

### **New Teachers: Challenges and Insights video**

I interviewed three newly qualified teachers and asked them to tell me all about their insights and challenges so far. Here were some of the questions they answered:

1. I understand you are isolating due to Covid. How do you feel Covid has affected your professional learning?
2. What is the most important thing you have learned on your training year?
3. What did you perceive would be the most challenging aspect of being an NQT and how (if at all) did that change? Why?
4. How effective was your induction? Did you feel prepared to teach in September?
5. Is the job what you expected? How is it different?

NQT 1: I'm completely isolating due to covid cases within my bubble.

So that's been quite an anxious time to be honest with you.

With covid-19 hanging over me, hanging over all of us as teachers and NQTs.

it's something that's made this journey into teaching quite a lot more difficult than it could have been I've lost quite a lot of time doing the training year full term I never really got the timetable up to a level that would be quite useful now

and what we'd be used to now.

So there was a lot of time for CPD,  
but that doesn't really give you the experience  
that you need to hone your skills in this profession,  
but luckily the school that I'm in at the moment has been  
fantastic and I couldn't have asked for a kinder  
or more understanding department and we're all  
working together now to ensure that staff well-being  
is looked after  
as well as providing a good education to the children  
that we're supposed to be teaching.

NQT 2: I did have to be tested for covid after having symptoms.

Thankfully it was just the flu.

I mean at the moment it's very difficult as  
covid is preventing most teachers from doing  
their job a hundred percent as what they would have done before  
such as checking pupils' work, marking it etc.

Waiting for the test result was quite concerning,  
particularly because I didn't want to spend two weeks.  
off of school after just  
starting to establish relationships etcetera with the pupils  
and also because I have a vulnerable  
mum and my grandma as well,  
so I was worried in case it meant that  
I wouldn't be able to see them for a little while.

They are worrying times.

But I mean how many people

are in exactly the same boat?

So I'm just going with the flow.

But the pupils have been amazingly resilient.

In these trying times some of them have settled in really well,

which is a real positive.

NQT 1: So for me the most important thing that I learned in my training year was

not to assume a child's understanding of basic terms and language.

This was something I encountered very early on.

Pupils not quite understanding tasks or not quite understanding

some keywords in written text.

I always thought that behaviour management would be the most challenging aspect

of being an NQT

Without the support of another adult in the room that

you've got during your training year,

which does help keep the behaviour in

check,

especially when it's an established member of staff that's

got the pupils to a level over a number

of years of working in the school.

So yeah,

I thought that behaviour management would be something that I would struggle with quite a lot.

It's not actually been the case apart from one year 8 I've had this year so far.

That's my main struggle.

I've had some quite good behavior - I managed to just use techniques that I learned last year and it seems to work.

So yeah,

What I have found is that the problem so far is work load.

It's not as tough as it was in your training year.

So so don't worry about that, but it's definitely important.

I feel to get that work-life balance right is very important.

NQT 2: I think one of the most challenging things for my NQT year is going to be starting at a new school and forming those relationships with pupils and behaviour management. so being prepared for students to sort of test my boundaries and see where the line is, but I'm prepared more for that having experienced that in my training Year.

My induction was really good. I had a few days before term started and it did prepare me for school. But being honest, I don't think any induction can fully prepare you because you need to sort of get stuck in and then start building relationships with your pupils which you can only do once you're in the classroom,

My job is as I expected.

I have expected it to be tough.

I'm coming up to my first half term now and  
this term is always a bit of a hard slog.

It was in my training year. Because you're trying to establish  
new relationships with a classroom, establish your expectations  
and also sort of trialing  
new behaviour management strategies as well.

NQT 1: So, induction for school,  
for this for this new term was quite effective  
actually.

I'd say it was quite good.

But the first day still hit you  
like a ton of bricks.

It was the first day teaching.

I went home and I was I was in bed by half seven / eights o'clock.

I was very tired but got into the swing of  
things fairly quick by the second or third day.

It just went past like that.

I'm pretty used  
to it now.

Just managing to keep some time for yourself and your hobbies  
would be my advice on that one.

NQT 2: One of the most important things that I learned during my nqt year was to experiment and try different things so different activities, different behaviour management strategies, and then to also remember pupils' names as quickly as possible. as it's really effective not only for praise but also for behaviour management.

NQT 1: Yes.

To be honest, the job is everything I was expecting. my wife's a teacher. My sister's a teacher, I've got half a dozen friends that work in the education sector, so nothing really comes as a surprise.

Although we're only two weeks into school, I've already been sent home. I'm isolating already. I've got to go back in and this isn't what I expected. The aspects of now having to work from home and remote learning. That's not what what I signed up for but I'll get used to it the more I do it.

I mean I already feel I've made a difference to some of my pupils. I was teaching a class last week where some of the pupils really struggled to understand the concepts, but we dug into it deep and yeah

they understood it by the next lesson and and using the AFL techniques to assess whether the whole class understands it.

I get the feeling I've facilitated this learning and that's a great feeling to have.

NQT 3: Okay

So question number one.

Do you feel like you had enough support and what support would have made things easier for you?

And if this question is regarding my training, I had two placements.

I did have enough support in the first placement, but I did not feel I had as much as I would have liked to have in the second one and this was because I did not get to spend as much time with my mentor.

Number two. I do understand my accountabilities and my role and the most challenging thing has been finding the time required to plan for students with very different abilities in a classroom.

Number three: Tell me about a good lesson or bad lesson that you've had and what did you learn?

I cannot really remember a very good lesson because I am very self-critical but the lessons I have felt happiest in is when I have had the feeling that every single student in the class was engaged through assessment, questioning or whiteboards. I have been shown that they were learning.

Also when I have felt that I have provided the right activities for them to enjoy the lesson while working and make more one-to-one time for them so they can engage more during the lessons.

It's important to use good body language. It also depends on their abilities and I try to match that carefully with the activities because one of the reasons why they may not enjoy the subject is because they don't fully understand so they can disengage



and they end up disconnecting.

If I was a headteacher

What would I change?

Regarding placement,

I would try to give more

time to mentors

and trainees and very importantly

for people

who are very self-critical and

I am and I believe that many

of us are, or because we have high expectations.

I think I would try

to have a very positive outlook.