

Phases of the Primary PGCE Course 2024-25

Throughout the course you will be gradually learning about, and building up your confidence in, a set of key strands:

Teacher as professional	This strand explores the breadth of the roles and responsibilities of a primary teacher, all within an asset-based approach to education. You will develop an understanding of how to take ownership of, and be proactive about, your professional development, your professional identity and your wellbeing. You will develop an understanding of how a teacher's role is underpinned by a sense of responsibility towards the social, emotional and intellectual wellbeing of children.
Teacher as thinker	This strand focuses on your growing knowledge as a teacher and how this knowledge develops through reflection and professional dialogue, engagement with theory, research and expertise in the field. You will develop an understanding of practice-based inquiry and research methodology in order to theorise your practice. You will explore what is known about how children learn, generally and in specific curriculum subjects, and how this affects your decisions as a teacher. Your goal will be to develop an informed philosophy by drawing on experience and expert thinking in the field and to maintain, and develop, your intellectual curiosity.
Subject knowledge for teaching	The key purposes of this strand are to understand and appreciate the nature of teaching and learning each subject, explore pedagogies specific to each subject, explore how knowledge in each subject is constructed and develop an understanding of conceptual progression within each subject. As you build your knowledge of each subject as a teacher, you will develop an informed confidence in the decisions you make at all stages of the planning, teaching, assessment cycle.
Pedagogies	This strand explores general pedagogies and core practices that all primary teachers should be familiar and confident with. You will gradually develop your confidence and competence in these pedagogies and practices across the primary age range and within a range of contexts.
Progressing learning for all	This strand focuses on your growing understanding of planning and assessment and how to ensure all children make progress and maximise their potential. You will develop your understanding of how lessons are structured, how to effectively (and, over time, efficiently) plan lessons and how to assess children's progress. You will develop your understanding of how teachers, and schools, gather and use data in a range of ways and what a teacher's responsibilities are in relation to this. You will explore potential reasons why children may not reach their potential, barriers to learning and issues related to special educational needs and disabilities, with a focus on inclusion.
Curriculum	This strand explores how curricula are designed and the factors that influence this. Throughout the year you will explore the National Curriculum. You will locate the curriculum within a broader historical, social and political context and consider how schools interpret and develop the curriculum.
Building positive relationships	Throughout the year you will explore educational relationships and how these impact on children's learning. These relationships include those with children, teachers and other colleagues, schools and their communities. You will consider different approaches to classroom management and explore ways of creating a positive learning environment and culture in your classroom. By the end of the year, you should feel confident to start your first ECT year and set up effective relationships with children.



Phase One (pre course): How are you preparing for your teacher education year?

Features of phase:

Before the course starts you are expected to have engaged with pre-course activities and have organised an experience in a primary school. A booklet of tasks has been designed to support the school experience.

During this phase you should focus on:

Reflecting on your educational aims, values and principles as you start the course.

Your key foci during Phase One will be:

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Teacher as professional	 considering how teachers convey a passion for teaching and learning. considering how teachers convey a respect for, and commitment to, children.
Teacher as thinker	 reflecting on experiences, and pre-course reading, to consider your personal philosophy of teaching and learning.
Subject knowledge for teaching	 identifying strengths and areas for development in your subject knowledge across the primary curriculum.
Pedagogies	 noticing the organisation of a classroom and teachers' routines, including how they establish new routines and practices with children.
Progressing learning for all	 reflecting on your own learning and any potential barriers to learning. considering the types of schools and communities you have experienced.
Curriculum	 becoming familiar with the primary National Curriculum.
Building positive relationships	 reflecting on your personal philosophies and preconceptions and educational background. understanding how teachers start the year with a new class.



Phase Two (start of course to end of October): In what ways can you develop an understanding of the specialised knowledge a teacher needs?

Features of phase:

During this phase you will gradually spend more time in school, but with regular time at university which provides you with space to reflect on, and make sense of, these experiences and plan for further development.

