



Initial Teacher Training

With Lead Partner:
Learners First
Schools Partnership

2025-2026

A Teaching
Career Starts
Here!

Learners First Schools Partnership

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Teaching



Every Lesson Shapes a Life

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Learners First
Schools Partnership

Connecting People, Promoting Excellence

Train to Teach with Learners First

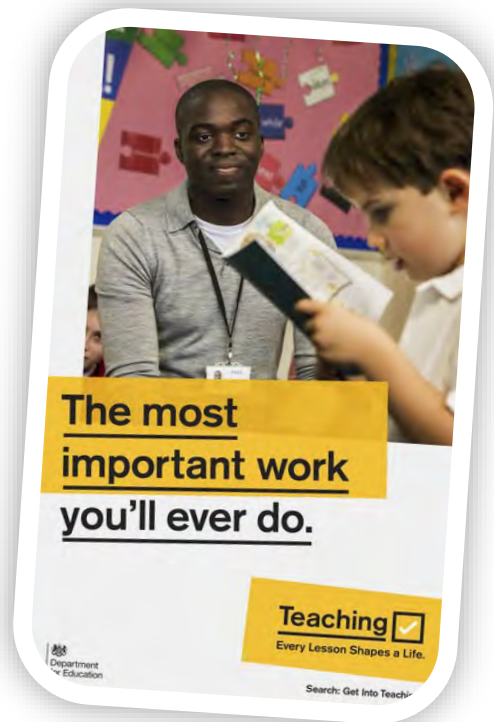
Teaching is a hugely fulfilling career and Learners First has an amazing track record of recruiting, developing and employing high quality trainee teachers across South Yorkshire and the East Midlands. If you are looking for an exciting, high quality and rewarding school-based training programme and like the idea of working alongside qualified teachers and leaders on a daily basis as you train to become a qualified teacher, Learners First has the programme for you!

Our School based Initial Teacher Training (ITT) programmes offer trainees the opportunity to gain both Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) which is University accredited.

As a trainee you could be eligible for a bursary or there may be opportunities for you to earn an income as you train through our apprenticeship routes.* Across our partnership we offer teacher training opportunities in Early Years, and Primary schools and settings. So, irrespective of the phase of education you wish to teach and whether you are looking to train in a large school or a smaller school, a more rural setting or in an urban context, earn while you learn or receive a training bursary, Learners First can help you on your journey to becoming a confident, rounded and inspirational qualified teacher.

You could be on your way to an exciting career in teaching sooner than you think – we recruit the next generation of outstanding trainees between October and July each year for training programmes commencing in September and teacher apprentice routes that commence 1st July. However, due to high demand, early applications are advised. If you have the drive, passion and commitment, we have the programme for you. Register your interest by emailing the Learners First School Direct ITT team at: mroddison@learnersfirst.org

*For candidates with an employing school.



“Teaching is regarded as a positive, meaningful and recognised profession; helping children to gain the skills and confidence needed for their lives.”

(Institute for Employment Studies)

What do the training routes look like?

Learners First works as a Lead Partner for Initial Teacher Training (ITT) which gives trainees the opportunity to work alongside current teachers and leaders to gain valuable first-hand experience, knowledge and skills as they work towards becoming a qualified teacher. It is underpinned by the same academic rigour as university led courses and Learners First trainees have the option to study for a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) as well as gaining Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). This fantastic opportunity allows trainees, from day one, to be immersed in current classroom practice, have access to personalised mentor support and engage in wider aspects of school life as well as benefitting from a robust professional studies programme. The success rates and enhanced employment prospects associated with Learners First is a firm favourite amongst trainees and schools alike.

Primary postgraduate Teaching Apprenticeships are a nationally-recognised, work-based route into teaching. In addition to working towards Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) on successful completion of the course, apprentices will also complete an end point assessment (EPA) to consolidate learning from initial teacher training. Apprentices training with Learners First have the advantage of studying for a PGCE alongside working towards Qualified Teacher Status. There are no tuition fees to pay by trainees following this route.

*candidates interested in this route should already have an employing school to sponsor their apprenticeship position.

