

## Why School Experience?

School experience, is **extremely important** for acceptance on to the Graduate Teacher Programme. All initial teacher training programmes would expect you to have some experience in a school, or with young people of the age group that you were wishing to teach. The reasons for this are:

- Most importantly, you need to be sure that teaching is the right career move for you. This includes gaining the assurance that the age range and school setting and this route are appropriate for you.
- The GTP is a very competitive route into teaching, despite what we know to be its very demanding nature. The Consortium is allocated a limited number of places each year. Those who have substantial school experience can present a much stronger application than those who have had little school experience. There is no stipulated length of time for such experience/ placement because more relevant than the length of time, is the ability to observe and reflect upon the teaching, learning and classroom management strategies that you observe.
- When you are applying for the GTP you need to have the support of a school. The school does in fact employ you as an unqualified teacher. Schools need to get to know their potential trainees to see how they will work within the school's ethos and how well they will relate to pupils and colleagues.
- Before the start of the training programme it will be necessary to complete a needs assessment to ensure that you are given appropriate, individualised and effective training. This time spent in school will contribute to the required needs assessment undertaken by the school and the Consortium.
- In addition to observing teaching and learning strategies, school experience will provide you with an introductory understanding of the curriculum knowledge required by teachers to work in their chosen age range.

We hope that the above gives you a clear indication of the importance of gaining school experience.

Experience has informed us that those people who have had school experience, and therefore have an awareness of what is expected of them, are stronger candidates and will be likely to complete the programme successfully and go on to make teaching their career.