You will be focusing on getting to know your placement school and its community, and you will have a Personal Learning Record with a set of tasks that support you to learn more about the key foci of the phase. Your ITE Coordinator and mentor will support you to settle into your placement and organise teaching and professional development activities. In the first three school-based days, you will focus on developing your understanding of children as learners at the beginning of the teacher-child relationship and, in the following two weeks, you will visit a range of classes across the primary age range. By the end of the first half term, you will be planning a sequence of maths and English learning that you will teach in the next phase.

You will also be developing a research-informed understanding of educational issues and practices by reflecting on, and debating, experiences in school and expert knowledge in the field of education.

During this phase you will engage in 10 Immersive Practice Days which will shine a spotlight on specific aspects of teacher knowledge and skills that are fundamental to you developing into an effective, confident, competent and inclusive practitioner. Four of these days will be virtual days in which you will practise:

- Your use of voice and language
- Your use of body language
- Being aware of, and managing, your own behaviours
- Planning and delivering a good explanation

There will be a further six university-based Immersive Practice Days in which you will practise:

- Developing expert communication and teacher presence
- Eliciting prior knowledge
- How to model effectively
- Planning and asking higher order questions
- Establishing expectations and ground rules
- Managing low level disruption



Assignments:

Over this phase you will start working on an assignment that explores lesson planning in mathematics. You will submit your assignment at the start of Phase Three.

During this phase you should focus on:

- understanding teacher knowledge is something specific, new and different.
- practising foci from Immersive Practice Days with your class
- having a basic understanding of the planning, teaching, assessment cycle.
- having a developing understanding of how to build early relationships with children.
- raising questions about things that are interesting you about teaching and learning.

You will continue to progress by revisiting and building on the foci raised in the previous phase. Your new foci during Phase Two will be:

Teacher as	• reflecting on your personal philosophies and challenging your preconceptions.
professional	 being introduced to, and exploring the implications of, the University of Nottingham's aims and ethos on your professional development.
	 beginning to appreciate the breadth of the roles and responsibilities of a primary teacher.
	 beginning to understand the teachers' relationship to different layers of communities, contexts, policy, values and principles.
	 understanding that a teacher's practice is underpinned by a sense of responsibility towards the social, emotional and intellectual wellbeing of children, including safeguarding.
	 developing an understanding of the importance of young people having good mental health to support their learning
	 exploring strategies to support your wellbeing as a professional teacher
	 becoming part of wider professional associations, including teachers' unions and subject associations.
Teacher as	 being introduced to the theory-practice continuum and understanding what university/academic knowledge is going to
thinker	offer you through the year.
	 understanding there are different sources of knowledge about education, and how children learn and develop, and beginning to engage with research.
	 exploring models of teacher knowledge.
	 understanding what is meant by critical reflection, how you will reflect and why it is important to do so.
	 cultivating an openness to professional thinking, and a variety of perspectives.
	 understanding how to make informed and thoughtful judgements as a professional.
	 unearthing and challenging your preconceptions about how teachers know what to do and about what constitutes knowledge and learning in schools.



