



The National Association of  
School-Based Teacher Trainers

## NASBTT Opinion Piece

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### How can we make apprenticeships work for every school?

I'm looking forward to next month's [Establishing and Delivering Apprenticeships](#) conference, where I'm delivering a keynote speech on Making Apprenticeships Work for Every School. So how can we make them work? Here are my top tips:

1. You can't do it alone – partnership is key. Teaching Apprenticeships can only be delivered by accredited training providers so it's vital that, early on in the process, you find a partner which is offering apprenticeships.
2. If you're in a local authority maintained school, you must establish conversations with them as soon as possible. Not only do they hold the levy purse strings (so you will need to be sure that they will pass some of the levy back to you), they may have complex procurement processes that determine which provider you have to work with.
3. Consider how you balance the role of a teacher with the development a brand new entrant is going to need. They are employees and you'll want to ensure value for money – but expecting an apprentice to step straight into the role of a teacher from day one is unreasonable, unethical and unrealistic.
4. If you're 'growing your own', and appointing from within, consider how you're going to help the apprentice transition from their previous role. It can be notoriously difficult for a teaching assistant, no matter how competent they are, to make the transition to 'teacher'. Much depends on the ethos of the school and how supportive and understanding the team around them are.
5. Involve everyone on your team in the apprentice's development. They will have a 'named mentor' but mentorship goes beyond the formal relationship or the one-to-one meetings (although these are really important). They say 'it takes a village' and this is especially true when developing new teachers.
6. Value the mentor (or as we prefer to refer to them, school-based teacher educator). An apprentice will fail fast if they aren't given sufficient time and support and their mentor is the biggest single factor in determining success. If the mentor is under pressure, busy, disinterested or worse, annoyed at being given an apprentice to "look after", you have a recipe for disaster from the off.
7. The impact of not looking after your apprentice goes far beyond just one potential new recruit. Apprentices train together and talk to one another. If their experience of your school isn't a positive one, word will spread like wildfire – don't be the one left wondering why no NQTs are applying for your post. Your apprentice can be your greatest advocate, or your harshest critic.

Emma Hollis is Executive Director of the National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers (NASBTT)

**-ENDS-**

NASBTT is a registered charity committed to promoting high-quality schools-led programmes of training, education and professional development of teachers.

NASBTT represents the interests of schools-led teacher training provision in relation to the development and implementation of national policy developments. Our members include SCITT providers, School Direct Lead Schools, Teaching Schools, HEIs as well as a range of other organisations involved in the education and professional development of teachers. We have 195 members representing almost 7,000 individual trainees.

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