Welcome to the PGCE Partnership Newsletter:

The class of 2014……

Congratulations to all trainees, teachers, support staff, pupils who have worked together in 2013-2014 in the University of York, Red Kite Alliance and Northern Lights Alliance to successfully train another generation of teachers.

Thank you to all of the 50 schools in the University of York Partnership, as well as the new school partners we have developed excellent relationships with via Red Kite and Northern Lights.

Trainees have made a wealth of excellent contributions to schools this year.

This edition of the newsletter showcases some of this excellent work with schools and external partners. Trainees demonstrate their talent, skill and passion for working with young people. Thank you and congratulations.

York Theatre Royal – working in partnership

During my first week of Professional Enrichment I shadowed the Creative Engagement Team at York Theatre Royal. The team work closely with local schools and young people to enrich their knowledge and passion for Drama. During the placement, I worked with children in educational and extra-curricular Drama workshops, including a ‘Hamlet’ workshop with a Year 3 class, ‘Ghost Stories’ workshops with Year 3 and 4 classes, and 8-11s and 16-19s Youth Theatre sessions. I observed, participated in and helped to deliver a range of Drama activities in these workshops which I will be able to use in my future teaching practice. These opportunities also enabled me to work alongside a range of other professionals, including theatre staff, school teachers and support staff. I also created resources for the Creative Engagement Team on Arthur Miller’s play ‘A View From The Bridge’ by reflecting on how an English teacher might approach teaching the text. This will help the team to create Education packs on the play for schools.

The placement greatly developed my subject knowledge of different Drama texts, terms and activities. I thoroughly enjoyed my placement at York Theatre Royal, and was made to feel very welcome by everyone there.

Joanne Day – PGCE English trainee

Whisby Nature Reserve

‘Steven there appears to be a large beetle crawling up my leg,’ stated one pupil quite matter-of-factly and there was indeed the granddaddy of all beetles patrolling his newly found viewpoint: ‘You’re supposed to catch them in the bug pot you know!’

Professional Enrichment was a brilliant opportunity to gain more experience in education, and for me it wasn’t just in the standard classroom setting. Despite just dedicating one week to my experience at Whisby Nature Reserve’s education centre I had an incredible time and gained newfound respect for the tireless work that charities put in to education.

During the week I was thrown in at the deep end; thankfully it wasn’t literally, for the pond dipping lake was far too full of wildlife for a casual swim, but by the end of the week I was running the entire day with pond dipping, ‘wild art’ and sweep netting all taking place. Seeing younger pupils in an outdoors environment hammered home the importance of what we’d already learnt in the course: the importance of clear instructions for behaviour management and by the end of the week I was able to get pupils to turn on a sixpence, whatever one of those is. Despite how much my behaviour management improved I’ll still never know how I made it through the week without a child submerging themselves in a lake.

Steven Sheppard – PGCE Maths trainee
**Malton Museum – collaborating with Malton School and Norton College**

The professional enrichment I undertook was aimed at introducing elements of local history into the new curriculum for 2014. Initially I worked alongside Malton School to assess which parts of local history could be implemented successfully into the curriculum. I then liaised with Malton Museum to establish whether they could enhance student learning by providing suitable artefacts, knowledge or learning spaces. I helped produce resources for KS3 students on Industrial History whereby they would be able to link local events with both national and international history, thus seeing how local events connect with wider history themes. I have forged excellent links with Malton Museum for Malton School and Norton College specifically. The museum will now be providing artefacts and knowledge for history lessons in both schools (and the wider primary school community) during 2014/15. This not only helps the schools enhance their delivery of History but also makes the museum more sustainable. I have also been fortunate enough to choose some artefacts which I believe will enhance student learning in both KS3 and KS4 and I have opened negotiations with a view to KS4 and KS5 students having the opportunity to undertake potential work experience sessions with the curators.

James Wigby Red Kite PGCE History trainee

**EAL – practical strategies**

The prospect of teaching EAL learners can be quite daunting for teachers, especially if students speak very little English and appear withdrawn. Providing alternative education can be challenging: How can these students contribute to a class discussion on villainy in Much Ado About Nothing? Will my lesson on bear-baiting in Elizabethan England now be appropriate...? But fear not. The sheer fact that they are in your classroom absorbing and listening is a great achievement in itself. What we can forget as educators is that being in school has already considerably improved the quality of life of some students. Undeniably, we do not have an easy job on our hands; however, the transition for some students into mainstream presents further difficulties. At the Ethnic Minority Achievement Team in Middlesbrough, I’ve had the opportunity to work with organisations that meet with new arrivals, arrange students’ integration into schools, teach basic English lessons prior to starting school and help families with organising uniforms and transport. Let’s not forget that these students’ needs venture further than academia. A smile in the corridor, asking how they are, helping with equipment, explaining classroom rules and routines, and showing genuine care for their wellbeing will go a long way. Make them feel part of the class and seat them centrally, ask them to hand out equipment and ensure that they achieve at least one thing in the lesson - no matter how small! This ‘behind-the-scenes’ work can be time-consuming; however, the main priority is to have the students ready to start school. Some students have not attended school in their native countries and are illiterate in their own language – they’ve never had to sit in a class and abide by rules and routines. Others have experienced traumatic things and still live in fear – school here is the only safe place they have known. Quite often families are experiencing financial difficulties or are struggling to fit into their new areas; it can be a complete culture shock for these students.