Subject	 appreciating the complexities of the breadth of the primary curriculum.
knowledge for	 developing an understanding of conceptual progression within a lesson.
teaching	 appreciating how different subjects work – ways of thinking and ways of knowing within the subject.
	 identifying strategies for developing, and sharing, subject knowledge in different curriculum areas.
	 developing an understanding of procedural knowledge in each subject.
Pedagogies	 observing experienced teachers' age-appropriate core practices and how these contribute to a positive learning environment.
	 understanding, and enacting, selected core practices such as delivering effective explanations to ensure all pupils can make progress.
	 recognising different lesson structures in different subjects and age groups.
	 recognising different lesson structures in different subjects and age groups. exploring different pedagogies for different subjects, appreciating and identifying signature, subject-specific pedagogies,
	structures and syntax - particularly in maths and English.
	 understanding the relationship between your subject knowledge for teaching and inquiry-based learning.
Progressing	 understanding the structure and components of a lesson and how it is planned.
learning for all	 being introduced to the planning-assessment cycle and the link between the two elements.
	 beginning to understand breadth and progression across age ranges to inform planning.
	 understanding principles of assessment and being introduced to some formative assessment strategies to inform planning.
	• finding out how experienced teachers recognise learning has taken place within a lesson for diverse groups of children.
	 beginning to understand how a school gathers, and uses, data about children's learning.
	 being introduced to the concept of social justice and appreciating that this is integral to the role of a teacher.
	 exploring some children's barriers to learning in an asset-based way.
	 beginning to understand principles of inclusion and how to cater for individual needs in order to develop a repertoire of
	strategies that support any child with a barrier to learning
	 enacting key communication practices such as use of voice and body language to support high expectations for all pupils.
Curriculum	 understanding progression across age groups within the primary range, including EYFS.
Building positive	 understanding how teachers initiate a relationship with a new class.
relationships	■ getting to know children as individuals.
	 enacting some key teaching practices such as establishing expectations to ensure all pupils are able to learn.
	 developing good working relationships with colleagues.
	 understanding the school community and exploring the relationship between a school and its community.
	 exploring school policies and the classroom routines and organisation that build a positive environment.
	 exploring how expectations of behaviour vary across the age ranges.



Phase Three (end of October to winter break): How can you become confident in planning, teaching and evaluating lessons?

Features of phase:

During this phase you will predominantly be in school with a block of time in university at the end of the phase.

With the class you are attached to, you will gradually plan and teach more lessons with increasing independence. By the end of the placement, you should have built up to teaching **40-50% of a timetable**, teaching a mix of individual lessons and sequences of lessons: a sequence of maths teaching one week and a sequence of English teaching another week. You will also teach some foundation subjects and, where possible, this will include PE (as a minimum observe PE teaching) and **one full day** of teaching towards the end of the placement.

You will be continuing to develop a research-informed understanding of educational issues and practices by reflecting on, and debating, experiences in school(s) and expert knowledge in the field of education.

You will continue to carry out tasks that enable you to address the key foci of the phase and visit other age groups, and your ITE Coordinator and mentor will support you to organise teaching and professional development activities.

You will spend one university-based Immersive Practice Day sharply focusing on inclusive pedagogical practices.

Assignments:

Over this phase you will be working on an academic presentation that explores approaches to formative assessment with a focus on reading. You will present this at the start of Phase Four.

- feeling more confident in the classroom, to varying degrees depending on the journey you are undertaking.
- planning, teaching and assessing learning with some understanding of children and their needs.
- taking full responsibility as co-teacher in your classroom.
- exploring different approaches to managing your workload.
- practising foci from Immersive Practice Day with your own class.



You will contin	ue to progress by revisiting, and building on, the foci raised in previous phases. Your new foci during Phase Three will be:
Teacher as professional	 evaluating your own practice and progress. understanding how to take ownership of your own learning. beginning to understand and question how teachers gather and use data. exploring different approaches to managing your workload.
Teacher as thinker	 reflecting on experiences in school. participating in professional dialogue (with teachers, tutors and peers) about developing practice. noticing, and questioning, emerging interests you have about teaching and learning. engaging with research, and professional literature, to begin to articulate your understanding of links between theory and practice.
Subject knowledge for teaching	 understanding how knowledge in a subject can be structured and the implications of decisions teachers make about how to structure knowledge in lessons and sequences of lessons. planning for conceptual, and procedural, progression within a subject, a lesson and across a sequence of lessons. developing an understanding of what is known about how children learn a particular subject and common misconceptions that children harbour.
Pedagogies	 developing your confidence with core practices with small groups and whole classes. using different lesson structures and evaluating their impact on learning in different subjects and age groups. broadening knowledge of subject specific pedagogies across the curriculum, including science and PE.
Progressing learning for all	 beginning to understand how to plan for a coherent sequence of learning. beginning to evaluate children's learning. understanding how to use the outcome of formative assessment strategies to inform next steps, both within a lesson and when planning future lessons. understanding, and questioning, how class data can inform a teacher's planning. beginning to understand the demands of planning for a full primary day. finding out how a school gathers information about individual children, drawing on different forms of data, and exploring some individual children's barriers to learning in an asset-based way. beginning to apply principles of inclusion in planning and teaching and understand how to plan for diverse groups of children, e.g. using the Universal Design for Learning approach
Curriculum	 familiarising yourself in more depth with curriculum expectations for your placement key stage and class.
Building positive relationships	 exploring behaviour for learning alongside different approaches to classroom management, including pre-emption and conflict resolution. promoting positive climates for learning.
· c.a.i.o.i.o.ii.po	 managing the behaviour of individual children and a whole class.



