The University of Manchester

Manchester Institute of Education

**Secondary PGCE 2024-25**

Study Pack

**Primary School Practice**

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| **Your name:** |  |
| **Your PGCE subject:** |  |
| **Your Primary placement school and postcode** |  |
| **Dates of your PSP placement** |  |

**Within a week of completion of your placement, please submit this assignment electronically via Blackboard – “Teaching and Learning in Schools and Colleges” unit**

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# Instructions for arranging and completing the PGCE Primary School Practice

**Primary School Practice** (a compulsory element of the PGCE)

**1. You** need to arrange this placement for yourself in a school in England. It is an integral part of the PGCE Secondary course and a valuable part of your introduction to the English school system. It is suggested that you organise the placement at your earliest convenience, and that you consider doing so in an area away from major urban centres of teacher education such as Greater Manchester, where schools tend to be dealing with more requests for placements than they can accommodate. You may find personal contact with the school to be more successful than an email in arranging your placement. You should make an informal approach to the Headteacher of a school that you would like to undertake your PSP in, to gain their permission and agree the dates. Often a face-to-face approach helps. At the back of this document you will find a sample letter to which you can add your name and present to the school to give them information about the placement.

**Core PGCE trainees:** the planned dates for the PSP are the week beginning 2nd September 2024 or week beginning 16th June 2025.

**School Direct trainees:** Arrangements for your PSP may differ slightly from Core trainees, and will be made with your SD Lead School.

**2.** Once you have arranged your PSP Placement you should complete the survey at the following link to give details of the school and dates:

[**https://www.qualtrics.manchester.ac.uk/jfe/form/SV\_3VRmD9ZGmCmhjcW**](https://www.qualtrics.manchester.ac.uk/jfe/form/SV_3VRmD9ZGmCmhjcW)

Should the details of your placement school change, you can make additional submissions through the survey link, but explain why you have done so in the notes field.

**3. Phases** You should spend at least 50% of the time in Key Stage 2 classes, because transition to high school is an important focus.

**4. Safeguarding:** all suitability processes must be underway for you as a prospective trainee, and your DBS must at least be ‘in progress’, before you can start the primary school placement. If you have any doubts about this, contact the PGCE office. The next page contains critical information on safeguarding which you must adhere to.

5. **Brief** **feedback from headteacher or other senior teacher**. The assignment includes a form at the back for completion by the headteacher or a member of staff designated by her/him. Please scan this and paste it into the back of this document. All this should be submitted as a Word document.

**6. Assignment**: The completion of this booklet comprises the PSP assignment, which is a requirement of the PGCE. Upload your completed task booklet to Blackboard by **30th September**, or within a week after you have completed the placement if that is later. Please notify your tutor that you have submitted it, so that it can be assessed in a timely manner.

This assignment booklet should answer all of your questions, however please feel free to contact the PGCE Office [teachereducation@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:teachereducation@manchester.ac.uk) should you have any queries. We look forward to seeing the flexibility and resourcefulness you bring to making the most of this assignment.

**Dr Rosa Archer**

**Director of Secondary PGCE**

# Safeguarding: what you need to know immediately

**UoM ITE curriculum:** Knowing when and how and to whom to pass on any safeguarding concerns, and having a clear understanding of what behaviours, disclosures and incidents to report.

* Children have a right to protection.
* Everyone working with, or in contact with children has a responsibility for their protection.
* Responsibility relating to concern for a child's safety must be shared.

As a trainee teacher on your PSP placement, you need to be sufficiently aware of the issues around safeguarding so that you act in accordance with safe practice. You are not expected to be an expert and you are not a qualified teacher, so you should consult and check in the event of any concerns you have. You must also be aware enough not to put yourself at professional risk.

Avoid unnecessary professional risks:

* Work in an open and transparent way
* Discuss and report any incidents of concern or that might lead to concerns being raised about your conduct towards a child
* Dress appropriately for your role
* Avoid any contact with children or parents through social media or email
* Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children
* Avoid working in one-to-one situations with children
* Do not record images of children

If you see or hear something that concerns you:

* Don’t ignore it
* Make a mental note
* Act quickly if you are concerned about a child’s safety
* Speak to the school’s designated safeguarding lead as soon as you can

If a pupil tells you they are worried about their safety:

* Be calm, don’t panic
* Nod and make reassuring noises but don’t ask lots of questions
* Show the child you care through your facial and body language but avoid physical contact
* Give the child time, don’t hurry them
* Explain that you want to help and you must tell someone else who will know what to do
* Tell the designated safeguarding lead

Recording information:

* Record your concerns on the school’s form
* Include the child’s name, age, ethnicity and any disability or special educational needs and preferred method of communication
* Include dates, times, what you have observed, what the child has said to you and your reply
* Hand the form to the designated safeguarding lead.