Hannah McHale PGCE English

**The One Hundred Minute Lesson**

**Lady Lumley’s School**

Before starting my second placement, I was terrified of two things: hundred-minute lessons and the mysterious Kagan, both of which were in place at my second placement school. My main reason for fearing the former was quite simply ‘How on Earth am I meant to keep a class of teenagers engaged in French for ONE HUNDRED MINUTES?!’ (Keeping a class of teenagers engaged can be challenging enough in 60-minute lessons!), whilst my fear of the latter was quite simply fear of the unknown. As luck would have it, Kagan, or co-operative learning, is very, very similar to how I learnt French and Spanish at school (obviously I learnt with a bit more rote learning than is currently du jour) and the activities are similar to the ones seen in our sessions at university, encouraging students to work together. By ensuring activities are engaging, the fear of the ‘hundred-minute-er’ was surpassed as students responded well and were engaged in what I had planned. Hallelujah! Classes seem more relaxed in hundred-minute lessons, with the pace being kept by the Kagan structures. I only hope I can survive my NQT year in a non-Kagan school that has sixty-minute lessons and that it’s not a cauchemar total!

Martin Heeley PGCE MFL trainee
Working with The Smallpeice Trust

In the first term, the Maths PGCE trainees were visited by the Smallpeice Trust. This trust aims to support STEM teaching in schools, particularly through the running of hands-on activity days and residential for pupils in years 6-12.

So of course we had to try one of these activities out! Our task was to first design, and then build a working model of a wind turbine in small groups. Motors and gears were provided, but the rest of the structure had to be created from rolled up paper, card, plastic, drawing pins, blutac, sellotape and many more materials. All items had an associated cost, leading to a competition for the most efficient use of resources. Some innovative designs were created (including a vertical suspended turbine and a self-rotating, wind-seeking turbine).

Then building began, with mixed results. Paper littered the floors. Depending on the height achieved by the turbine, different speed settings on a fan were used to test each model. Points were awarded for the biggest voltage produced as well as for innovation and cost effectiveness.

The day was an incredibly fun-filled competition, and provided all of us an insight into running our own STEM activity days.

Matthew Wray  PGCE Science trainee

Meet the Meerkat – Professional Enrichment at Flamingo Land

I spent both weeks of my Professional Enrichment with the education department of Flamingo Land, a theme park/zoo near Pickering. I was able to shadow a few guided tours of the zoo with some primary schools there on school trips. This then led to me and a few other PGCE science trainees leading an hour tour ourselves. It was great learning the names of the animals and anecdotes about them, and then being able to share them with pupils on our tour. The ten week-old tiger cubs were particular favourites.

When I wasn’t exploring the zoo, I was spending time creating resources for the education department to use with future school visits, or writing an article for the local newspaper about the meerkats. I also had the chance to help run a meet-a-creature session, whereby visitors to the zoo come to the education centre and get hands-on with some of the snakes, lizards and snails.

Finally, I attended the Festival of Ideas with CIRCLE, a collaboration between the University of York and Flamingo Land, promoting research and conservation to the public. It was a fantastic two weeks.

Matthew Wray  PGCE Science trainee
A particularly memorable experience from my main placement was being involved in the BBC School Report Day: a yearly live news event in March participated in by schools from across the UK. Pupils take on the role of journalists, writing and filming articles on local, national and international stories, which are then uploaded to a school webpage linked to by the BBC main site. In preparation for the day we chose twenty Y9 pupils who were given information about style, format, legal restrictions and so on. Beforehand, and on the day, these pupil-journalists largely took control: an IT suite was transformed into a “newsroom”, we had constant live-blogging, pupils interviewing head teachers and local celebrities, and a continual stream of content being researched, produced and edited to meet strict deadlines. Although it was a fast-paced, slightly frantic day, the pupils absolutely shone - a meaningful audience and the glamour of being associated with such a huge event inspired some fantastic independent work. It’s definitely something I’ll try to be involved in again next year at my new school, as it was a wonderful way to promote literacy, an awareness of current affairs and an interest in journalism.