Phase Four (January to mid-February): How does your growing understanding of the complexities of education foster new perspectives?

Features of phase:

The focus of your whole experience in this phase is on developing professional identity, challenging and disrupting your thinking, and developing unique skills and knowledge that you can offer to an employing school. You will be developing a deeper understanding of educational issues and practices by reflecting on, and debating, experiences in school and expert knowledge in the field of education.

In this phase you will spend blocks of time in university as well as one week in an alternative setting and one week in an early years' placement.

During this phase you will also engage in three further school-based and one university-based Immersive Practice Days, during which you will practise:

- supporting the inclusion of pupils at different stages of language acquisition
- managing transitions effectively
- supporting children who face additional challenges
- facilitating meaningful classroom talk

Assignments:

At the start of this phase, you will have completed both the assignments for 'Learning and Teaching in Schools' module. During this phase you will be supported to plan an inquiry project that you will carry out in your next placement.

- drawing on a wide range of experiences and expert input to understand the role of the teacher, your personal philosophies about teaching and learning and the type of teacher you want to become.
- appreciating innovative and exciting approaches to education, enabling you to widen your repertoire of skills as a teacher, convey your passion for teaching and develop your professional identity.



You will contin	nue to progress by revisiting, and building on, the foci raised in previous phases. Your new foci during Phase Four will be:
Teacher as professional	 challenging, and unpicking, earlier assumptions and your personal philosophies in light of your developing professional identity. being challenged to think about the impact of policy on the education of the whole child. recognising the need to be proactive about your, and children's, wellbeing as part of your professional responsibility. beginning to understand your potential contribution to a school. building a repertoire of tools for professional development. developing an understanding of the mental health of children and exploring the impact of mental ill-health on learning. exploring the professional identity of a teacher and understanding the factors that influence this.
Teacher as thinker	 using theory to deconstruct, and reconstruct, practice. drawing on a range of sources to shape, and make sense of, experience. understanding what we mean by inquiry and ways to inquire. exploring themes of inquiry. developing research literacy. exploring critical incidents as a means of reflection. reconsidering models of teacher knowledge.
Subject knowledge for teaching	 understanding the structuring of knowledge and progression in a growing range of concepts across the curriculum to inform medium- and long-term planning. rearticulating your passion for teaching.
Pedagogies	 learning about additional pedagogies e.g. how to facilitate meaningful classroom talk (oracy) in order to broaden your repertoire of core practices as a teacher. learning about the pedagogies associated with alternative and early years' settings and considering their relevance to your own practice.
Progressing learning for all	 challenging assumptions about ability and adaptive strategies to ensure high expectations for all, including practising ways to support pupils at different stages of language acquisition understanding how barriers for learning are categorised and how this can both help and hinder children's progress. exploring potential and limitations of data. understanding summative assessment and how it is used. unearthing preconceived barriers to learning for multilingual (EAL) learners. being challenged to think about strategies to promote social justice through both teaching and engaging more broadly with the life of the school, within its community, and its wider curriculum.



Curriculum	 exploring how the curriculum is interpreted in a non-mainstream school setting. questioning some of the assumptions inherent in the curriculum based on your developing awareness of complex educational issues.
Building positive relationships	 understanding and critiquing approaches to behaviour management such as restorative justice and behaviourism. practising how to manage transitions effectively to ensure all pupils are able to learn practising how to support children who face additional challenges contributing to the wider school community. developing relationships in different settings.