*“Learners First offers bespoke training with support from highly professional and experienced tutors working within and on behalf of schools”
Headteacher facilitator.*




Training Route Options

Learners First Schools Partnership offer a variety of school based routes into teaching. Each route is designed to help trainees to gain an understanding of school life whilst training in a fully supported environment. By the end of each route trainees will be fully prepared to go into the world of teaching by gaining qualified teacher status (QTS). Some routes also offer the opportunity to study for a PGCE qualification alongside.

The minimum entry requirements into Initial Teacher Training, set by the DfE, requires candidates for all routes to have, or be working towards the following:

- First honours degree at 2:2 or above (degree for AO Route)
- GCSE Grade 4/C (or equivalent) or above in English & Maths (including Science for primary applicants)

NB: To be eligible for Assessment Only route & Teacher Apprenticeships candidates must already hold all of the above, or, for Teacher Apprenticeship, be able to demonstrate the confirmed degree classification if award is pending.



“Data analysis suggests that school-led teacher training routes are associated with an increased probability of achieving QTS and securing a teaching post when factors such as subject specialism, prior attainment and demographic details of trainees are taken into account.”

Initial Teacher Training Statistics,
Department for Education, Published July 2016

Primary QTS with PGCE (working with Learners First Schools Partnership as the Lead Partner)

This is available to all high quality graduates who wish to undertake a school based training route. Trainees are immersed in school life, and over time and with support, are expected to have progressive teaching commitment throughout the programme with a carefully designed training plan. Tuition fees for this route are payable by the trainee and, depending on the subject area, chosen phase and degree classification of the trainee, bursaries and other financial support may be available.

*Please [click here](#) to see the bursary options for 2025-2026.

Postgraduate Teaching Apprenticeship (Primary) QTS with PGCE

This route is very similar to the training route option, however, the expected teaching commitment is much more intense from an earlier stage in the programme. Although the teaching commitment would once again be progressive, it is higher than that of a training route trainee, and could be up to 80% of a teaching timetable.

Teacher Apprentices therefore need to be in a position to be able to demonstrate their ability to access and engage with this level of commitment. To gain QTS with PGCE, apprentices will need to meet the apprenticeship standard, the teacher standards and pass an end point assessment.

Apprentices on this route will receive a salary (paid at unqualified teachers 1 scale) and the school where the apprentice is placed are responsible for meeting this salary. If eligible, the employing school will be able to meet some, or all, the tuition fee through the use of the apprenticeship levy. As paid members of staff, teacher apprentices would be subject to all school HR policies and procedures.



Am I Eligible to Apply?

Funding & Finance

School based training is a popular and competitive route of teacher training and aims to attract the highest quality and calibre trainees. In order to apply, all applicants must have:

- An undergraduate degree or a recognised equivalent qualification at 2:2 or above (degree for AO)
- GCSE grade 4 (or Grade C) or above in English and Mathematics (plus Science for applications to primary programmes)
- And, importantly, a passion for teaching children and young people!

Although not essential, classroom experience and/or some experience of working with children and young people (in either a voluntary or paid capacity) can often be beneficial.

If you would like any support to gain some school-based experience, please contact Learners First as we may be able to help broker and facilitate opportunities to undertake voluntary work placements across the partnership.

There is a wide range of generous funding opportunities available to support trainees during their teacher training. Once qualified, there are competitive starting salaries and excellent opportunities for career progression and pay rises.

Trainees following the Teaching Apprenticeship routes will receive a monthly salary, paid at Unqualified Teacher scale, from the school in which they are placed. Trainees will be classified as a member of staff in that school. As a salaried trainee, bursaries are not available.

For more detailed information on the national bursaries and scholarships available please visit the funding pages of the Department for Education (DfE) website: <https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/funding-and-salary>



How are School Based Lead Provider Training Courses Structured?

