



**Teach First**

Funded by



Department  
for Education

# Early Career Training Programme

INDUCTION TUTOR PROGRAMME GUIDE | YEAR 1

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# Introduction

Welcome to the Teach First Early Career Training Programme (ECTP). We're delighted to be working with you and your school to ensure your Early Career Teachers (ECTs) have the best possible start to their teaching careers. Your role as an induction tutor is central to this success, and this guide is designed to support you every step of the way.

The ECTP has been developed in collaboration with schools and sector experts and is underpinned by the latest educational research. It is designed to be both practical and impactful—supporting ECTs to build strong foundations in their teaching practice.

## This guide will help you to:

- understand your responsibilities as an induction tutor and how they align with statutory induction requirements
- support mentors and ECTs to engage fully with the Early Career Training Programme (ECTP)
- gain a clear overview of the training structure, including modules, seminars, and self-directed study for both ECTs and mentors
- quality assure the delivery of the programme in your school

You'll also find practical guidance to help you embed the programme effectively and ensure your ECTs receive the high-quality support they are entitled to.

We're excited to work with you to deliver a programme that not only supports new teachers but also strengthens your school's professional learning culture.

# About the Early Career Teacher Entitlement (ECTE)

The Early Career Teacher Entitlement (ECTE) is a 2-year entitlement that supports ECTs at the start of their teaching career. It is at the heart of the DfE's teacher recruitment and retention strategy to transform the support teachers get at the beginning of their career. It is designed to develop their professional skills and provide them with the knowledge and skills to meet the teachers' standards.

There are five main elements to their entitlement:

1. Access to an early career 'training programme' for ECTs (ECTP)
2. Mentor support for ECTs
3. A comprehensive training programme for mentors
4. Time off timetable for ECTs and mentors
5. Regular progress reviews and 2 formal assessments for ECTs against the teachers' standards.

## DfE Funding

The ECTE is fully funded by the DfE. Schools receive funding to reduce an ECTs timetable in year 1 by 10% (additional to their PPA time), and 5% in year 2. This funding is also used to provide mentors with time to both work with their ECT and engage in their own training. The funding schools receive is dependent on ECTs and mentors' engagement with the programme. Teach First will collect engagement data for ECTs and mentors, which will be shared with the DfE.

Full details around eligibility and funding for the ECTE can be found [here](#)

# Working with Teach First

Teach First is an educational charity whose mission is to make the UK education system work for every child, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. We aim to end educational inequality by training great teachers and developing strong school leaders, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to fulfil their potential, regardless of where they grow up.

Teach First is an Ofsted outstanding Lead Provider of the Early Career Framework (ECF) since 2020. We are proud to be able to continue to offer ECTs and their mentors a high quality and impactful programme as a part of the ECF. By working with Teach First your school will benefit from:

- **Experience:** Teach First has over 20 years of experience helping training Teachers and leaders.
- **School-led approach:** The programme is developed with schools, for schools.
- **Local delivery:** Programme delivered by local experienced teachers.
- **Expertise:** Evidence informed and research led training, supported by experts in education.
- **Flexibility:** Online learning resources that fit around teachers' timetables.
- **Subject/phase specific approach:** Subject and phase specific support for ECTs and mentors.
- **Workload and wellbeing:** ECT and mentor workload and wellbeing at the heart of the programmes design.
- **Additional support:** Access to optional modules related to school leadership and teaching in special schools.

*"This high-quality programme is specifically designed to fit in with Early Career Teachers reduced timetable in order that their workload is manageable. ECTs are provided with a variety of stimulus to support them in building a strong and rich knowledge base which can be embedded immediately in classroom practice. Regular seminars facilitated by experts provide ECTs with opportunities to reflect upon and discuss current teaching strategies in their phase and subject specific areas.*

*Independent learning, accessible online, extends ECTs thinking beyond the seminar; all materials are underpinned by credible research. These two components coupled with frequent mentoring interactions ensures all ECTs are receiving the best possible support as they embark on the most phenomenal career!"*

**Emma Taylor – Deputy Director –  
Teach School Hubs, Bright Futures.**

# ECTE Induction tutor roles and responsibilities

Thank you for taking on the role of ECTE induction tutor. We recognise the vital role you play in ensuring a successful induction experience for ECTs. A strong start, supported by a committed and knowledgeable senior colleague, is often key to developing excellent teachers and improving teacher retention. According to the Department for Education (DfE), the induction tutor has four core responsibilities:

- **Lead and coordinate** the delivery of the ECTE within your school.
- **Inform the DfE** of any changes related to the ECTE in your school.
- **Review and assess** each ECTs progress against the teachers' standards.
- **Act as the main point of contact** for all individuals involved in the ECTE.

