



The National Association of
School-Based Teacher Trainers

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2021 Teacher Wellbeing Index: response to ITT findings

The 2021 [Teacher Wellbeing Index](#), an annual report produced by charity Education Support in conjunction with YouGov, has been published, finding that “teachers’ mental health is getting worse – not better – in several areas, compared to a year ago at the height of the Covid pandemic”. According to this year’s Index, 74% of teachers think their Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses do not prepare them well to manage their own wellbeing, although findings do indicate that there is a small improvement among those who have trained more recently, pointing to a slowly improving picture.

In response, NASBTT Executive Director Emma Hollis said: “Whilst the report points to an emerging picture of improvement in ITT, we recognise there is still more work to do and continue to work closely with Education Support, and ITT providers, to support trainees’ wellbeing.

Formal recognition is needed of mental health as a training need. This is true for the ITT year but also specific referencing is needed in the Early Career Framework and National Professional Qualifications so it becomes a career-long priority. No isolated programme can adequately prepare an individual for what is a complex interplay between many moving parts which change and evolve over time, point in career, personal circumstances and lived experience in schools.

We also believe that there is increasing evidence of the need for professional supervision to support teacher wellbeing. This is commonplace for many in caring professions, and would recognise the multi-faceted nature of what teachers do and increased expectations on staff due to extended expectations on schools during closures of social and community support. Training providers and teacher educators themselves would benefit from professional development opportunities to equip them to support others. Signposting to, and access to funding for, quality training in this field would be welcomed.

Outside of ITT, we warmly welcome the Department for Education’s £760,000 investment in a new mental health support scheme for school leaders, launching the education staff wellbeing charter which commits to reducing unnecessary teacher workload, championing flexible working and improving access to wellbeing resources.”

Key ITT findings:

- 74% of teachers consider their ITT courses did not prepare them well to manage their own wellbeing.
- 65% of teachers consider their ITT courses did not prepare them well to manage their pupils’/students wellbeing.
- In 2021, teachers working for up to five years felt better prepared to prioritise their own wellbeing than those working longer:
 - 23% of 0-2 years.
 - 26% of 3-5 years.
 - 20% of 6-10 years.

- 10% of 11-20 years.
- 10% of 21-30 years.
- 6% of 31+years.
- Early career staff (0-2 years) were most likely to experience panic attacks, dizziness, changes to appetite, over-eating, irritability/mood swings, tearfulness and forgetfulness.
- Recommendation from the report: Existing frameworks present opportunities for improvements: Newly qualified teachers are at risk of experiencing a range of symptoms of poor mental health. A consistent approach to quality training that prioritises mental health and wellbeing must be adopted. In England, existing training frameworks including the Initial Teacher Training Core Content framework, Early Career Framework and National Professional Qualifications provide a real opportunity for improvement. We invite all Education Departments and training providers to work with us to ensure that mental health and wellbeing is consistently prioritised within all frameworks and teachers feel prepared to face the challenges of the profession.

-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 SCITTs, School Direct Lead Schools, Teaching School Hubs, HEIs as well as a range of other organisations involved in the education and professional development of teachers. We have over 250 members representing more than 12,000 individual trainees.

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