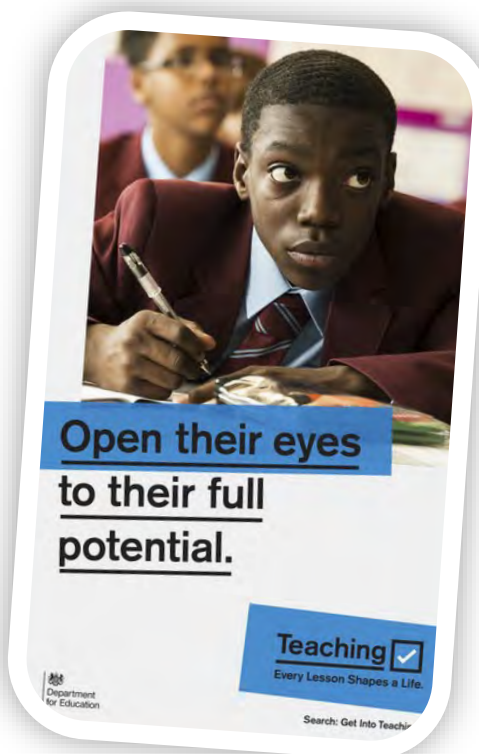
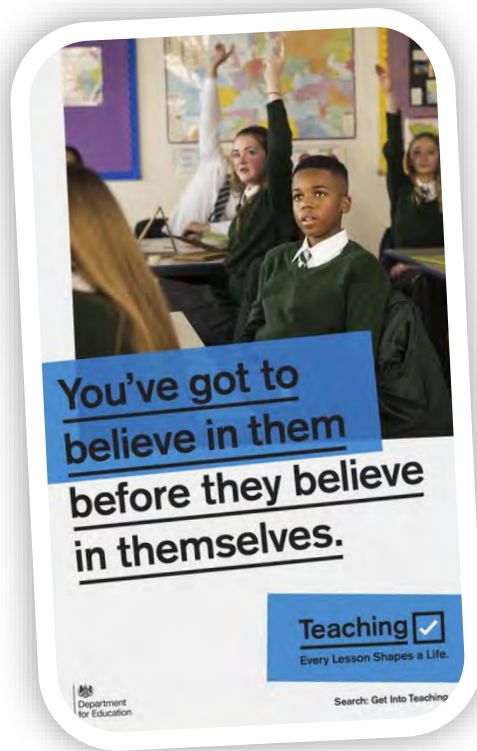
On all School Based training programmes (salaried and training routes), trainees spend the vast majority of time in their placement schools learning and working alongside experienced teachers and leaders and being fully immersed in school life. To complement this school-based experience and to provide a well-rounded training experience, all trainees follow a weekly professional development programme, based around the ITT Core Content Curriculum. This incorporates high quality training led by headteachers, lead practitioners and experienced members across the education community and includes practical teaching ideas, examples of research and examples of good practice as well as theory and academic inputs led by HEI colleagues. Through this training and development, trainees get the opportunity to see and experience other school environments, extend their knowledge and expertise of teaching strategies, and network with other School based trainees and teachers.

"The Learners First training days have been very informative and useful in terms of innovative teaching ideas and classroom resources. The experience I have had during my teacher training year has prepared me well for my ECT year"

Primary ITT Trainee

During the programmes, all trainees experience teaching in at least two placement schools. School Direct and teaching Apprenticeships are therefore a popular choice for those who like the idea of a more 'hands on' approach and for those who hope to secure a teaching job in the network of schools where they train.

"My school has been amazing throughout my ITT year. I have had no end of support from my mentor and fellow colleagues. The department has made my year enjoyable and as stress free as possible!"



What Can Learners First Offer?

A Comprehensive Training Programme and Excellent School Placement Experiences

Learners First is an established accredited provider of School Based teacher training programmes and offers high quality training in early years, and primary school settings. The programmes provide opportunities to 'learn on the job' alongside outstanding and experienced school leaders. Through our extensive partnership we have access to a wide range of schools in which trainees can be placed covering all phases and contexts across the region. All placement schools are required to adhere to rigorous quality assurance processes to ensure trainees are well supported during their placement and Learners First works closely with both trainees and schools to accommodate, as far as possible, any placement preferences.