Helena Patterson  PGCE
English trainee

EAL – teaching and learning
I decided to focus on EAL students for my Professional Enrichment as I knew that I would be teaching EAL students in my new job. It was an excellent opportunity to focus on a specific area of teaching and differentiation and I feel that I now have a solid bank of resources and strategies to support with teaching EAL. The biggest highlight for me was the opportunity to apply everything I have learnt to two intervention sessions working with a small group of EAL students. For these sessions I also created resources, again applying all the knowledge I had accumulated across the two weeks, and it was really rewarding to see the positive effect on progression that these resources and my teaching had on the students. I focused on key areas that they particularly struggle with (i.e plurals and prepositions) and the students were able, by the end of the session, to use both plurals and prepositions effectively in creating grammatically sound sentences. I also gained more of insight of the cultural and pastoral issues that the students face and how I can support them with this.

Eve Connollan PGCE English

Cologne in the Winter
When my first placement school organized a trip to Cologne, only 30 miles from where I lived most of my childhood, I cursed my luck that I wasn’t an MFL trainee. Louise Clarke had been happily packing for weeks and all I had to look forward to was a boring weekend. Well, can you believe it – tragically, the event organizer broke her ankle a week before the trip. Panic all around, we needed someone who knew Cologne and spoke German. Voila! We set off after school on a cold Thursday afternoon, accompanied by two lovely bus drivers who let me sit at the front after I bribed them with custard creams. The first hurdle appeared in the form of the highest tide for 60 years, so high that the ferry at Dover couldn’t dock and the car park was slowly flooding, to the horror of the students. Finally, we made it to Germany, where it emerged that the continent is bitterly cold and most pupils hadn’t brought coats. Nevertheless, after a trip round the famous chocolate museum we had 6 hours to look around the numerous Christmas markets. Three pupils got stuck on a Ferris wheel and we found the cathedral closed to visitors. At lunchtime on Saturday, tired, grumpy but full of chocolate, we were back in sunny Hull, where I’d just missed the train to York. Still, I got to stock up on lebkuchen.

Mathilde Hazenburg  PGCE
Science trainee
Mowbray School – Professional Enrichment Placement

For Professional Enrichment I went to a Special Educational Needs school in North Yorkshire. I spent time in both the Primary and Secondary school and thoroughly enjoyed myself.

I was inspired by the amount of whole school coordination that occurred on a daily basis, which involved all members of staff. Each morning there was a full staff briefing where all staff were given a timetable of any scheduled meetings and training, and staff would be able to share any concerns or strategies about the students. Whilst this briefing was of great importance, given the individualised behaviour and education plan for each student that had to be discussed, this experience has really highlighted the importance of sharing; something which I will now be keen to follow in my future career.

This placement also emphasised the importance and value in lessons of TAs. At this school, in an average class size of 8, there was a teacher and at least 2 TAs. They played a significant role in enforcing behaviour strategies and providing one to one assistance with certain students. It was interesting to observe how the TAs played an active role in lesson planning; they were consulted in assessing the progress made in prior lessons and suggesting where next to take the learning. This is something that I hope to replicate in my own lessons, especially where a TA is working specifically with one or two students on a regular basis.

Clare Howard Red Kite History trainee

"When am I ever going to use this Miss?" Cross curricular and functional activities and their place in a Mathematical curriculum

As a trainee Maths teacher I became bemused and frustrated at the apparent lack of connections students have between maths and real life and set myself a small challenge to see if I could try to overcome some of these issues with the classes I taught. As well as trying to integrate more "relevance" for my students in their usual lessons, I also taught some carefully selected stand-alone lessons on such things as Cryptography, Fibonacci, and 'Building a farm'. When planning these lessons and activities I wanted tasks which applied to real-life situations and the results were incredibly positive. During a cryptography lesson with my year 7s, students learnt about code-breaking during World War 2. When asked why mathematical skills came in useful in this profession, a rich discussion followed. The students even deciphered a genuine World War 2 message as a plenary. I typically did these lessons at the end of term and seeing the way in which the students eagerly entered the classroom, asking straight away what they would be learning that lesson, showed me that these topics deserve their place in any teachers repertoire. Their ability to engage and motivate the students and evoke a genuine passion for the subject suggests that the benefits of integrating these throughout the curriculum could be huge.