**You can find more detailed guidance on the DfE website:**

[Induction tutors: responsibilities for early career teacher entitlement](#)

To ensure the successful delivery of the ECTE, it's essential that everyone involved has a clear understanding of their role. This table provides a practical breakdown of the key responsibilities for induction tutors—building a level of detail onto the four core duties outlined by the DfE—as well as for mentors and ECTs. These responsibilities will be explored in greater detail later in this guide.

Responsibilities	
<b>Induction Tutor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be a senior leader in school with responsibility for overseeing the effective implementation of the ECTE.</li> <li>• make sure the programme complements statutory induction</li> <li>• make sure timetables allow for ECT and mentor engagement</li> <li>• maintain ECT and mentor engagement</li> <li>• select an appropriate mentor</li> <li>• follow the process for changing mentors</li> <li>• quality assure the programme</li> </ul>
<b>Mentor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be an experienced teacher who is paired with the early career teacher to support them directly through the programme</li> <li>• attend the mentor Welcome Conference</li> <li>• monitor ECT engagement</li> <li>• arrange weekly interactions</li> <li>• select the highest leverage area of development as part of an instructional coaching cycle</li> <li>• complete mentor diagnostic to tailor ECTs curriculum</li> <li>• attend mentor training seminars</li> <li>• engage with weekly mentor self-directed study materials</li> <li>• inform delivery partners or induction tutors if they cannot attend a seminar</li> </ul>
<b>ECT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attend the ECT Welcome Conference</li> <li>• engage with weekly self-directed study</li> <li>• attend ECT training seminars</li> <li>• inform induction tutor or delivery partner if they cannot attend a seminar</li> <li>• attend and engage in weekly mentor interactions</li> </ul>

If an ECT is unable to meet the engagement requirements, they may be withdrawn from our programme and your school will need to find an alternative route or method for them to meet the expectations of the

Alongside the induction tutor, mentor and ECT themselves, there are two further roles that you and will interact with:

### **1. Delivery Partners**

Partners working with Teach First to deliver the Early Career Training Programme in your school. All delivery partners are highly experienced in training and supporting teachers, as well as leading local and national networks. Delivery partners will be leading the ECTP for ECTs and mentors in school.

### **2. Seminar facilitators**

Seminar facilitators are experienced practitioners who are experts in training teachers. Facilitators will be organised through delivery partners and their sessions will either be online or delivered in person.



# Early Career Training Programme structure

Before we look in detail at the programme structure, it is important to introduce you to two learning platforms that will be referenced frequently throughout this guide.

## **My Teach First**

My Teach First is the online platform that both ECTs and mentors use to access their self-directed study materials. They will receive a welcome email, followed by a separate email containing their My Teach First login information.

If ECTs or mentors do not receive their login details within seven days of their welcome email, or if they experience any technical issues, they can get in touch via the 'Contact Us' button on My Teach First. Their query will be directed to colleagues in the Teach First Contact Centre, who will work to resolve any issues.

## **Brightspace**

Brightspace is the learning platform that hosts all our online content. ECTs and mentors will be directed towards Brightspace when they access the My Teach First platform. You will also get your own access to Brightspace through My Teach First using the Brightspace Learning Platform link on your home page. This will allow you to see all the content your ECTs and mentors will have access to.

## Year 1 at a glance

### 6 Modules (1 per half term)

- 1 How can you create an effective learning environment?
- 2 How do pupils learn?
- 3 What makes classroom practice effective?
- 4 How can you use assessment and feedback to greatest effect?
- 5 How can you support all pupils to succeed?
- 6 How can you design a coherent curriculum?

