



The National Association of
School-Based Teacher Trainers

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Schools pulling teacher training placements for 2020-21, according to NASBTT survey

A “worryingly high” number of schools say they are not in a position to offer teacher training placements in the next academic year, according to the findings of a survey by the National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers (NASBTT).

From 247 responses to a survey which closed on 1st June, 124 School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) providers, School Direct Lead Schools and HEIs have reported that school partners had informed them they are unable to participate in training programmes in 2020-21.

Furthermore, 81% of ITT providers are more concerned about securing sufficient school placements next year compared to previous years and 45% of providers have closed, or are considering closing, programmes as a result of placements.

The findings come at a time when latest figures show that there has been unprecedented increases in the number of applicants accepted for places on postgraduate ITT courses in the month between mid-April and mid-May: 30,600 compared with nearly 29,400 in May 2019, and also marking some 4,000 new applicants since mid-April.

“ITT providers have told us, through our survey, that schools are not offering placements primarily due to concerns over the post Covid-19 transition, including worries about having additional people in school, the reluctance to allow trainee teachers to teach given the amount of time children have been away from school, the need to focus on other priorities, and uncertainty resulting from the pandemic,” NASBTT Executive Director Emma Hollis explained.

“Additionally, capacity in schools (and in particular mentor capacity), concerns over the amount of support NQTs will need and therefore not being able to also support ITTs, and general anxiety over school finances have all been given as reasons for the decision. The number of schools who appear to be withdrawing placements is worryingly high, especially at a time when we are seeing increasing applications to teaching.”

Emma called on the Department of Education to “act now” to ensure that there is no permanent damage to the system. “We would like to see supportive communications to schools, including clear guidance and encouragement to take ITTs and NQTs in the next academic year; but if needed, a requirement for schools to engage in ITT,” she said. “Funding, including suggestions for funding to schools to incentivise placements and to providers to support additional mentoring time, is also a consideration. And further guidance to ITT providers on areas such as social distancing for training and flexibility in online offerings is also worthy of attention. The bigger picture also shows concerns about the ITT Core Content Framework and Ofsted Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Inspection Framework, and both of these could be delayed or relaxed to give ITT providers some much needed breathing space.”

Giving his reaction to the findings, James Noble-Rogers, Executive Director of the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), added: “We are extremely worried about the likely shortage of school placements next year and the impact it could have on recruitment to ITE. At a time when we are experiencing the first significant increase in applications to ITE for many years, it would be a great shame if potentially excellent teachers were turned away because of placement difficulties. The government could help to address this by pointing out to schools the benefits of participating in ITE, and giving ITE providers the flexibility that they need to maximise existing placement opportunities.”

-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 over 200 members representing more than 10,000 individual trainees.

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