

CONCERNS ABOUT A TRAINEE DURING SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

There may be a variety of reasons that there is a cause for concern about a trainee during their school experience. Some of these have been outlined below. If there is significant or persistent concern then the mentor/school should contact the university tutor as soon as possible.

UNEXPECTED CIRCUMSTANCES AT SCHOOL

For example: if the mentor has unforeseen extended absence during placement, the trainee should discuss the situation with his/her school ITT coordinator (or the head teacher) and then contact his/her UT to discuss any changes to the support or organisation of their placement that may be required. For any Covid-19 related changes or requirements specific to a school or class then the university tutor should be informed and this will be discussed on a case-by-case basis to decide any further actions.

If a trainee presents with any Covid-19 symptoms or falls into any vulnerable category as outlined by Public Health England or government guidance, then they would be expected to follow government guidance and adhere to any school policy. The university tutor should be informed of this by the mentor and trainee.

CAUSES FOR CONCERN IN TRAINEE PROGRESS

Trainee making slower than expected progress

Slow progress during the placements may be due to a trainee's lack of prior school experience. Consequently, they may be unable to identify which factors are affecting the teaching and the learning in their classroom. Focused discussion with a mentor can help such trainees to gain the evaluation and the observational skills needed.

- 1) Identify a maximum of 3 significant targets that will have an impact on the teaching/learning in the class. These may be classroom/behaviour management issues or planning/teaching issues.

Complete a support plan ([Appendix E](#)) to agree deadlines and expectations.

The expert mentor should encourage the trainee to think of several alternative strategies that they can try. The mentor too should suggest alternative strategies and examples of good practice that they can try. Team teaching and/or observation of the mentor in practice may aid trainee understanding.

Steps for mentor for sustained concerns:

- 1) Create and agree a support plan ([Appendix E](#)) with specific targets and timelines identified for short term progress. Agree a review date.
- 2) Contact UT or SD alliance coordinator to discuss the specific concerns.

UT and mentor/SD coordinator to undertake a joint observation of trainee – if possible in Covid-19 restrictions.

If a trainee has difficulty meeting the support plan targets, an observation and feedback from another teacher may be helpful.

If progress continues to be less than adequate, then a letter of concern will be sent.

If concerns remain consistently over a substantial period, then a trainee will need to meet the course director to discuss options (see [Cause for concern flow chart](#)).

TRAINEE WELLBEING

If you are concerned about the wellbeing of a trainee, whether personal issues or managing workload, then it may be useful to give the trainee an opportunity to share how they are feeling and try to identify and address the pressure points that are impacting upon them. It may be that an agreed support or action plan can support the trainee and resolve the issue. It is vital that all interactions and disclosures are treated in a professional manner and follow our guidance about sharing information (see next page). Information must only be shared with permission of the trainee or if the safeguarding of the trainee or pupils is an immediate concern. If you have permission to share disclosed information with the university tutor and you think this would be of assistance to support the trainee then do contact the relevant tutor.

University contacts to support trainees

The university counselling service offers online therapeutic resources, free to students. These can be accessed via the counselling website: <http://www.counsellingservice.manchester.ac.uk/get-help/> or by phoning 0161 275 2864 to make a phone appointment. There are also a number of workshops and sessions throughout the year, subject to Covid-19 restrictions. Details can be found on the counselling website. <https://www.counsellingservice.manchester.ac.uk/workshopsfurtherinformation/>. The university Occupational health service can also be accessed by trainees if issues are causing barriers to their learning.

Please note: You can share these details and contacts with trainees at any point of their training, however, you cannot make a referral or discuss any trainee issue with any of these services without the consent of the trainee.

WHOLE SCHOOL/CLASS PROFESSIONALISM ISSUES

On rare occasions a trainee may behave in an unprofessional manner during placement, either within the class or within the wider school community.

Steps for mentor to take:

- 1) Meet to discuss the specific concerns with the trainee and give an opportunity for the trainee to respond and reflect on these.
- 2) Contact UT or SD coordinator to discuss the specific concerns and strategies, if required. If required, create a support plan ([Appendix E](#)) with specific targets and timeline for progress. A sincere and reflective apology from the trainee is an important way of acknowledging inappropriate behaviour. If the trainee **does not** respond to discussions and targets set then the UT/SD alliance lead should be contacted. This may result in a cause for letter of concern (see [Cause for concern flowchart](#)). If concerns remain consistently over a substantial period, then a trainee will need to meet the course director to discuss further options.

KEY NOTICE FOR SCHOOLS:

- 1) **Gross unprofessional conduct regarding pupil safeguarding or e-safety will result in dismissal from the course.**

Head teachers reserve the right to terminate placements if there has been a breach of conduct, a safeguarding issue or if the education of the children is being held back as a result of the trainee's practice. If this happens, the trainee would may be relocated or required to re-sit the placement at a later stage.

For any immediate safeguarding issues and advice please contact the trainee's university tutor in the first instance. However, please refer to the Safeguarding handbook on course sites for more extensive information related to safeguarding (<http://www.mie-teacher-education.uk>). Our primary safeguarding lead, Martin Kelly, can also be contacted for advice (martin.kelly@manchester.ac.uk).