Rachel Bakes PGCE Maths trainee

The value of extra-curricular activities

Whilst all trainee teachers are encouraged to get involved in the wider life of the school, and participate in the extra-curricular activities, it was not until I had experienced this myself that the value of this became apparent. During main placement at Harrogate Grammar School I immersed myself in the extra-curricular activities both in and out of my department; one of the most rewarding experiences was my involvement in the charity stay awake with year 7 and 8. During the evening I helped to run the art project and film room, as well as taking responsibility for a group of pupils throughout the evening. This event enabled me to engage with some of the pupils within my classes, and appreciate what made them individuals outside of the classroom. The respect I gained from the pupils from being involved in this event was overwhelming, and there was a noticeable improvement in the rapport between me and the pupils within my lessons. The year 8 class I taught on placement was a challenging group, and I really valued this time to get to know more about these students, and engage with them on a different level out of an academic setting. After the success of this evening, there was a noticeable difference within my lessons, and having developed a rapport with some of the stronger characters within the class, I found the environment within the classroom became much more positive, turning the lessons into more enjoyable experiences. Without getting involved in extra-curricular activities and allowing the pupils to see a different side to my personality, I think it would have taken much longer to establish such a positive working atmosphere within the classroom.

Marie Whiles PGCE History
Whitby: cross-curricular collaboration English and History

The History and English PGCE cohorts visited Whitby in May. Unfortunately for anyone (there was only me) optimistic enough to opt for shorts, it was, in true Yorkshire style, cold and windy. This did not, however, detract from a very enjoyable and worthwhile experience. English presentations focused on literature while history groups looked at the fortunes of a local park, linked to wider social developments; the dissolution of the monasteries and the Penny Hedge myth.

Visiting Whitby was useful because it helped our thinking on the new History National Curriculum requirement to include an element of local history. Moreover, it reinforced to us all the benefits of school trips, despite the red tape that surrounds them. Even as adults, hearing about the problems faced by the abbey in the sixteenth century while looking at the same structure still standing today, added an extra level of intrigue and interest that would only be multiplied for students.

Certainly, activities such as this demonstrate the great variety provided by the PGCE outside teaching practice. As for our group, we were able to confirm that if you forget your photocopying, Whitby Library is very well equipped; it is only a shame that future CPD probably won’t feature fish and chips on the sea front.

Tom Knowles PGCE History trainee

A Level Politics and Twitter

Main Placement Fulford School

Doing a PGCE at York allowed me to pursue some somewhat off-the-wall ideas. One of my earliest ones was starting a Twitter account for my main placement school’s Politics department. This evolved into the idea of using ICT to connect with political figures, eventually leading me to organise a half hour long Q&A session between my Year 13 Politics class and American Congressman Mark Pocan, via the video-conferencing technology of Google Hangouts. From numerous emails to the Congressman’s scheduling staff, to finding out that Skype could not be used in the Congressman’s office, to realising on the morning of the video-conference that clocks in America had moved forwards to summer time ahead of the UK and frantically rescheduling, the whole process was very stressful! Yet the session itself was superb, with pupils being able to hear directly from someone who was such an integral part of what they were studying. Several pupils also expressed how the session motivated them to get engaged in politics and make a difference to people’s lives, as well as helping them to develop a greater understanding of the complexities of American Politics. It also reinforced my belief that ICT can be used to inspire learning.

Tom Wedge-Roberts PGCE History trainee

Historical Scholarship in the History Classroom

Engaging in, and critiquing historical scholarship and debate, is often believed to be a skill for A Level students. Unfortunately, because of these connotations, when pupils reach their A Level studies, these skills often add to the perceived jump between GCSE and A Level. Helen Snelson triggered the idea of using historical scholarship with KS3 pupils during university sessions, and whilst on main placement I decided to trial this with Year 9. Initially I designed lessons to address the Browning-Goldhagen debate within the topic of the Holocaust for a high ability year 9 class. These lessons focused on addressing the debate and historians’ conclusions, engaging with the case study used, and linking this to other first-hand accounts from participants in the Holocaust to reach their own conclusions to answer the lesson’s enquiry question. These lessons were such a success, I adapted them to deliver to lower ability sets, putting differentiation strategies in place to scaffold their entrance to academic debate of this calibre. Pupils of all abilities were able to access the learning and academic historiography surrounding the topic and draw some interesting and well-structured conclusions, analysing the evidence used within this debate, and bringing in their wider knowledge and historical skills. From this, pupils commented that they appreciated being exposed to academic writing of this calibre. I strongly believe that exposing pupils to historiography and academic writing within KS3 with enable them to make smooth transitions through school, and be better equipped for higher education.

Marie Whiles PGCE History
**Being Red Kite**

Being a trainee under Red Kite has been a positive and valuable part of the PGCE experience. Firstly, it has allowed trainees to be part of a very strong and supportive network of successful schools. This has meant that throughout the year, there has been a clear purpose and direction to the structure of the programme, the targets you were expected to meet and the help and resources that were always available to you should you need them.

