taught elements of my PGCE and my Bachelor's degree. The experience also helped me to better understand how to work with a range of learning technologies, how to design engaging evaluation activities, such as team dynamics' questionnaires, and how to construct training activities for members of staff. I notice that supporting the development of innovative learning resources is a requirement for this position and I believe that the training experience I have gained will enable me to contribute a strong knowledge of current educational technology to programmes of staff training in the school.

In closing, I very much look forward to having the opportunity to discuss with you how my experience and skills could make a positive contribution to your school. I am passionate about providing every child with the support, tools and capacity to make outstanding progress. I love the constant challenge of secondary school and I believe that my organised, clear thinking and calm-under-pressure approach would make me an asset to your institution where 'A healthy mind, in a healthy body' is the school motto.

It is a good idea to demonstrate an awareness of the school's policy on this topic.

Short quotes can be helpful to back up what you are saying about yourself.

Give specific examples of projects you have been involved in.

When describing examples, using the CAR technique can be helpful to structure your evidence: Context - Action - Result. The action is usually the methods you used and the result is any impact/progress your actions made, and emphasises achievement.

End on a positive note and, if possible, make reference back to the particular school you are applying to again.