"I have definitely learnt the most from my placement school. The experience I have had has been invaluable and without such an amazing placement I would not have been successful on the course. The support from my School Based Mentor could not have been better and I cannot thank her enough!" Primary ITT Trainee

A Strong Track Record of Trainee Success & Employment

Learners First has an incredible track record of recruiting, supporting and developing high quality trainee teachers. Feedback from trainees, mentors and headteachers is extremely positive and our success rates are excellent; on average, trainees who complete the Learners First programmes pass with 98% being judged to have met the teacher standards at the required level or at a deeper level. The employment rate is also very high for our trainees with an average of 96% securing roles as 'Early Career Teachers' (ECT) before the end of their ITT year.

"We have employed one ITT student and are looking to employ two more this year. The procedure that the students must go through before actually being offered places on this course ensure that the standard is high..." Primary Headteacher

Support, Professional Challenge and Career Progression Opportunities

Trainees are supported every step of the way with Learners First through our dedicated and experienced team of professionals who oversee the design and delivery of our programmes, the quality assurance of the provision and ensure the highest levels of in-school support. Through our professional networks and the wider Learners First Leadership Curriculum, employment, career progression and professional development opportunities are plentiful for trainees. Alongside a comprehensive menu of 'Early Career Professional Development' opportunities, Learners First works in partnership with Teaching School Hubs across the region to deliver a wide range of opportunities rooted in the Early Career framework and with accredited National Professional Qualification Delivery Partners.



How to Apply

The application process can be categorised into four key stages:

Stage 1: Application

All Initial Teacher Training applications should be made via the DfE APPLY website [here](#). Applicants will have the option to select a provider and 'Learners First'* will be one of the options available. Once submitted, Learners First will receive and assess the application.

**NB Please note that when choosing a location, applications may not be for the actual school, but for the surrounding geographical partnership schools also.*

Stage 2: Invitation to Interview

If the application successfully passes the first assessment stage, Learners First will contact the applicant and issue an invitation to interview. The interview process will be in line with the accredited HEI Provider and could be online or face to face or a hybrid approach. Applicants should be committed to a 2-2.5 hour time slot.

Stage 3: Decision

Following the interview, applicants will receive written correspondence from Learners First informing them of the outcome. This will then be followed up with a further communication via the DfE APPLY system.

Stage 4: Responding to Offers

Applicants offered a place on the Learners First programme, will need to respond (accept or reject the offer) through APPLY. Those accepting the offer will be sent further correspondence from Learners First including details of the programme, pre-course sessions and school placements.

When to Apply

The application window opens in October each year for programmes beginning the following September. Applications can be accepted at any point during the academic year, however, based on previous cohorts, there is a high demand for places with Learners First so early applications are strongly advised.

*NB. Teacher Apprenticeship applications will typically close at the end of May.

All applications should be made via the APPLY website which can be accessed via: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-teacher-training> If you need support or have any questions about making an application, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Learners First team.

Some Useful Links

- DfE Get into Teaching: www.education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching
- DfE Funding and Finance: <https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/funding-and-salary>
- DfE Subject Knowledge Enhancement: <https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/explore-my-options/teacher-training-routes/subject-knowledge-enhancement-ske-courses>



Contact Us



If you are interested in applying for a place on a School based training programme or are a school leader interested in hosting a trainee, we would love to hear from you. Please do not hesitate to contact Learners First if you would like any further information about the School Based programmes, or would like to discuss your individual circumstances in more detail - a member of the team will be happy to help!

Email: mroddison@learnersfirst.org

Website: www.learnersfirst.net

Follow us on Twitter: [@Learners_First](https://twitter.com/Learners_First)



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Connecting People, Promoting Excellence

“It is the BEST route into teaching! The route provides you with real first hand experiences of teaching. It fully prepares you for those early stages of your teaching career,” - Primary ITT Trainee

“School Direct is an exciting and forward thinking way of training high –quality entrants in initial teacher education. Learners First offers bespoke training with support from highly professional and experience tutors working within and on behalf of schools” - Curriculum team facilitator

“We have employed one ITT student and are looking to employ two more this year. The procedure that the students must go through before actually being offered places on this course ensure that the standard is high.” - Primary Head Teacher

