



There are numerous routes into the teaching profession; each in turn prepares those wishing to teach design and technology, from able trainees into exceptional teachers. However proposals contained within the government's White paper: *The Importance of Teaching*, suggest significant reform to the way in which many teachers are trained. The paper implies a move away from undergraduate training routes, which coupled with the recent reduction in teacher trainee numbers, creates a potential threat to initial teacher training undergraduate provision.

This article seeks to celebrate the 'uniqueness' of one such route and the success of some of the teachers who qualified by following it. The KS2/3 course is a distinctive pathway in that it prepares trainees to teach in both primary and secondary settings. Arguably the most difficult initial teacher training route, many still grapple to understand the rationale behind the course and frequently question the motivation of the trainees following it; don't they know who they want to teach? Can't they decide if they want to be primary or secondary specialists? In short what is the point of this course? And this scepticism hasn't always ended once the trainees become teachers, with critics questioning the

ability of those trained via the KS2/3 route, who choose to work across the secondary phase, to be able deliver subject knowledge in sufficient depth, particularly at Key Stage 4.

Misunderstood by many, particularly in the early days, qualified teachers who have trained via this route have established themselves as excellent teachers within the schools in which they work.

Notably, trainees qualifying via this route appear to be engaged in the delivery of a wider range of subjects not only within design and technology but others across the curriculum. They often appear to be heavily involved in the provision of high quality

pastoral care, not only in terms of their work with students but mentoring trainee teachers and other departmental staff. This has led to their engagement and association with a diverse range of whole school initiatives, which in turn has led to a range of promotional opportunities, often outside of the subject for which they were trained. Through a series of short case studies, each of which showcases highly successful teachers working within the secondary age phase who qualified on this course, this article aims to capture the essence of just some of their successes.



## Sarah Cooper

Now in her fourth year of teaching Sarah qualified in 2008 and teaches at Thornleigh Salesian College in Bolton. Working within the home technology department, Sarah is responsible for the delivery of Key Stage 3 textiles and food technology and at Key Stage 4 she teaches GCSE food technology, BTEC first children's care, learning and development.

So why did Sarah opt to follow the KS2/3 route into teaching? "I must admit when I started my training I was convinced I wanted to work in a primary school, but I also had a real passion for my subject so when I discovered the KS2/3 course it was exactly what I needed". As the course progressed Sarah realised she preferred working in the secondary sector but her time spent in primary schools was not a pointless

experience as Sarah explains "I believe that the Key Stage 2/3 course and training definitely gives you a wider perspective of the education system, in both pastoral and curriculum areas". An experience that has had a clear impact upon her work in school and which has opened up a range of opportunities. In addition to her responsibilities within design and technology, like so many other ex-KS2/3 trainees Sarah's understanding and expertise of the KS2 age range has led to her direct involvement in undertaking a leading role within the development of whole school initiatives, which in Sarah's case involved undertaking work as a key member of the schools development team for the Year 7 Creative Curriculum, which is now entering its third successful year.

Further to this, in February 2011 Sarah was selected to take part in the International Teachers Programme and as she explains,

**“I was lucky enough to be able to go to Mumbai to study aspects of the education system.”**

She continues "This was a huge experience for me, I've been able to confirm that I have chosen the right profession, and also understand just how fortunate we are to teach the children we do". Upon her return and only three years into her teaching career Sarah gained a promotion and is now Key Stage 3 Tutorial Programme Co-ordinator.





## Peter Baines

As a mature trainee entering the profession and having gained a 1st class honours degree from Edge Hill University in 2007, Peter had a very clear idea about the particular area of education within which he wanted to work.

During his course, which he selected on the basis of a desire to work cross phase when possible, Peter took the opportunity to focus upon his passion, to develop his skills not only in creative art, design and technology but to develop his knowledge and understanding of special educational needs. As Peter, who now works at Hope High school, Skelmersdale, explains "Knowing where I wanted to work, I saw the potential of the KS2/3 course, and it has proven to be more than useful in preparing me for my

teaching role" he continues "I teach students from ages 11-16, however due to their individual circumstances and background they arrive at Hope with a range of experience and my ability to work at Key Stage 2 has been invaluable in helping my students to progress". The experience of studying subjects at Key Stage 2 has enabled Peter to confidently teach other subjects such as geography, history and ICT at Key Stage 3. Peter works with students who for whatever reason do not participate in mainstream education, and alongside the national curriculum he offers bespoke studies designed specifically to meet the needs of his students.