Phase Five (mid-February to spring break): What does it mean to be an inclusive, effective, well-informed, beginning teacher?

Features of phase:

For the majority of this phase, you are in school full-time with some university-based days which continue to provide you with space to explore experiences, be introduced to new ideas and expertise in the field of education and prepare for further teaching.

The phase starts with you becoming familiar with a new school and comparing and contrasting this with your autumn term placement. Your ITE Coordinator and mentor will support you to settle into your new school and organise teaching and professional development activities.

In the first few days at your new school, you will be learning about the school and its children and engaging in small amounts of teaching. There will then there be a build-up of teaching to **60% of the timetable** by the Spring break.

You will spend one university-based Immersive Practice Day sharply focusing on outdoor pedagogies.

Assignments:

During this phase you will be developing your personal philosophy and theories about teaching and learning. During this period, you will also carry out your inquiry project.

- feeling competent and confident in the classroom in most contexts.
- planning, teaching and assessing learning with an understanding of the diverse needs of children in your class.
- clearly identifying the key areas of your practice that you wish to focus on in the final phases of the course.
- practising focus from the Immersive Practice Day with your own class.



You will continue	You will continue to progress by revisiting, and building on, the foci raised in previous phases. Your new foci during Phase Five will be:	
Teacher as professional	 maintaining high expectations for your continuing professional development. taking on full responsibility as a teacher for a sustained, specified, period. engaging in professional dialogue in order to take ownership of your professional development. deepening your understanding of how children's social and emotional wellbeing can impact learning. developing a greater awareness of your professional identity as a teacher and how this impacts your practice. developing a greater awareness of your own wellbeing and ways to manage your workload effectively. 	
Teacher as thinker	 using inquiry as a means of theorising practice. demonstrating an understanding of how research-informed thinking impacts upon your practice. 	
Subject knowledge for teaching	 applying an understanding of conceptual, and procedural, progression in order to meet the needs of all children. within a given subject, recognising how understanding is different to knowledge. 	
Pedagogies	 embedding varied and appropriate pedagogies into your practice, including outdoor pedagogies revisiting and utilising strategies for establishing routines and practices in different settings. continuing to develop core practices appropriate to different contexts. broadening knowledge of subject specific pedagogies across the whole curriculum. experimenting with different teaching approaches and learning from successes and failures. 	
Progressing learning for all	 becoming confident in using the planning and assessment cycle. transitioning to planning sequential learning within a holistic view of the curriculum. over time, developing effective systems of assessment to inform planning. promoting social justice through your teaching. 	
Curriculum	 exploring how the curriculum is interpreted in different school settings. developing an understanding of alternative curricula. developing an understanding of how we make teaching and learning relevant, interesting and exciting through the curriculum. 	
Building positive relationships	 building an effective relationship with a new class. understanding the wider role of the teacher within school, including working with parents. 	



Phase Six (spring break to end of course): How do you maximise your potential as an inclusive beginning teacher ready for your first teaching post?

Features of phase:

For the majority of this phase, you are in school full-time with a final week at university.

In this phase you will negotiate a more personalised timetable that responds to your individual needs identified from Phase Five. This timetable will have been drawn up in collaboration with your mentor and tutor and will include a six-week block where you will teach 80% of the timetable.

In the final week in university, you will reflect on your learning from the year and, through a variety of activities, ensure you are fully prepared for your ECT years.

In this phase you will engage with four further university-based Immersive Practice Days in which you will practise:

- managing challenging situations as an inclusive practitioner
- creating an inclusive learning environment
- adaptive pedagogies
- communicating with parents and carers

Assignments:

You will submit your inquiry project assignment.