# Professional and Ethical considerations

Whilst in the school you must behave in a professional and ethical manner at all times. You should:

Be punctual and appropriately dressed (smart attire). The school is a professional environment.

Be polite and courteous at all times to everyone, adults and children alike.

Respect everyone as you expect them to respect you;

Don’t ask anyone sensitive or personal questions which may cause them to be upset;

Show this Study Pack to the head teacher/ class teacher and gain consent to carry out the activities;

Share your responses to the activities with the head teacher/class teacher as appropriate, and explain that these are only used as part of your PSP assignment for the PGCE.

In line with practice in relation to data protection (GDPR) no individuals should be identifiable in your assignment responses. Do not record the names of teachers or pupils. Instead, use codes e.g. Teacher A, Pupil 1 etc.

# Reasons for undertaking the PSP

**Understanding the Primary school environment:**

* + reflect on the Primary school environment
  + consider progression throughout the first six years of the National Curriculum, especially in terms of children's development; develop your understanding of early reading and phonics, and mathematics.

**Understanding where young people are coming to high school from:**

* + what do primary school age children experience before the transition to secondary schooling;
  + the issues relating to transition to the secondary phase;

**Reflecting on yourself as a teacher:**

* + consider your attitude to children, and primary school teaching, teachers and schools;
  + begin to develop an understanding of the needs and experiences of different groups of children (eg. with SEND, with EAL, in receipt of the Pupil Premium) and how teachers can work effectively with them

**Gain an initial familiarity with some aspects of the UoM ITE Curriculum:**

* + consider **how young people learn**, and what supports effective learning
  + consider the **features of effective lessons** and what teachers do to create a **positive learning environment**
  + consider the development of **literacy and numeracy** and implications for you as a Secondary teacher

The activities are organised into ‘focus areas’ and include:

* The whole school; the classroom; individual children;
* The development of understanding of language, mathematics and literacy in the primary school;
* Your specialist subject.

**Please note that the text boxes for your responses are set as a guide but can be expanded where required.**

# Focus 1: School context and transition to high school

Each school exists in a social context which can (and should) influence what goes on in the school. Consider:

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| **Activity 1.1** *Make brief notes in answer to some of these questions, with reference to your placement school*   * In what sort of area was the school situated? For example, was it on a council estate, near to shops, by busy main roads, or in the country? * How would you describe the social behaviour of the children in the playground, in assembly or in classrooms? * How would you describe diversity in the school? Think about the children *and* the staff. * Was there a nursery class? How did this relate to the rest of the school? * Was there a feeling of space, light and colour? How was the work of the school demonstrated in the school? For example, were books on display in the foyer; were there examples of children's work displayed in the corridors? * Were the children actively involved in assembly? What part did music and drama play in the life of the school, and was there any evidence that the children are encouraged to be creative in these spheres? * What opportunities existed for sport? * What role did parents typically play in the life of the school? Was there a strong PTA and, if so, what was its function? * What facilities did the school have for recognising the needs of children who have special educational needs or were particularly gifted or talented? |

**Transition to high school – thinking about your placement school.**

**UoM ITE curriculum:** Finding out what your pupils already know and linking it to what is being taught (e.g. explaining how new content builds on prior knowledge).

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| **Activity 1.2** *Make brief notes in answer to some of these questions:  What part did the secondary schools play in the process? Did the local authority have an input? Was there competition between the secondary schools to attract children and how did this influence the process? Did the children get an opportunity to visit the local secondary school(s) prior to attending? What information about children was passed from primary to secondary school?*  *Did many children worry about transition to secondary school? If so, what did they worry about? Was it the same for all of them?* |

**Key points and questions to take from Focus 1:**

*What were some of the significant differences between your own Primary school and your placement school?*

*What key questions are you left with, from this section?*

# Focus 2: Classroom routines and environment

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| **UoM ITE curriculum:** Establishing and positively reinforcing routines can help create an effective learning environment |

**Activity 2.1**

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| ***Routine procedure*** | ***What routines were in place in the classroom?*** |
| *Entry in morning* |  |
| *Registration* |  |
| *Playtime* |  |
| *Lunch time* |  |
| *Assembly* |  |
| *Going to the toilet* |  |
| *Getting help in class* |  |
| *Using ICT* |  |
| *Getting work assessed* |  |
| *Tidying up* |  |
| *Exit at end of day* |  |

*Routines are important in the Secondary classroom too. Think about the routines that you may need to put in place.*

**Activity 2.2 The classroom environment**

Research has interrogated primary school practices in relation to the physical environment. See for example:

Thomson, P., Hall, C., & Russell, L. (2007) If these walls could speak: Reading displays of primary children's work. *Ethnography and Education*, *2*(3), 381-400. Often, displays are intended to carry clear and stimulating messages.