**Fran Dolata Red Kite MFL trainee**

**MFL Show and Tell**

The MFL show and tell at Harrogate Grammar School was a great opportunity for trainees to not only come together to share ideas with one another, but also with fellow, experienced practitioners for the first time. The opportunity to present some of the ideas we had come across and used during our teaching placements created a sense not only of achievement and purpose for trainees, but also validation: we have successfully joined the teaching community. What’s more, we were able to speak to other teachers from schools across the country and future York PGCE trainees. It was reassuring to know that whether we have one or ten years’ experience, all teachers share the same challenges in the classroom!

I was delighted to meet a fellow Durham graduate who has also just finished his PGCE course. He had been to a previous Show and Tell hosted by Suzi and was so enthused by the day, had brought his friends to the Harrogate Show and Tell. I think he summed up the day quite aptly from a trainee’s perspective when he mentioned that it was nice to know that he wasn’t alone when embarking on his NQT year.

I thought the genius bar sessions (particularly the session I attended focused on encouraging speaking in the classroom) were a great idea to share outstanding practice. I have taken away many new ideas from this particular session and hope to use them in the future.

**Christina Browett PGCE Science trainee**

I would like to return next year: I consider the Show and Tell not only to be a great way to share ideas, but also to remain in contact with the individuals who have helped me to become the teacher that I am today!

**PGCE Science**

My time on the course has been excellent. I have learnt so much about teaching, students, and even myself. Having so many others on the course and mentors everywhere we went really helped to make me feel supported throughout all the ups and downs you go through as a trainee. The university sessions were great at highlighting the research into teaching whilst the schools based training provided our own context-based learning. Curriculum area sessions were great fun as we found some fantastic practicals and demonstrations that really get the students engaged and thinking about science. I spent my Professional Enrichment supporting sixth formers when making choices about university and writing UCAS applications. It helped me think about giving students a goal to work towards in lessons so that they give themselves the best chance possible. The key things I have learnt are: don't underestimate your own abilities even in difficult situations, keep up with paperwork, and don't assume anything! I would recommend anyone with a passion about learning and education to apply for a PGCE.

**Sam Thompson Red Kite History trainee**

Another positive part of being a trainee under Red Kite is that it has allowed trainees to have access to exactly the same level of contact and input from University of York as those doing the straight PGCE course. This has meant that Red Kite trainees are able to access the best from all areas; being able to gain the upmost experience and development opportunities from both University of York and the Red Kite Alliance combined. Having this kind of support structure is invaluable to a PGCE trainee and is of considerable benefit to your continuing development as a new teacher.

**Christina Browett PGCE Science trainee**
Creative spaces
Placement at Lady Lumley’s School

The PGCE is a time to take risks in lesson planning. It is important to continually challenge yourself throughout this year and taking risks is one way to do this. One of the ways that I have tried to do this is through incorporating the physical classroom into my lesson plans. When teaching my students about the bombing of Dresden during WW2, I wanted to make the situation more real to them, in order to help them better understand it. I decided to make the classroom into Dresden after it had been bombed, turning over tables and chairs and making the classroom into a "right mess," as described by one of my students. I tried this twice: the first time was not particularly successful, but gave me an opportunity to refine my approach for the second time. The second time was extremely effective. I combined the visual impact of the classroom with an emotive eye-witness account of the bombing, effectively engaging the students with the topic. I had also arranged the classroom so that students still had organised places to sit. I made clear the rules of the activity at the start of the lesson, placing an emphasis on the importance of calm behaviour due to the potentially dangerous nature of the arrangement of the furniture. The atmosphere of the classroom was fantastic and the students gained a lot from a memorable lesson.

Charlotte Messer PGCE History trainee

EAL in the classroom – first placement at Feversham College

During my first placement I had the privilege to work with a Spanish EAL student. Currently in the UK there are approximately 436,000 secondary school pupils whose first language is not English- a statistic which is constantly on the increase. Whilst on placement I was asked to write an article for the NALDIC quarterly on how I used the student’s first language to create a safe environment for the student to make progress in her second language, English. As a speaker of Spanish, I was fortunate enough to be able to make resources in Spanish and adapt my teaching to 'meet the needs of all students' to allow the student to progress in English but also my subject area, Science.

At times I found it difficult to make sure that all the resources for the EAL learner were accessible; however, as weeks progressed, I discovered what styles of learning suited the learner, allowing for me to focus further on resources linked to those styles. In particular, the use of visual aids was of great importance when supporting her, and she was able to associate these with her prior subject knowledge allowing for progress to be made. I discovered that for this student the most productive resource for me was the use of my Spanish speaking skills to make the student feel welcome and create the safe environment within which successful learning could be achieved. It also allowed me to make resources containing written Spanish to allow the student to access the work that the students were covering during the lessons.

