

2nd Edition

SUCCESSFUL INDUCTION for New Teachers

[a guide for NQTs and Induction
Tutors, Coordinators and Mentors]

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6

Professional development

The range of professional development activities
Coaching and mentoring
Observation
Video
Learning conversations
Courses and conferences



Becoming a better teacher doesn't just happen through trial and error. Professional development speeds up the process if it's planned well so that it has a positive impact and gives good value for the time and money that your school invests in it. Having two or three hours a week for professional development is probably the best bit of all your induction entitlement. Although two-thirds of my Lambeth NQTs felt they had made good use of professional development opportunities, a third felt that they had only made 'a little' use of it. You'll never have as much opportunity again, so you need to make the most of it, as Julian's Term 1 induction programme shows (Table 2.6 on p. 22). It's easy to fritter this time away in catching up with whatever else needs doing – planning, marking, phone calls – but people regret it when they no longer have that time.

I've only been on one course and want to participate in as many as possible next term. Any suggestions as to where to look, good websites etc.? (NQT, Term 2)

I hear this type of comment so often! People often only think of professional development as referring to courses, yet the range of on-the-job, off-the-job, and close-to-the-job professional development opportunities is huge. Rather than wondering what courses to go on, the NQT should approach it from the opposite angle. What do you want to be better at or know more about – and what's the best use of time and money? Budgets are never big enough, if they exist at all. The costs of going on a course, for instance, include the fees, travel, subsistence and supply cover. But there are invisible costs too: the time and effort taken to analyse needs, find the right course, and to book it. Then there's the cost of disruption to pupils' education, and to colleagues who have their timetable altered or who have to support the supply teacher. Against these questions of cost, however, how can the benefits be measured? How do you measure what you've learned; your greater self-confidence and esteem; that newfound energy; what you do differently and its impact on the school and all present and future pupils? It's very hard but these are issues to be aware of.

The range of professional development activities

Once you've decided what you want and need to develop (which isn't easy, as we saw in the previous chapter), choose the best way to do so, bearing in mind how

you learn, how much time you have and what resources (human, financial and physical) are available. They might come from:

- within school, e.g. coaching/mentoring, lesson observation and feedback, collaborative planning and teaching;
- cross-school networks;
- other external expertise, e.g. external courses or advice offered by, for example, local authorities, universities, subject associations and private providers.

However, there are also further broad categories such as private study. Perhaps one of the most individualised, cheap and flexible ways to get better at teaching is through reading. And it's a lovely thing to do whether you're standing on the train going to work, sitting in the garden, lying on the sofa or even snuggled under the duvet! You can get more knowledge, ideas, food for thought and inspiration.

Here's a list of ways you could develop:

1. Reflect – take some time to think.
2. Ask your pupils – even seven-year-olds will be pretty expert at what teachers do that helps or hinders because they will already have encountered several teachers.
3. Watch someone teach – a teacher, an assistant, a football coach, a learning mentor, anyone.
4. Watch some individuals learning.
5. Discuss things with other new teachers and more knowledgeable others.
6. Try things out.
7. Arrange to visit an 'expert', or ask one in.
8. Go on a course or conference.
9. Watch videos, e.g. www.teachersmedia.co.uk
10. Visit another school, similar to or different from yours.
11. Read a book or document.
12. Search the Internet.
13. Find someone to coach-mentor you.
14. Ask someone to observe you.
15. Do a search on the *Times Education Supplement (TES)* staffroom or post your query.
16. Keep a learning log, reflective diary or blog.
17. Arrange for someone with expertise to work with you.
18. Read books and the educational press.
19. Do some research, perhaps with others.
20. Join a network where there is some input, lots of stimulation from people in other schools and an expectation of improving something specific.



Activity 6.1

Analysing the professional development involved in one objective

After discussion with her induction tutor, Hannah set herself an objective about teaching mathematical problem-solving better. She observed the head of maths teaching a problem-solving lesson, and they discussed strategies.

She introduced me to a few handy schemes and books which I've started using and as I've become more confident I've started adapting their ideas and getting feedback from the children. Her recent observation of my teaching of problem-solving made me realise how much progress I'd made – and all the children are doing well, particularly the more able. Would you believe that after a lesson on recording combinations systematically, a girl worked out all the combinations on a bike lock and tried to break into her own bike! (NQT, Term 3)

Discuss these questions

- (a) What elements of professional development led to Hannah's improved teaching of problem-solving?
- (b) What lessons can you learn from this?