*Describe the classroom displays (in two and three dimensions) on walls, windows, flat surfaces, off the ceiling… were displays static or mobile? Were there living things on display? Was pupils’ work on display? How did you feel about the displays?*

**Key points and questions to take from Focus 2:**

*Make a note of the key points that you have learnt or understood, or key questions that you have from this section.*

# Focus 3: Responding to diversity in the classroom

**UoM ITE curriculum:** **Teachers can be more effective when they seek to understand pupils’ differences, such as different levels of prior knowledge and potential barriers to learning.**

**Activity 3.1 *Examine two children's engagement with one particular curriculum area.*** In a lesson, but in a non-obtrusive way, make some notes about two different children and their engagement. This activity is asking you to observe children carefully and objectively.

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| ***Events / activities within the lesson*** | ***Reactions / response / behavior***  ***Child 1*** | ***Reactions / response / behavior***  ***Child 2*** |
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**Activity 3.2 *Now try to answer the following questions.***

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| *What similarities and differences are there in the participation and engagement of these two individual children in the classroom?* |
| *What might this suggest about organising classroom activities in your subject? (Consider different groupings, types of activities, ways of motivating children, how to support pupils with tasks, etc.)* |

Observation is a very important skill for teachers. It does not come naturally to everyone. You will need to learn to keep an eye on everyone in the class – but also, pay attention to individuals and small groups, to see what they are engaged in.

**Activity 3.3 *Learning to question what is seen as normal.*** *The Black Lives Matter movement and the challenge of ‘decolonising the curriculum’ suggest that the privileges that some groups in Britain enjoy should not be taken for granted. Teachers who understand and engage with diversity positively are teachers who question and resist the idea of what is ‘normal’. Similar questions arise in relation to disability, gender and sexual orientation, for example.*

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| *What did you notice in the classroom, about the way diversity was being approached? For example, how did teachers engage with diversity in terms of language, ethnicity or gender? What assumptions may have been evident? Can you see ways in which diversity was being embraced?* |

*Responding to diversity is a theme throughout the PGCE. For most of us, this is an ongoing area for development which requires a readiness to engage in conversations, as well as the tuning of our capacity to critically assess and respond to situations and norms at work in school, college and university. We look forward to developing these conversations with you.*

**Key points and questions from Focus 3:**

*Make a note of the key points that you have learnt or understood, or key questions that you have from this section.*

# Focus 4: Literacy and Numeracy

*All teachers teach literacy and numeracy, because these are gateway skills to so much else within the curriculum, and in life beyond the classroom and school. As part of your PGCE, you will be expected to complete audits of your own skills, and readiness to teach, in literacy and numeracy.*

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| **UoM ITE curriculum:** Every teacher can improve pupils' literacy, including by explicitly teaching reading, writing and oral language skills specific to individual disciplines |
| **UoM ITE curriculum:** To access the curriculum, early literacy provides fundamental knowledge; reading comprises two elements: word reading and language comprehension; systematic phonics is the most effective approach for teaching pupils to decode  [**https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/literacy-ks-1/**](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/literacy-ks-1/)  [**https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/literacy-ks-2/**](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/literacy-ks-2/)  Machin, S., McNally, S., & Viarengo, M. (2018) Changing how literacy is taught: Evidence on synthetic phonics. American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, 10(2), 217–241. https://doi.org/10.1257/pol.20160514. |

**Activity 4.1**

***With respect to your placement school:***

|  |
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| *What approaches to teaching reading are evident?* |

**Using references above and related, give a simple description of the following terms and their significance for the development of literacy.**

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| --- |
| *Decoding:* |

|  |
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| *Phonological awareness:* |

*Synthetic phonics:*

**Activity 4.2**

1. ***Watch the maths lesson on “videos for virtual PSP” on Blackboard, or use the link below: What aspects of this lesson do you think are effective and why? What questions does the lesson raise for you about the teaching of mathematics in high school?*** *Note that this is an issue for* ***all*** *teachers, since mathematics is embedded in all subjects.*

[Year 4 Singapore Maths Model Lesson: Measuring Area | Maths — No Problem!](https://youtu.be/67Bd_UVsfTU)

Consider especially these two statements from our curriculum:

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| **UoM ITE curriculum:** Providing opportunities for your pupils to learn essential concepts, knowledge, skills and principles of the subject, without fear of making mistakes. |
| **UoM ITE curriculum:** Effective teachers introduce new material in steps, linking new ideas to previous lessons and learning. |

1. ***Watch one of the literacy episodes on “videos for virtual PSP” on Blackboard, or use the links below. What aspects of this lesson do you think are effective and why? What questions does the lesson raise for you about the teaching of literacy in high school?***

[Primary school phonics lesson](https://video.manchester.ac.uk/weblounge-files/00000000-2e05-4fa0-0000-0138ebb46340)

[Guided reading Year 2](https://video.manchester.ac.uk/weblounge-files/ffffffff-898b-53d5-0000-0138ebc9db58)

**Key points and questions to take from Focus 4:**

*Make a note of the key points that you have learnt or understood, or key questions that you have from this section.*

# Focus 5: Teaching and learning in your particular subject

**UoM ITE curriculum:** Teachers’ subject knowledge is vital for effective planning and teaching. Curriculum knowledge depends on but is not limited to subject knowledge.