Given that not every EAL student speaks Spanish, I still want to continue my development of teaching EAL learners, as I feel in a modern society we need to make it our aim as teachers to allow for them to receive a well-balanced education, to become educated members of society.

Charlotte Wood Northern Lights Chemistry Trainee

Working with the IOE on Holocaust Teaching and Learning

History remains a controversial and sensitive subject both to teach and to learn. As part of our PGCE training, the History cohort received a session delivered by the Institute of Education, from the University of London on the Holocaust. The topic remains the only statutory requirement on the revised National Curriculum and as such, it is paramount that young professionals are able to teach its content effectively and appropriately.

The session was a fantastic opportunity! Our guest speaker encouraged us to review the Holocaust through a historical, philosophical, and psychological lens. As a cohort, we were encouraged to discuss the potential challenges in defining and teaching the Holocaust, as well as tackling the pedagogical implications, such as how to deliver this topic to a range of ages and abilities. Moreover, we tackled the significance of issues that are overwhelmingly omitted from
History lessons, such as the chronological history of anti-Semitism; support was offered on ways to incorporate this within our teaching and allow our pupils to explore history fully. A controversial debate was also encouraged about the existing approaches to teaching the Holocaust – we were asked whether it is more appropriate to teach the horror of the ‘Final Solution’ through primary images or through individual stories. Valuable questions were raised during the session and each of us will benefit from this training within our own classrooms. It was an excellent opportunity to reflect on a highly relevant aspect of History with other developing professionals. As historians, it was also a chance to stretch our intellectual thinking and challenge ourselves!

Alexandra Barraclough PGCE History trainee

Learning Support at Archbishop Holgate School

I spent my fortnight of Professional Enrichment at Archbishop Holgate’s School in York, which is where I will be completing my NQT year in the mathematics department from September. I spent most of my time in the Learning Support Centre, working in small groups with pupils who struggle with Literacy and Numeracy. I was also lucky enough to go on a Year 9 Gifted and Talented “Maths Trail” around York. This allowed pupils to work in groups of five, following a trail around the city, answering maths-based questions on the various tourist attractions in York.

One example of a question is given below:

“There is a plaque by the stairs to Clifford’s Tower which mentions a passage from Isaiah. The chapter is given in Roman numerals; what number does this represent?”

Pupils were also asked to find the diameter and circumference of Clifford’s Tower using their estimation skills.

Overall this was a fantastic event, enjoyed by all pupils and staff, and I feel that it was a perfect G&T trip, allowing pupils to have a fun day out, whilst seeing the applications of maths in real life. I look forward to being involved in the trail again next year!

Leanne Scarborough PGCE Maths trainee

Earth Science Day
Or
How I Learned Everything I Know About Geography is Wrong

There have been a lot of good subject knowledge sessions this year, and in most of them you will clear up a few misconceptions you had about the science we teach. Earth science day was different. I’ve never realised that so much of what I know about a subject can be so wrong, so quickly. And it was fantastic. This has taught me two things that are vital for becoming a science teacher:

Number one: Check your facts – and I don’t mean just look in a revision guide. As I’ve found out this year, as often as not they’re awful.

Ask your colleagues, ask your fellow trainees, ask your tutors, read a textbook, check online (from a reputable source – the IOP is a goldmine). Try to read around the subject too, so you know why or how we know something – it helps in lessons when they’re asking awkward questions.

Number two: Use demos. And make them as amazing as possible – practicals can be hard work.

Demos are always a joy. Now I’m not saying don’t do a practical, but the pupils will enjoy a demo almost as much and it will get them thinking – when it’s not practical skills you’re trying to develop then the demo is the way forward. And there are some amazing demos you can do – have a look whilst you’re checking your facts in 1.

James Keegans PGCE Physics trainee

The French Revolution in French Cross Curricular Collaboration at Malton School

Together with a history trainee at my second placement school, I planned and delivered a mini-sequence of lessons for a top set Y8 group on the French Revolution. As this was a joint history and MFL venture, we had a variety of aims; from a historical perspective, pupils were to gain an overview of the causes and consequences of the revolution and an insight into one particular aspect (the terror). From a French perspective, pupils were to use their reading skills (with recognition of cognates etc) to allow them to understand complex French used for a real purpose.

In the first lesson, pupils carried out a "spot the difference" exercise, in French, to help them to guess the topic of the lesson. Images included
players singing the national anthem, he tricolore flag and a croissant. (The croissant was the odd one out, as it is neither French, nor was it invented during the revolution - unlike all the other images). Having discussed this, pupils carried out a vocab match up activity and song gap fill on the national anthem to deepen their knowledge of the causes and lasting consequences of the revolution.

