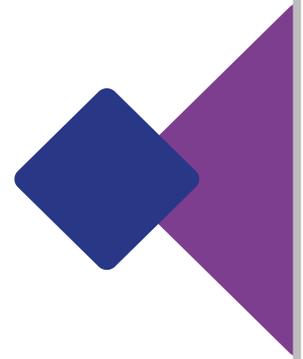


CASE STUDY:

# THE BENEFITS OF ENGAGING WITH INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

SOUTH FARNHAM SCITT

*Initial Teacher Training (ITT)*



## **PARTNERSHIPS:**

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At South Farnham SCITT everything begins with positive relationships. Schools are the single most important part of our initial teacher training programme. A school truly invested in a provider's programme makes success possible and ensures the next generation of ECTs are prepared and ready to thrive in the early years of their career. Building strong, trusted and mutually beneficial relationships with schools is therefore key. South Farnham SCITT ensures each school is part of a wider community, whilst maintaining a strong understanding of individual context and schools' needs. This is achieved through:

- **Strategic Board**

Heads representing each geographical hub sit on the board, enabling them to challenge and continually improve provision and outcomes across all areas.

- **Headteacher Partnership Board**

All Headteachers are invited to join, providing feedback to SCITT leaders and feeding into the Strategic Board, upcoming training curriculum content is shared to keep schools aware.

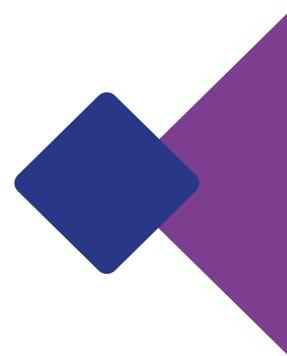
- **Newsletters**

All Heads receive this half termly detailing the coming module curriculum content with resources and links to research/slides supporting school awareness and CPD.

- **Full-time cohort lead**

Each school is supported by a dedicated cohort lead who visits regularly; supporting local recruitment initiatives, mentor development/need and additional trainee support.

**“ A school truly invested in a provider’s programme makes success possible and ensures the next generation of ECTs are prepared and ready to thrive in the early years of their career.”**



# SCHOOLS ARE CENTRAL TO THE SCITT

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## RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

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Headteachers and senior leaders from across our partnership are involved in recruitment days by being part of interview panels and by hosting marketing and recruitment events and interview days in their schools.

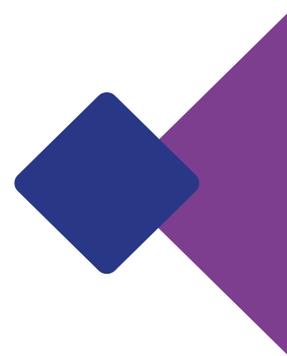
At South Farnham SCITT no candidate is placed in a school without the school leadership first meeting them. Finding an appropriate placement school is a collaborative process. At interview locations, connections with schools and preferences are explored. Following acceptance the SF SCITT team begin approaching schools. Knowing the schools we work with so well, we suggest candidates to schools when we feel the two will be a good match. Candidates are then invited to meet with the school leadership team, following this meeting the potential of a placement is discussed with the school. Schools, therefore, only agree to host trainees they have met and feel would be a good fit for their school.

This careful process ensures trainees have the very best chance of success. It is no wonder then that the majority of trainees are employed by their main placement school. In turn, this supports schools with their own recruitment and retention.

*“Lingfield Primary School has proudly partnered with the Surrey SCITT program for the past 8 years to train the next generation of outstanding teachers. Hosting SCITT trainees is an essential element of our recruitment and retention culture. By welcoming these highly motivated and well-prepared individuals into our school community, we are able to work alongside the SCITT team to provide rigorous training in evidence-based teaching methods, supported by our expert teacher mentors. Our staff are enriched by the opportunity to share their knowledge and refine their own skills as they guide each trainee.”* Cassie Puplett, Head

Matt Gates reiterates the importance of Initial Teacher Training for the recruitment and retention of staff.

*“At St Andrew’s and St Mark’s CofE Junior School, we have been working closely with the SSF SCITT for over a decade. This has become more than a mutually beneficial relationship, it has become part of the life and culture of our school. Through our partnership, we are becoming a greenhouse school that nurtures and develops its own talent - all of our teaching team began with us as newly qualified teachers - without exception.”*



## MENTORING AND DEVELOPMENT

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At South Farnham, we recognise that excellent mentoring and school partnership are key to successful training and in turn ECT teachers who are ready to thrive impact positively on recruitment and retention. We have worked with our schools to find flexible mentor training options that work for practising teachers and the school in which they work. We understand the challenges of arranging cover to release teachers when budgets and recruitment are already challenging.

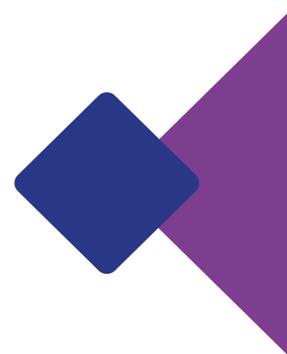
Matt explains how they have utilised the trainee teacher to support both mentor training and wider professional development.