Coaching and mentoring

☞ *All staff at school have been supportive towards NQTs and have played a role in mentoring me this year. (NQT, Term 3)* ☞

Adults learn best when they determine their own focus, through being asked questions and being given time to reflect (Bubb and Earley, 2010), so being coached or mentored is an important part of induction. Those acting in the role of coach-mentor – usually induction tutors – need to have the appropriate personal qualities and the knowledge and skills to be able to coach in subtle but effective ways: by active listening, asking questions and holding new teachers accountable for the actions agreed. Coaching courses often base themselves around models such as STRIDE:

- Strengths
- Target
- Reality
- Ideas
- Decisions
- Evaluations

or GROW:

- Goals – what do you want?
- Reality – what is happening now?
- Options – what could you do?
- Will – what will you do?

There is a lot of evidence to suggest that acting as a mentor or coach is highly beneficial. People in a coaching-mentoring role should try to help you think of pragmatic solutions rather than perfect ones. When things are tough, induction tutors should encourage the new teacher to think of the kids who do behave and focus on teaching them.

Working with an expert

New teachers can get help from people with expertise. Heather got some fantastic insights about how autistic children see the world from James, an advanced skills teacher from a special school, and his reading of Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (2003). She rethought her handling of the autistic child in her class:

I've implemented some strategies such as using a timer to help him structure his work and to help him keep calm by letting him go on the classroom workstation when things get stressful.
(NQT, Term 2)

Observation

Observation is a powerful tool for professional development. New teachers learn a great deal from watching others, and research has shown that they find observing and being observed the most useful of all induction activities (Bubb et al., 2002). There is much to observe, such as

- teachers in your school – advanced skills teachers, supply teachers, experienced, inexperienced ... anyone!
- support staff
- teachers in other schools – both those that are similar to and different from yours
- someone teaching your class
- someone teaching a lesson that you have planned
- a colleague taking an assembly
- a visiting expert
- a sports coach, an artist or a musician
- a lesson through a child's eyes
- classrooms and corridors.

When you're observing you can:

- watch and understand the development of complex classroom interactions;
- observe in a structured way how, when and with what effect a teacher uses different strategies;
- investigate the different effects of a range of teaching styles and strategies on how pupils respond and learn;

- internalise new approaches you may see in others' practice so that they become part of your repertoire;
- connect knowledge and practice (General Teaching Council for England, 2006: 2).

Good teachers make the most of any opportunities to observe others, formally or informally, around the school. It's very cheering to see that everyone has similar problems, and fascinating to study the different ways people manage them. Steven bravely confessed to being unsure how to teach phonics, so his induction tutor arranged for him to observe her Year 4 class and other staff teaching. He was delighted, saying:

I got loads of ideas and was able to put things into practice in my class in no time at all.
(NQT, Term 2)

However, observing so that one gets something out of it is not easy. People need to have a focus for observation because there is so much to see that they can end up getting overwhelmed. For instance, someone who wants to improve pace in introductions needs to notice the speed of the exposition, how many pupils answer questions and how the teacher manages to move them on, how instructions are given, how resources are distributed, and how off-task behaviour is dealt with. And then they must think how they could integrate it into their own practice.

There are lots of people you could observe but you need to think who's going to be most useful. Diana had problems with behaviour management, so she was sent to watch a teacher with a good reputation for control. She gained some ideas, but found that much of this experienced teacher's control was 'invisible' – he just cleared his throat and the class became quiet. This did nothing for her self-confidence, in fact she felt worse. After talking things through with her induction tutor, she observed a supply teacher and someone with only a little more experience than herself. These lessons, though not so perfectly controlled, gave Diana much more to think about and she learned lots of useful strategies. Both teachers found it useful to have Diana's views on the lesson, as a non-threatening observer, so they too gained from the experience.

There's much to be said for peer observation – new teachers observing each other for mutual benefit:

While watching exemplar teachers gives you great techniques that you strive to emulate, watching inexperienced teachers shows you much more effectively why certain things that you are doing aren't working much better than a feedback report does. (NQT, Term 2)

The benefits of being observed include the chance to:

- unpack the complexity of what you do in the classroom;
- look closely into one particular aspect of your teaching such as questioning;
- experiment with new teaching strategies;
- focus on what is happening to the learning of a particular group of pupils;
- discuss the impact of your teaching;
- connect knowledge and practice.