The second lesson, on the terror, culminated in pupils doing a card sort, matching up the French and English for genuine accusations from the French revolution. Pupils then had to separate the cards into two lists: one list for those who were acquitted, and another for those who were guillotined. A panel of judges was selected, who passed judgement on the rest of the class (each pupil had one alleged crime to read out). However, as the panel of judges did not separate correctly (all but one of the crimes had resulted in decapitation), the history trainee and I deemed the panel to be traitors to the revolution, and thus were poisoned for their crimes (with very sour sweets).

The sequence of lessons motivated pupils greatly to learn more about French history and culture, and to use their knowledge of French to understand real language used for real purposes. It is a sequence that I plan to use again and build on in the future.

Adam Bridges PGCE MFL Trainee

Meade Hill School – Professional Enrichment Placement

I chose to complete the professional enrichment part of my PGCE at Meade Hill ESBD School in Manchester. The school is part of the Manchester Federation of EBSD Schools that provides education for children with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. I spent some time observing the class teachers in subjects such as English, Maths and Science and how they deal with the behaviour of the students whilst still delivering a successful lesson in which students are able to make progress. Many of the behaviour management techniques are similar to that of a mainstream school. The school has high expectations. Every day the pupils are given a task sheet to fill in for each lesson. The teacher awards points up to ten for how they behaved in the lesson. At the end of the week the points accumulated lead up to golden time, where the pupils get to choose what they do for Friday afternoon.

The fewer points one has the less time the pupils get. I learned a vast amount about diffusing different situations during my time at Meade Hill. All the staff at the school have to read a file on each pupil and be up to date with the disabilities, triggers and risk to the class and themselves. Therefore in a number of situations the teachers would use different techniques with different students on a vast scale. One particular student did not respond in a positive manner to anyone who tried to raise their voice, therefore the teacher would speak quietly to this boy in order to communicate. I think that one major point from the two weeks that I believe is vital is trying to get to know your students as well as possible in order to try and prepare yourself for many situations.

A really interesting aspect of Meade Hill was the transition phase to and from the school. There are many things in place to try and make these phases as smooth as possible. When arriving at Meade Hill, the pupils may be coming straight from primary school, a secondary school or a PRU. Therefore it is vital to ensure that the pupils are made to feel welcome straight away to get them settled. The pupils begin with half day visits before moving on to a lighter timetable. After a number of weeks, meetings and statement reviews the pupils are moved to full timetable. I was lucky to be able to observe this during my time at Meade Hill as two new year 7 boys were starting the school. The actions seemed to be working because the pupils appeared to be settling in to their new surroundings. I have been able to understand that the transition phase not only affects the pupils directly involved but also the teachers, the rest of the class and the other people in the school.

Connor Berry Red Kite History trainee
Physics Teacher – Horsforth School and Harrogate Grammar School Placements

It’s ten to nine, rain is pounding the walls as I stand waiting anxiously outside room H.01 in the Humanities building. My ragged box of textbooks and resources draws glances from teachers and students alike as they make their way through the busy corridor. Their looks all seem to say: “Is that guy really a teacher here?” I am about to teach my first Physics lesson. Eventually the bell sounds and the classroom is mine. My mentor arrives to offer some final words of advice and motivation. A crowd of Year 10 students quickly accumulates outside the door querying the need for a room change. I greet them at the door, struggle to introduce myself over the noise in the corridor and encourage them into the room. I pretend to look busy by reading my lesson plan (again) as they find their equipment and cautiously discuss their new teacher. Finally, I make my start…

The rest of the hour flies past with a plethora of activities. We describe the waves produced by a Slinky™; we draw diagrams, we research the wave equation. They ask questions, puzzle over problems and offer each other help. I circulate to check progress, give praise and target anyone slacking. Exhausted at the end, I dismiss them and my mentor smiles to let me know everything is alright.

It was a long way from outstanding, with plenty of things to work on, but I had loved every minute of it and knew that teaching was for me.

Christopher Mirfin
Red Kite Physics trainee

Ode to My PGCE
In the month of September, you’re not sure what to expect, Trying to gather documents that the admin accept. A couple of faces you’ll remember from interview day, Trying to anticipate if you’ll be sent the same way.

Two weeks in a primary, of which you’re dubious at first, The opposite of secondary feels like the worst. But once there, the magic light bulb goes ‘ding!’ And highlights the possibilities that teaching can bring.

Then comes October, gathered once again in lecture, All excited and ready for our next venture. The volume of paperwork has us absolutely frantic But the energy and passion is completely ecstatic.