*“Releasing teachers to develop their mentoring skills has not been problematic as our SCITT students are committed to working with their classes for their training year, giving ample opportunity for mentor and trainee release for professional development. As a result, everyone’s abilities are enhanced.”*

As a SCITT we also offer numerous mentoring sessions, at different times of the day to ensure all our mentors get the training that will best prepare them for mentoring a trainee through our curriculum. This flexible approach was introduced following feedback from Heads and mentors. For the team, it means putting on the same session on a number of occasions, but the impact on trainee development is clear. Since adopting this model attendance at scheduled mentor development sessions is well over 95%. Furthermore, the ‘hub’ model we operate, led by a dedicated Cohort Lead, enables them to ‘catch up’ any mentors in their schools who have been unable to attend mentor development. Consequently, all mentors on our programme receive the training required of them

Schools welcome the opportunity for mentors to visit their trainee whilst on their cross-phase second school experience. This supports trainees to reflect on what they have learned and are applying to their new school and enables the mentor to continue to see the trainee’s development outside of their own setting. Mentors frequently comment on how powerful this is, enabling them to be ‘context free’ and not entrenched in the knowledge of the class/cohort.

*“The SSF SCITT allows our teaching team to develop valuable mentoring experience and the training provided has been applied to working with other stakeholders. Having mentors able to visit other schools to see their trainees on placement has been invaluable; in Spring 2 a teacher is always telling me about a fantastic piece of practice they will be stealing from what they have observed”!*



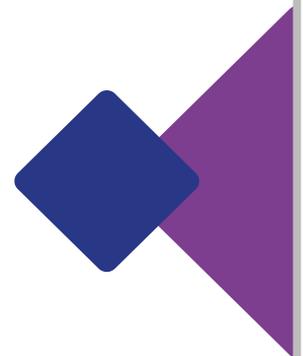
## UTILISING ITT CURRICULUM TO SUPPORT SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT AND CPD

Our high-quality research informed curriculum supports schools to keep up to date with current evidence. Many schools access our professional studies training programme in one way or another.

- Some schools use sessions for staff CPD, enabling teachers to attend to keep up to date with current evidence, either in core training or to support in subjects.
- Many schools utilise our materials in their own staff development – for example, Ewell Grove Primary School send relevant slides/ videos as a matter of course to their staff team and when really pertinent use them as the basis for school CPD.
- Subject specific facilitation of our professional studies programme is frequently carried out by expert teachers from across our wide partnership. South Farnham SCITT provide clear guidance on the research, content and format each session needs to contain. Before sessions are delivered, the central team ensure that all aspects of our curriculum are covered and the research base approved.
- Following subject specific professional studies, trainees work through a subject knowledge for teaching workbook. This has moved mentor, school and trainee focus away from confidence in subject knowledge, to a much deeper look at each subject. Trainees work with subject leads to explore the development of curriculum skills and knowledge across the school. They work with their mentor and class teacher to develop a deeper understanding of the substantive and disciplinary knowledge across the curriculum, as well as balancing this with pedagogical content learned across the whole year.

Many previous trainees come back to us as mentors following their ECT years, schools within the partnership often encourage past trainees to do this as part of their CPD. Additionally, schools contribute to the wider development and assessment of trainees through Support Tutoring. Senior leaders (Deputies and Heads), following training, take on tutoring roles. This involves them working with one or two trainees across the year to ensure the school-based training quality requirement is met, that the mentor, school and trainee are afforded appropriate and bespoke support and importantly that assessment and progress judgements are accurate across the wider cohort.

Schools are connected through local networks. Cohort leads provide mentor open drop-in sessions which enable mentors to connect across schools with each other, our cohort model supports this approach. Mentors are encouraged to visit and work with the second school mentor. In this way, mentors can share experiences and ensure current goals, targets and developmental needs are a continued and consistent focus across both school experiences.

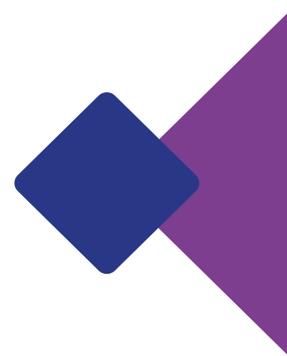


## RURAL AND DIFFICULT TO REACH SCHOOLS

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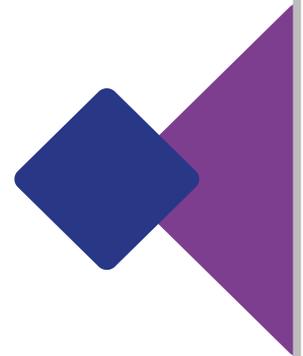
South Farnham works with several very small and rural schools. Schools such as Northchapel Community Primary School (West Sussex) and Sheet Primary School (Hampshire) are very small 4 class primaries with less than 100 pupils. In these locations, they struggle to recruit and with challenging budgets find retention and enabling CPD a challenge. At Sheet, the Head was keen to be involved in ITT and joined the programme as a Support Tutor. This provides the school with additional income (for her time) and access to all of the current curriculum, research and materials. As such she is able to ensure that her small staff are kept up to date with current approaches. At Northchapel the school became involved with hosting training teachers. This again supports staff development and access to expert support and CPD opportunities.

**“ The Head joined the programme as a Support Tutor. This provides the school with additional income and access to all of the current curriculum, research and materials.”**



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Hosting trainees by offering a placement is a great way to support a school or trust's recruitment and retention strategy.
2. Flexible approaches to mentor training reduce workload and release time burdens.
3. Engaging in initial teacher training can support a school-wide approach to creating and embedding a culture of learning and professional development for all staff.



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*The Teaching School Hubs Council (TSHC) are supporters, advocates, and facilitators for the national network of teaching school hubs in England.*