But unless it's set up properly it risks being too cosy, perpetuating the status quo and even mediocrity. There's potential for offence, upset and damaged relationships, so

you need training in peer observation techniques and protocol. As one teacher said: 'Filling in an observation feedback sheet on your friend is scary. There's such a responsibility to get it right.' Egos are fragile. Everyone needs to buy into the principle of peer observation equally and trust each other. You need to know that your peer isn't going to go badmouthing you in the staffroom. When it works, it's great:

I was told a few times that I needed to give my lessons more pace – which I fully accepted – but I wasn't able really to work out how to do this, or which parts of my lessons weren't pacy enough. It was only when I saw a new teacher in my own subject teach a lesson that I got what they meant about pace because she was too slow too. (NQT, Term 1)

Some schools set up 'learning threes' where teachers are teamed up across subjects and year groups. They help plan each other's lessons, then each teaches a lesson for the other two to observe and then all three discuss what happened.

Three newly qualified teachers at a primary school were encouraged to do peer observation by their induction tutor. Behaviour was an issue for all of them, so they decided to focus on that for their observations. When Year 1 teacher, Ria, was observed she made an effort to use as many strategies for behaviour as she could, not only to help her friends but to prove to herself what she could do. Nursery teacher, Becky, was reassured that she was doing well because there were so many similarities between their teaching. She found that she was able to learn more because everything was more relaxed than in an official observation. Because Becky and Ria casually pointed out how Lucy, teaching Year 3, overused the word 'excellent', she varied how she praises. The conversations after the observation are where the real learning happens.

Being observed

Feedback on teaching is really valuable – if it's done well (see the next chapter). While on induction you should be observed every six weeks or so, so it's worth getting as much as you can out of it. Teaching requires a lot of self-confidence, so you should be looking to people to boost yours rather than knocking it. With a bit of luck, you'll feel brave enough as the year goes on to be observed teaching something that normally doesn't go well. Being nervous is perfectly normal, but try to address your worries and do something about them, as illustrated in Table 6.1.

Here are some suggestions for how to prepare for an observation:

- Plan with even more care than usual. Be completely prepared.
- Have a copy of the lesson plan for the observer.
- Be absolutely clear about what you want the pupils to learn and do.
- Make sure your teaching and the activities match the objectives.
- Have as much stuff as you can written up on the board beforehand.
- Think about what the person observing you is looking for. Address things that haven't gone well before.
- Do everything you can to feel confident – wear your favourite teaching clothes; encourage others to boost you; sleep well; tell yourself that you're going to teach well.

Don't panic if things start to go wrong. Think on your feet. Most teachers have some lessons that go swimmingly, others that are OK and the occasional disasters.

Table 6.1 Concerns about being observed

| Your concern | Possible solutions |
|---|---|
| Pupils will be passive – won't engage | Plan something to get them lively. Use talk partners ('turn to your neighbour and tell them the answer to my question'). |
| The behaviour of one child will ruin everything | Plan for an assistant to be with the child. Make sure the work is just right. Or send them to someone else during the observation. |
| I can't get or keep attention | Do your best but see the observation as a way to get ideas so that you improve. |
| The pupils play up when I'm observed | Tell them that <i>they</i> are being observed. Remind them that you are expecting exemplary behaviour. |
| Technology will go wrong | Set it up beforehand; check and double-check; have a back-up in case it does go wrong. |
| I'll forget or lose key resources | Make a list of what you need, tick items off when collected, organise them. |
| The teaching assistant won't turn up | Keep reminding them that you're relying on them and give them a plan of what they should do. |
| The pupils will finish work too early | Have some extension work; make the task harder or open-ended. |
| I'll forget what I planned to do | Do a clear, written plan (that very act helps lodge it in your mind); keep your plan to hand on a distinctive clipboard to avoid it getting lost; have a spare just in case you leave it somewhere; use prompt cards; rehearse the lesson structure in your mind. |
| I'll forget what to say | Script key parts of the lesson especially questions; rehearse out loud and in your head. |
| I'll let the class wander off the point | Stay focused; put timings on your plan; write up the learning objective; plan questions that will guide the pupils' thinking. |

There are many factors to do with you and what you're teaching and then a whole heap to do with different classes, what lesson they've just had, and what time of day it is. So, don't beat yourself up about it.