It is clearly a combination that works as Peter boasts consistently good GCSE results in

resistant materials for the higher ability students as well as offering entry level qualifications in graphics, resistant materials and motor vehicle studies for those students not quite ready for GCSE.

Peter also notes how his training has provided him with a strong understanding of the pastoral system, and how these qualities have developed into strengths, which have helped him to develop strong behavioural management techniques and also secure a series of promotions. At the end of his first year Peter was awarded a second point on his SEN allowance, in his third year became temporary head of Key Stage 3 and as of September last year has moved to being the permanent Head of Key Stage 4.







## Mark Langley

Mark is another exceptional young teacher, now in his fifth year of teaching, who qualified from Liverpool John Moore's University's KS2/3 course. Mark teaches at Childwall High School, Liverpool and specialises in graphics, product design and resistant materials, but in part due to the diversity of his teacher training via this undergraduate route Mark has also taught food and textiles. In addition to teaching BTEC construction and MVE, he currently delivers AQA GCSE product design, EDEXCEL A-Level in graphic products, product design and BTEC art and design. Although he is keen to point out that in relation to the BTEC art and design he does use a product design method of teaching.

As with other teachers trained for this age phase Mark has clear pastoral strengths. Whilst in post he has led a range of extra-curricular activities including undertaking residential visits to Ireland,

France and Belgium, and plans to take a cohort of food technology students to Spain later this year. In addition to designing the drama sets for a number of school plays, Mark has established a number of quality transitional curriculum projects with local primary schools. His dedication and enthusiasm has led to local recognition, the most recent being for a project with a gifted and talented cohort of girls who won the Liverpool Compact 2010 'Females in Construction' award.

However Mark is keen to work with students of all abilities and has "run a range of classroom activities designed specifically to help boost confidence and develop kinaesthetic learning and teamwork".

Mark's latest innovative project, for which he has been awarded funding, is with a group of Year 10 students who are producing work which has been influenced by the work of

Banksy "in this project they are using his work to influence their own, and to produce 'unique' graffiti around the school, but this is not graffiti in the traditional sense of spray painting". Mark continues, "the project aims to establish a range of 3D outcome and uses a range of materials and equipment including the laser cutter, router, miller and Stika".

Mark's outstanding work has resulted in his being put forward for leadership training and in addition to his recent completion of an emerging leaders course, he has completed the first phase of TLA accreditation and is currently about to embark on his masters. Furthermore having been an Assistant Pupil Progress Leader for two years, Mark who is also the department's curriculum mentor and mentors trainee teachers from both LJMU and EHU, has recently been promoted again and is now Student Progress Leader for Year 7.





## Joanne Bleasdale

As one of the first cohorts to exit from the KS2/3 teacher training route, Head of Department Joanne, who is currently completing her Masters degree in Educational Leadership and Management, has recently been appointed as Lancashire's Advanced Skills Teacher for design and technology.

After completing her degree at Edge Hill University in 2002, Joanne worked in a Liverpool based inner city school before moving to Lostock Hall Academy in Preston. Since qualifying almost ten years ago Joanne has taught a huge range of subjects including PE, RE, history, engineering, food technology and art. Her passion however lies within resistant materials, for which she has twice 'won' the Good Schools Guide for girls studying Resistant Materials.

Joanne is very clear about how her training on this unique course has been of benefit to her career "Having experience in primary and secondary schools widens pedagogical knowledge and understanding of the transition phase from Year 6 – Year 7" she continues,

**“ it is beneficial to know what primary school students are likely to have experienced when they begin in Year 7. ”**

Joanne believes this has enabled her to have a greater awareness of the importance of learning styles, an ability to teach a wide range of subjects due to studying all subjects to Key Stage 2 and as a result has been involved in the delivery of whole school INSET, projects and initiatives. She has a flare for creativity, and her approach to teaching

demonstrates flexibility and adaptability. Despite her ever increasing number of responsibilities Joanne still ensures she celebrates students work and as such she still co-ordinates the displays for open evenings and primary partnership week.

In only her second year of teaching Joanne was appointed Assistant Head of Year 8, and only a year after that she was appointed Head of Design and Technology at the tender age of twenty-four. As Joanne explains "my training gave me a sound working knowledge of all of the design and technology areas, and this allows me to coach and mentor colleagues working in other disciplines within my department". Having been accepted onto the Fast Track Teaching scheme in April 2004, Joanne was recognised as one of the 'Top 50 Fast Track' teachers in March 2009.

