For more than 60 years, initial teacher education has been the foundation of our work in the School of Education.

The hallmark of our approach is our commitment to providing high-quality opportunities that enable students to become outstanding teachers with the knowledge, skills and attributes to raise the educational outcomes for all children.

Central to that is our close partnership with schools. Every year, students following our Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course take up practical teaching placements in schools across the City of Leicester, Leicestershire and neighbouring counties. This experience makes a fundamental difference to their learning and to their growing confidence as teachers.

The benefits of hosting PGCE placements

Welcoming and supporting PGCE students on practical teaching placements brings significant benefits not only for the student but for the whole school.

- We recruit high quality applicants with clear potential to become successful teachers; 98% of students who graduated in 2016 were good or outstanding. So we’re confident that our student teachers will bring the kind of dedication, high ambitions and willingness to learn that you’d look for in any member of your own staff.

- Our students come from very diverse backgrounds, including those fresh out of university, experienced teaching assistants and career changers; their enthusiasm and unique experiences will help to enhance your teaching community and add a new dimension to your pupils’ learning.

- Building the mentoring skills of your own staff is an excellent way of supporting individual development and also brings positive benefits for the wider school, not least by encouraging a culture of aspiration where expectations of pupil progress and professional development are high, and where reflective and collaborative approaches encourage the sharing of practice.

- At the end of the course almost two thirds of our students take up posts in Leicester or Leicestershire, often in schools that have supported their training – so hosting placements can be a great recruitment strategy.

The PGCE student has been hugely enthusiastic from day one and the pupils have got a lot out of his passion and enthusiasm for the subject and enjoyed the sense of fun he tries to bring to his teaching.

Made me re-evaluate areas of my own practice that I wouldn’t necessarily look at.
Hosting PGCE student placements

School-based placements are arranged in three blocks of 6, 6 and 9 weeks, providing the practical teaching experience students need to complete the course and qualify as new teachers. Schools may offer a placement for a PGCE student, or students, for one or more placements in one or more of the following year groups:

- Early years (Foundation year, year 1 and year 2)
- Year 3 or year 4
- Year 5 or year 6

We’re looking for a range of placements to ensure students experience a variety of learning contexts, environments and age ranges.

If your school is selected to host a PGCE placement, we’ll ask you to identify a member of staff, usually someone from your senior leadership team and often a headteacher, to coordinate all aspects of initial teacher education (ITE) in your school. The ITE co-ordinator is the first point of contact for all communications with the University and has specific responsibility for organising the student’s overall programme of work and for identifying an experienced teacher from the appropriate year group to act as the student’s mentor.

It’s the mentor’s role to construct the timetable for the student as well as support, monitor and assess their professional progress throughout the placement, including:

- formal and regular observation of the student teaching and provision of written and verbal feedback
- formal weekly review meetings to support students’ professional development
- submission of interim and summative assessment reports to the University

We’ll discuss and agree the student’s individual development needs before the placement starts and assign a visiting tutor from the University to provide ongoing support for the student and mentor once the placement is under way to ensure everything runs smoothly.

We ask all mentors to attend mentor training prior to each placement and, to facilitate this, make a payment to the school for supply cover costs.

Supporting your school and our students

We offer lots of guidance and support to develop the mentoring skills of your own teaching staff and deliver a high-quality placement experience that benefits both the student and your school, including:

- a comprehensive handbook for use by students, coordinators, mentors and visiting University tutors that clearly sets out the requirements, roles and responsibilities relating to each teaching placement
- regular University-based meetings that support the professional development of coordinators and mentors by providing opportunities to network, share practice and learn about the systems and processes involved in hosting, monitoring and assessing student teachers
- dedicated support from our Partnership Team, including help with training documentation, administration and organisation of placements, processing of payments and mentor expenses and speedy resolution of any emerging issues or challenges. The Partnership Team also leads on matching students to placement offers and coordinates training for mentors and ITE coordinators; the team will be your constant point of contact for anything relating to your involvement in the PGCE Partnership

Dates of placements for 2017-18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching experience 1 (TE1)</th>
<th>Teaching experience 2 (TE2)</th>
<th>Teaching experience 3 (TE3)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration:</strong> 6 weeks</td>
<td><strong>Duration:</strong> 6 weeks</td>
<td><strong>Duration:</strong> 9 weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong> This is a paired placement where two students are placed in one class working with one mentor. Group work and paired teaching leads to individual teaching of a sequence of lessons in the final 2 weeks.</td>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong> This is an individual placement where one student is placed in one class building up from 40% through 60% to 80% whole class teaching in the final 2 or 3 weeks.</td>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong> The students are placed individually in one class for their final placement building up fairly quickly to 80% whole class teaching.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor training: 6 October</td>
<td>Mentor training: 12 January</td>
<td>Mentor training: 16 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preliminary visits to the school: 11 – 12 October</td>
<td>Preliminary visits to school: 16 – 17 January</td>
<td>Preliminary visits to school: 18 – 19 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Placement: 30 October – 8 December</td>
<td>Placement: 22 January – 9 March</td>
<td>Placement: 23 April – 22 June</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-TE assessment afternoon: 7 February</td>
<td>Mid-TE assessment afternoon: 5 June</td>
<td>Mid-TE assessment afternoon: 5 June</td>
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Other ways to get involved in the PGCE Primary Partnership

In addition to hosting teaching placements, there are a number of ways in which your school can work in partnership with the University of Leicester to help develop and support future teachers.

Supporting the recruitment of PGCE candidates: Every year we ask ITE coordinators and mentors from our partner schools to be involved in our recruitment process and attend interviews of potential PGCE students.

Becoming a School Direct lead school: If you’re interested in offering your own teacher training route by becoming a School Direct lead school, we can provide lots of practical tips and advice to help you get up and running. We have substantial experience as a School Direct partner and offer a range of different options for working together to deliver a successful teacher training programme.

Joining our Partnership Management Group (PMG): The PMG, which meets termly, takes a central role in the strategic development of the University of Leicester PGCE and is made up of Primary headteachers, ITE coordinators and members of the PGCE Primary tutor team.

Why partner with the University of Leicester?

Reputation and experience: Our PGCE has a long-established and well-deserved reputation for producing newly qualified teachers schools want to employ. Our tutors have many years of experience as teachers themselves and our expert knowledge of education is enhanced by the international perspectives of staff, students and research collaborations.

A tradition of successful partnership: The School of Education at the University of Leicester has been committed to supporting children and young people at every stage of their lives. We work closely with schools and institutions across Leicestershire and beyond, training and developing teachers throughout their career and undertaking ground-breaking research that drives forward change in policy and delivers innovation in the classroom.

• Our teacher education programmes are led by academic tutors with years of teaching experience themselves and supported by partnerships with more than 200 schools
• Practical courses and networking opportunities offered by our professional development team enhance teaching practice and encourage collaboration
• One in five of our research outputs is deemed ‘world-leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’ and our academics are experts in their field with a shared passion for research that delivers real-world impact
• Our highly regarded postgraduate courses cover a range of topics that enable teachers and educationalists to take their learning to the next level, including educational leadership, international education and action research; we also have a large, thriving community of doctoral students.

Find out more
If you would like to offer placements for 2017-18 PGCE students, or want to find out more about hosting placements and joining the University of Leicester PGCE Partnership, contact:

The Partnership Office
e: pgcepartnership@le.ac.uk
t: 0116 229 7504