The dialogue that takes place after a lesson observation is vital, and there's more on this in Chapter 8. There's no such thing as a perfect teacher (except in your mind) so lessons don't have to be perfect, but you can show that you're reflective, making progress and acting on advice. It's bad enough when a lesson doesn't go well but when someone has been in the room observing the chaos, you can sink to new levels of humiliation. Shedding tears in the staff loo is a perfectly normal reaction, but dry your eyes and see the feedback session as a way to get help. That's what induction is all about. Teaching is tough. People aren't born as super-teachers. Everyone has to work at it.

Video

I think what I get most out of the programmes I watch is a better understanding of kids in the classroom. (NQT, Term 3)

Watching videos can be a great way to help teachers develop. Teachers' TV produced hundreds of programmes, which can now be found at various websites:

- www.teachersmedia.co.uk/
- www.tes.co.uk/video

- www.teachfind.com/
- www.laserlearning.tv
- www.prometheanplanet.com/PDTV
- www.proteachersvideo.com

You often have to register, but this is usually free. There are many pitched at new teachers, such as those in Table 6.2 and others like those in the *Teaching with Bayley* series that are great for those who mentor them too because John Bayley uses superb coaching skills. Take a look at *Ecoutez* or *Too Much Talk*.

I've taught electricity a couple of times with children running round a 'circuit' of other children, mimicking the particle flow. The one on Teachers TV did it similarly but with balls being passed round. If my class could cope with the physical process of continuous passing, each child having one ball at any one time, it'd help their understanding. I'm going to try it out – but now I think about it, with an improved model for the switch!

See how the programmes reassure but spark new ideas? Teaching can be a solitary business, but video gives a window on the world of teaching and learning. You can spy on and discuss lessons without having to intrude or disrupt, and you can dismiss, damn or copy the ideas – and it's all safe.

A NQT course about teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language helped one teacher to re-evaluate her practice. After the training, she watched the videos that were mentioned and found them invaluable in planning for and meeting the needs of pupils.

I sometimes encourage a girl to write in her first language and use this to assess her understanding of concepts. As an extension she sometimes tries to translate her own work in oral English – the rest of the group really find it fascinating.

Table 6.2 Programmes specifically for new teachers

| Secondary NQTs | Primary NQTs |
|---|---|
| <i>Expert Advice 1 and 2</i> | <i>Working with Others</i> |
| <i>Teaching with Style</i> | <i>Fit to Teach – D-Stressing</i> |
| <i>Extending Your Range</i> | <i>Fit to Teach – Food and Fitness</i> |
| <i>Making PPA Work for You</i> | <i>Assessment and Lesson Observation</i> |
| <i>Survival Secrets</i> | <i>Testing Times</i> |
| <i>Differentiation</i> | <i>Practical Tips 1 and 2</i> |
| <i>Reporting to Parents</i> | <i>From One Thing to Another</i> |
| <i>Sharing the Load</i> | <i>Getting There</i> |
| <i>Lesson Observation</i> | <i>Managing Behaviour</i> |
| <i>Time Management</i> | <i>Lesson Planning on the Web</i> |
| <i>First Year and Beyond</i> | <i>Early Days</i> |
| <i>Classroom Management</i> | <i>Work–Life Balance</i> |
| <i>Classroom Encounters with Cowley</i> | <i>Simrit and Victoria – Episodes 1 and 2</i> |
| <i>Lesson planning</i> | <i>Passing Out</i> |



Activity 6.2

Learning from a video

Watch *Lesson Planning* from the *Secondary NQTs* series (www.teachersmediauk.co.uk/videos/lesson-planning). This charts modern foreign language teacher Clare Hewitt's progress over her first term of teaching and takes a detailed look at how she is tackling her lesson planning. Clare's finding it hard to motivate Key Stage 4 classes and wants to plan dynamic lessons to keep them interested. Using mind-mapping, mentor Sarah Williams helps Clare to plan a Year 10 French lesson for pupils of mixed ability.

Use the prompts in Table 6.3 to stimulate discussion and aid your learning.