For the words of the leader ring in your ears, “You will do the greatest profession for many years.” Providing education to enable equality and choice For those who have not yet found their voice.

So off we went, for four weeks in school, Unsure if we’ll be a hit or look like a fool. Itching to teach, yet observing lesson after lesson, Sat at the back feeling like a bit of a lemon.

Until the light bulb 'dinged' again, but met with confusion, I can't be learning - that must be an illusion! For the beauty of teaching, is you never stop learning, Leaving a desire for more ideas constantly burning.

Time to put it all into practice. Oh but what to do? Now it comes down to it, the spotlight is on you. You discuss with your mentor, who you may not yet trust, Yet for new ideas and possibilities, you share the same lust.

You finally settle in to routine, and start to believe, Yet in no time at all it is time to leave. Back to Uni with your assignment and first review, Ready to share what we’ve all been through.

Then one night in December, you receive the e-mail, The key to the school where you will pass or fail. The shock when you realize that your next quest Will send you 50 miles away from your address.

You fear for the worst, until you begin And this time its different, you’re thrown straight in Teaching half a timetable, pushing you to your limit, And the workload becomes to feel infinite.

Yet at the Hayfield there is nothing I would alter The constant support and jokes would never falter These people assured me that my decision was right They spurred me on with all their might.

Although in French, the Year 10’s struggled to speak, I’d look forward to seeing them every week. The pride I felt when I saw them progress Was greater than seeing a daughter in a prom dress.

Christopher Mirfin
Red Kite Physics trainee

PGCE Partnership Newsletter
The cheeky Year 8's kept my banter up to date. I’d always be up laughing until late. Although they were ‘difficult’ and had letters next to their names, I loved to unleash their enthusiasm when learning through games.

When the time came to leave, and I'd received the good news, Although I should have been happy, I felt only blues. As I drove out the car park, overcome with tears I couldn't believe fourteen weeks ago, I had only fears.

So as I begin my next journey, I am ever indebted To all who enabled me to achieve the unexpected. It's hard to believe that just ten months ago We had no idea of what we now know.

**Ellie Dawson PGCE MFL trainee**

**Duke of Edinburgh with cows**

Mud, sweat and tears. Well, maybe not tears, but certainly loads of the first two. That was my predominant experience of taking part in a Duke of Edinburgh’s expedition as a leader. As part of my professional enrichment, I ventured into deepest, darkest Yorkshire (well, some hills just outside of Harrogate) with twenty year 9s in tow in order to match our wits against the almost wilderness as they battled to achieve their Bronze qualification. And I loved every minute of it.

Started in 1956, the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award aims to “allow young people to reach their potential whatever their circumstances”. The Award comprises of 4 parts (Physical, Skill, Volunteering and Expedition). It is a fantastic way to inspire, motivate and challenge pupils to push themselves in new and exciting directions. If you are lucky enough to be offered the chance to take part in it in your school, seize it with both hands. Going out on an expedition with pupils really puts them in a whole different light, and I certainly found that as a trainee teacher, I learned a lot about learning relationships outside the classroom. On top of that, it’s fun.

If you do go on an expedition, be prepared to walk, be prepared to camp and be prepared to get rained on. (This is Britain, after all). And don’t be surprised if your pupils take the odd wrong turn or two; they usually find their way back on track again. Above all, be prepared to see a real change in your pupils by the end of day two, as even the most reticent of walkers muster their strength for the final push. Many can’t believe they’ve actually made it, and that victory moment is pretty amazing.

Oh, one more tip: if you need to walk through a cow field, do it slowly. They are watching you.

**Jane Murdoch PGCE English trainee**

**Roundhay School Professional Enrichment experiences:**

I completed professional enrichment at Roundhay School within the Inclusion department and in the Reception class at the primary campus. My enrichment included working with an EAL pupil from Latvia to improve her spoken English. I organised question and answer sessions to improve her conversation skills. I also attended physiotherapy sessions with TAs from the Care Team (TAs supporting wheelchair users). I was impressed to learn that the TAs conducted these sessions and this highlighted the extent of care that TAs provide for pupils under their care.

For the second week, I organised story time and read to the pupils at the end of the day. The stories were chosen due to pupil interest and these included the topics Superheroes and the Ancient Egyptians.

I also made resources to help pupils with storytelling (Language Communication). I made masks to help pupils retell the story of The Little Red Hen from memory. I also team taught the topic halving. We introduced this topic using cream crackers and explained that we both wanted equal amounts of crackers for it to be fair. The pupils really enjoyed this particularly as it meant we were all eating crackers during the lesson.

**Fatima Dadhiwala
Mathematics PGCE trainee**

PGCE Partnership Newsletter
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