- feeling increasingly competent and confident in the classroom in most contexts.
- planning, teaching and assessing learning with an understanding of all children and their needs.
- drawing on a wide range of experiences and expert input to further understand the role of the teacher, your personal philosophies about teaching and learning and the type of teacher you want to become.
- practising foci from Immersive Practice Days with your own class.
- continuing to appreciate and practise innovative and exciting approaches to education, enabling you to widen your repertoire of skills
 as a teacher, convey your passion for teaching and develop your professional identity.
- clearly identifying the key areas of your practice that you wish to focus on in your transition to your first ECT year.



You will contin	ue to progress by revisiting, and building on, the foci raised in previous phases. Your new foci during Phase Six will be:
Teacher as professional	 revisiting your personal philosophy of teaching and learning. understanding how to effectively manage your workload. taking responsibility for your continued professional development beyond your ITE year. building a wider repertoire of tools for professional development. reflecting on how your professional identity has developed over the ITE year and how you now see and describe yourself as a teacher.
Teacher as thinker	 having the confidence to critically engage with theoretical perspectives to inform your practice to impact on children's learning and your own professional development. developing confidence to make an informed contribution to thinking in school. using theory to deconstruct and reconstruct practice. demonstrating an understanding of how research-informed thinking impacts upon your practice.
Subject knowledge for teaching	 continuing to explore the relationship between knowledge and understanding. recognising strengths and weaknesses within, and across, specific subject areas to inform transition to your first ECT year.
Pedagogies	 identifying, and developing, core practices that still need consolidating. identifying opportunities for developing pedagogical confidence and knowledge in specific areas of the curriculum. continuing to challenge yourself by taking risks with different approaches.
Progressing learning for all	 contributing to the school's knowledge of its children. developing a greater awareness of resources and support available to teachers to ensure that all children progress. being confident in using the planning and assessment cycle for a range of ages and purposes. developing your understanding of planning, assessment and approaches to teaching based on an analysis of your professional needs and interests.
Curriculum	 considering your potential future role as a subject leader for a curriculum area. understanding how you can contribute to, and influence, thinking about curriculum design at a range of levels.
Building positive relationships	 reflecting on the relationships you have built over the year and identifying how you will develop new relationships in September based on the learning from these experiences. adopting inclusive practices to manage challenging situations. practising communication with parents and carers.
	 exploring scenarios of situations and identifying the learning from your ITE year that you can use to approach them.



Phase Seven (beyond the course): How do you sustain your professional development, and passion for inclusive teaching, through the next stage of your career and beyond?

Features of phase:

You will be preparing for your first teaching appointment.

You should be considering how to develop professionally through engaging with communities of practice. For example, this might be through joining subject associations, maintaining links with the University of Nottingham or planning to undertake further study.

- transitioning successfully to your first ECT year.
- becoming part of a range of communities of practice as you continue in your teaching career.



You will continue to progress by revisiting, and building on, the foci raised in previous phases. Your new foci during Phase Seven will be:	
Teacher as professional	 developing professional, and research, networks and communities to engage with a range of continuing professional development opportunities. taking responsibility for ensuring that your practice reflects your passion for teaching and your desire to support children in developing the qualities, skills and dispositions necessary in a fast-changing world.
Teacher as thinker	 being able to critically reflect on your own practice, and that of others, and become a part of a collaborative community of inquiry. continuing to engage with further study.
Subject knowledge for teaching	 understanding the role of subject knowledge associations and the university as a resource for continuing professional development throughout your career.
Pedagogies	 looking ahead to your new school, identifying its unique features and the implications for pedagogy and your continuing professional development. identifying your pedagogical strengths and what you can offer colleagues. being able to critically engage with, and respond to, the impact of policy initiatives on pedagogy, maintaining a sense of agency and your own professional philosophy of teaching and learning.
Progressing learning for all	 refining your own, efficient, systems of planning and assessment that will enable you to be ready for your new school.
Curriculum	 continuing to engage with factors that influence curriculum design and change.
Building positive relationships	 understanding your new school so that you can develop positive relationships. making a positive start as an ECT. building relationships with each successive group of children.