Table 6.3 Using a video to stimulate discussion and learning

| Parts of the programme www.teachersmediauk.co.uk/ videos/lesson-planning | Think about... |
|---|---|
| <i>Lesson planning</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How should NQTs get on top of planning? • What advice should a mentor be offering? |
| <i>Clare says she's going to use different techniques to appeal to different kinds of learners.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does this tell us about Clare's approach to teaching? • Should all teachers be thinking about this? |
| <i>The role of the mentor</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is this mentor doing that is useful? • What do you expect from the NQT–mentor relationship? |
| <i>Mind-mapping</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this a useful technique for lesson planning? • Are there other techniques you would recommend NQTs try? |
| <i>The lesson plan</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the plan look? • Are there other things she should have included? |
| <i>The lesson</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you notice here of interest? • What did you think of the activities? • Anything about her manner or body language? • How does she relate to pupils? • Any tips here? |
| <i>Mentor in the lesson</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the mentor observing the lesson? |
| <i>Feedback session</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sort of feedback does a NQT need in the early stages of teaching? |
| <i>General comments</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have you noticed in general about Clare and how she's organising things? • What can you learn from this? • Any other suggestions? |

Learning conversations

All teachers can think of a conversation that has changed their professional practice. This can happen at school, on a TeachMeet, by messaging and through social media. If you're looking for learning conversations, support and professional development, the *TES* website's hugely popular community (<http://community.tes.co.uk/>) is freely available 24/7 and 365 days a year.

I've found empathy, humour, debates, great websites, camaraderie, and satisfaction in knowing I'm not the only one that crazy stupid things happen to. I've shared oodles of resources and gained oodles as well. I have to admit, I'm addicted.

Although the TES community is massive it feels cosy, as if you're listening to real friends. Anyone can pop in. Lots of them just read: 'even though I don't post here very often, I read most nights'. To post a message you join the two million who've registered.

Registering is easy – the hardest part is choosing a witty username that hides your true identity. Some of the site's success must be down to the freedom that comes with this anonymity: people can ask the questions that they'd be too embarrassed to raise elsewhere. Some parts of the staffroom have 'experts' popping in to give advice – I led the way with the new teacher forum. There are over 50 virtual corners of the staffroom where people with the same interests hang out. As well as different forums for subjects, there's a place for every type of school staff – not just teachers but trainees, admin, teaching assistants and governors as well.

They're one of the few places where teachers and support staff can say what they need to say about their own jobs and the world beyond, where anyone in education with a problem can seek and usually find help from their peers or from experts, and where anyone with an educational axe to grind can get their 15 seconds of fame.

Schools can be lonely places where people don't have time to have professional learning conversations or share fantastic resources. But the posters on the forum are the very opposite. Want some ideas for tomorrow's lesson? Ask and you'll get ten top tips in no time, as well as worksheets and links to websites. It is a real learning community. The TES Resource Bank is an area where people can share materials – there are over 650,000 free teaching resources. In its first year more than 72,000 items were downloaded, like the calendar template that was downloaded by 2,000 people.

I've spoken to literally thousands of people by e-mail and getting on for a hundred on the phone. This has broadened my horizons, educated me, challenged me, stretched me, and given me a window into hundreds of other schools.

It's often said that the best thing about going on courses is meeting other people, and nowhere is this social side seen more than in the busiest parts of the staffroom, Opinion and Personal. Here you can have a chat, put the world to rights, do some verbal sparring and play games – all without having to leave the house. Many friendships and romances have blossomed in this way – and some marriages. You can't say that about many courses!

Courses and conferences

When well chosen, going on a course is one of the ways to gain a good level of professional development very quickly. There are hundreds of courses run by local authorities, subject associations, national bodies, teacher associations and unions, universities, private outfits and schools themselves. Conferences offer the chance to hear an inspirational speaker and meet up with other people with the same interest. They're a good way to keep informed of the latest developments in the field.

I gained a wealth of knowledge and ideas from all NQT sessions. I take a lot of notes so was able to reflect on them. I fed back my new learning to staff at a staff meeting. (NQT, Term 3)

It's ideal for all the NQTs in a school, network or local authority to get together. Some schools have a programme of training sessions for new teachers about common concerns which can be addressed en masse, but, even more importantly, they benefit from the opportunity to chat. Many local authorities run courses for new teachers. My course for primary NQTs is on 12 half days over the year. These sessions not only give people practical ideas that they can try out straight away, they're an essential support network for teachers working in one of the most difficult areas in England. New teachers are their own best support network: it's good to realise that they're not the only ones who can't get their class to assembly or who aren't enjoying the job or liking all their pupils. As one said:

It's lovely when you speak to other reception teachers and they say exactly the same things and you think, that's super, because I know it's not just my children, and it's not just me.