**Activity 5.1 *What notable activities did you observe or hear about in your placement school, which connect to particular skills and knowledge in your subject? These might be lessons, topic work, projects…***

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**Activity 5.2 *Take a role either as a classroom assistant or as teacher a lesson related to your specialism. Consider one or more of the following UoM ITE curriculum statements in planning how you will approach this role.***

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| **UoM ITE curriculum:** Modelling helps pupils understand new processes and ideas; good models make abstract ideas concrete and accessible |
| **UoM ITE curriculum:** Guides, scaffolds, worked examples and opportunities to practise can help pupils apply new ideas. |
| **UoM ITE curriculum:** Questioning is an essential tool for teachers; questions can be used for many purposes, including to check pupils' prior knowledge, assess understanding and break down problems |
| **UoM ITE curriculum:** High-quality classroom talk can support pupils to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding and extend their vocabulary |
| **UoM ITE curriculum:** Practice is an integral part of effective teaching; ensuring pupils have repeated opportunities to practise, with appropriate guidance and support, increases success |

***Reflect on your role in the light of one or more of these UoM ITE curriculum statements.***

**Activity 5.3 *How do you think teaching at KS3 can effectively build on pupils’ experiences in KS2, in areas relevant to your subject?***

**Key points and questions to take from Focus 5:**

*Make a note of the key points that you have learnt or understood, or key questions that you have from this section.*

# Focus 6: Implications

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| **UoM ITE curriculum:** Reflective practice should be supported by observation and feedback from experienced colleagues, professional debate, and educational research |

As a critically reflective teacher, your progress is greatly facilitated when you articulate for yourself the points of learning, and the questions raised for you by the experiences that you have. So, with reference to your case study school and the videos of lessons and episodes provided, summarise the *key points* *and* *questions* that you will take from this PSP into the following aspects of your practice as a teacher:

**6.1: teaching your subject**

**6.2: teaching young people to make useful links to their primary school experience**

 **PGCE Office, Manchester Institute of Education**

**School of Environment, Education**

**& Development**

Email: [teachereducation@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:c.burton@manchester.ac.uk)The University of Manchester

Oxford Road

Manchester M13 9PL

July 2024

Dear Headteacher

**Re trainee teacher: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) 2024-25**

Thank you for allowing the above named person, who has a place on a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) at The University of Manchester commencing in September, to come to your school to complete their Preliminary School Practice (PSP).

Our Secondary PGCE trainee teachers are required to spend 5 days observing at a primary school as part of their Secondary PGCE programme.

**Safeguarding:** all PGCE students are required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure and a number of other pre-programme checks. At this early stage in September, some trainees will still be ‘in process’, though some will have completed these checks.

May we request that you complete a brief report on the placement, and give this to the trainee. A form for this purpose will be supplied by the trainee, or alternatively you can provide a separate report on school letter headed paper. If you have any queries about this placement please contact Teacher Education in the first instance by email as detailed above.

Many thanks again for your support with this important element of our Secondary PGCE. Please don’t hesitate to get in touch with me if you have any concerns.

Yours sincerely

A close up of a sign

Description automatically generated with low confidence

Dr Rosa Archer

Director of Secondary PGCE

Primary School Practice Report

Dear Headteacher,

Thank you for supporting one of our trainee Secondary teachers by hosting this Primary school placement. We hope and trust that their presence and activity in the school has been constructive. I would be grateful for a *brief* report below on the contribution of your trainee teacher over their time in school with you. You may choose to comment on your trainee teacher's initiative, ability to relate to colleagues and children, communication skills and potential as a teacher. This report will serve as a Certificate of Attendance therefore a comment on punctuality and attendance would be useful, and we invite you to sign the report. You may of course email me separately if you have any concerns or questions.

Many thanks,

Rosa Archer ([rosa.archer@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:rosa.archer@manchester.ac.uk))

Director of Secondary ITE

*Note to trainee: Please scan and include this signed form at this point in this completed booklet before uploading it to Blackboard, as instructed in Section 1 and on the front cover.*

|  |
| --- |
| ***School:*** |
| ***Headteacher / classroom teacher:*** |
| ***Trainee:*** |
| ***Dates attended:*** |
| ***Brief report:*** |
| ***Signature:*** |