Some courses and conferences are held after school, on Saturdays or in holidays, which means that pupils' learning isn't disrupted. Not many people seem to know that you can get paid to attend courses in your own time – after all, you're saving the school the cost of a supply teacher or the hassle of covering absence internally.

The opportunity to network with other new teachers and broaden horizons is an important factor in deciding where to go on a course. Those organised by the local authority enable you to meet up with people from local schools and get to know the advisers and inspectors, which is hugely advantageous. Sometimes the local scene gets a little insular, so going to a venue that attracts a wider range of people can be great and gives a broader perspective. It's also a good way to find out about jobs!

One of the big advantages of going on a course is that actually being out of the school building and atmosphere gives you some time and space to think, to reflect. However, there's a danger that though you're inspired on the day, you go back into school and by 9.05 you're too overwhelmed to put things into practice. You need to be an active learner, always thinking about what you can implement in your context. A two-and-a-half-hour session for NQTs on managing behaviour with John Bayley had a lasting effect:

I've changed how I praise: sometimes I'll boost the whole class but at other times I'll speak or give a thumbs up privately to an individual. Techniques like proximal praise are working well for children who always want my attention so rather than tell them off for shouting out I praise someone sitting near them who is doing the right thing.

The class are very noisy so I made a sound chart to show where the noise level needs to be – and is! Speaking from different parts of the room keeps everyone on their toes and aware of what they're meant to be doing. I try to keep my voice at a low pitch – it sounds calmer and more authoritative – and the children have started to speak in the same way! At challenging moments during the day things that John spoke about pop into my head: it's so wonderful to have a range of strategies to draw on. (NQT, Term 1)

As well as the topics covered, courses just for NQTs offer a chance to share experiences, ask questions and seek advice in a non-threatening atmosphere. But most of all: the support of other NQTs at these sessions and opportunities to discuss experiences was invaluable.

I took away a reassuring sense that I'm doing the same as they are and employing similar teaching methods and was really pleased that the other teachers appreciated my ideas. The best kind of professional development possible is learning from each other! (NQT, Term 3)

Some courses that last for more than one day have activities built into them so that people have a 'learn, do and review' structure. For instance, within my induction

tutor course, participants are asked to set up an individualised induction programme, set and review objectives and related action plans for the NQTs' development through the year; write feedback from lessons that they have observed; and write assessment reports at the end of each term. All these are tasks that induction tutors have a statutory responsibility to do but being on the course means that people get a chance to discuss them – and be rewarded through gaining credits towards a Master's degree.

Helping other teachers

When I'm not snowed under, it's nice to be able to help someone else. It's a bit of a confidence boost when you can give a useful answer! (NQT)

Professional development is an entitlement, an expectation and a responsibility for teachers throughout their careers. But it's win-win: not only do you become a better teacher, but also you have evidence that you're meeting standards to help you on your career path. In schools, there's always someone who knows the answer to a question about the curriculum but remember that you're not a know-nothing new bug, because there are lots of things you know and can do through being fresh from training that are useful to experienced colleagues and other new teachers.

While I have to learn a great deal from others, I can also be useful in helping people and this has helped me really feel part of the team. I suppose lots of people go into teaching because they want to make a difference, and it's nice to know that sometimes I can be leading that difference-making, not just following someone else.

Thinking more about a subject in order to help someone sort out a problem sharpens your understanding.

I don't see the point of sitting on knowledge that others want and not sharing. I get a bit of a warm fuzzy feeling when someone asks something of me in particular because I'm known to have a strength in that subject or area.

And of course, there are few people more grateful for help or support than busy teachers.

Both NQTs and induction tutors can get recognition from elsewhere. With many PGCEs now carrying master's level credits, consider enrolling on a MA course. Some courses are geared towards new teachers. It's great intellectual stimulation. Most MAs will require you to do some action research in school, which has numerous spin-offs. One teacher uses talk partners as a way of developing the learning of all pupils, especially the large number who speak English as an additional language, but she is investigating what types of pairing work best:

- Single-sex pairs
- Boy-girl pairs
- Ability pairs
- Friendship pairs
- Does it differ with the age of the children?

Your learning can be used for evidence of professional reflection, make a difference in school and can be disseminated to maximise the benefit. In the next chapter we look at how observations of new teachers are a valuable form of professional development as well as a significant way to monitor development.