### Optional

### Excellent Teaching in Special School module

#### Time commitment

##### For ECTs

- **Welcome Conference**  
Full day (6 hours)
- **Self-directed study**  
3 hours 45 minutes per half term
- **Seminars**  
2 x 1 hour 30 minutes seminars per half term
- **Mentoring**  
Weekly sessions, 60 minutes in length

#### Time commitment

##### For mentors

- **Welcome Conference**  
Full day (6 hours)
- **Self-directed study weekly overview videos**  
1 hour per half term
- **Seminars**  
5 x 1 hour 30 minutes across the year
- **Mentoring**  
Weekly sessions, 1 hour in length
- **Diagnostic activity**  
as part of the 1 hour self-directed study

# ECT training and responsibilities

Session	Length	Title
1	60 minutes	The Teach First Early Career Training Programme
2	75 minutes	Developing your expertise
3	90 minutes	An introduction to instructional coaching
4	90 minutes	Using praise and consequences effectively*
5	30 minutes	Your wellbeing

*\*This session is also the first seminar of module 1*

## ECT Self-directed Study materials

Following the Welcome Conference, ECTs will begin engaging with their self-directed study materials. These weekly sessions are hosted on the Brightspace Learning Platform, which is accessed via My Teach First.

Each module takes approximately 3 hours and 45 minutes to complete over the course of a half term. There are six modules in total, each aligned with a half term in the academic year.

Self-directed module titles	
<b>Half term 1</b>	Module 1: How can you create an effective learning environment?
<b>Half term 2</b>	Module 2: How do pupils learn?
<b>Half term 3</b>	Module 3: What makes effective classroom practice?
<b>Half term 4</b>	Module 4: How can you use assessment and feedback to greatest effect?
<b>Half term 5</b>	Module 5: How can you support all pupils to succeed?
<b>Half term 6</b>	Module 6: How can you design a coherent curriculum?

## Module Seminars

ECTs will attend two module seminars per half term. Each seminar is 90 minutes long.

Module	Seminar 1	Seminar 2
<b>Module 1: How can you create an effective learning environment?</b>	Seminar 1: Using praise and consequences effectively *	Seminar 2: Holding high expectations of all pupils
<b>Module 2: How do pupils learn?</b>	Seminar 1: Avoiding working memory overload	Seminar 2: Building well-organised mental models
<b>Module 3: What makes effective classroom practice?</b>	Seminar 1: Using examples and non- examples	Seminar 2: Using questioning to extend and challenge thinking
<b>Module 4: How can you use assessment and feedback to greatest effect?</b>	Seminar 1: Structuring questions to anticipate and identify misconceptions	Seminar 2: Peer and self-assessment
<b>Module 5: How can you support all pupils to succeed?</b>	Seminar 1: Developing an inclusive classroom	Seminar 2: Supporting pupils with a greater level of need
<b>Module 6: How can you design a coherent curriculum?</b>	Seminar 1: Sequencing concepts, knowledge and skills	Seminar 2: Developing reading and writing

*\*This seminar is delivered as part of the ECT Welcome Conference.*

## Engagement with training

It is important that ECTs engage fully with all aspects of their training. Induction tutors play a key role in monitoring this engagement and providing support to mentors if their ECT is not sufficiently engaging with the programme. Induction tutors should act as an escalation point for mentors who have concerns.

ECTs must demonstrate a minimum of 75% engagement with their training offer across the two years of the programme . As such, it is essential to proactively support ECTs, and their mentors, in overcoming any challenges they may face in accessing or engaging with their training. ECTs will be at risk of being withdrawn from the programme if they do not demonstrate sufficient engagement.

## ECT Responsibilities

Earlier in this guide, a brief overview of the ECTs' responsibilities within the programme was provided. The following section offers a more detailed explanation of each of those responsibilities.

### 1. Engage with self-directed study

Each half term, ECTs will need to complete 3 hours, 45 min of self-directed study, which they can do at their own pace.

The self-directed study materials are structured into six modules, each containing five sessions to be completed across the half term. To evidence engagement and learning, it is essential that ECTs complete the 'knowledge check' at the end of each session.

#### **Complete the diagnostic activity to tailor their pathway through the self-directed study**

At the beginning of each module, the ECT will answer a set of diagnostic questions that will help them reflect on their current knowledge and understanding of the module content. It will take them approximately 10 minutes to complete.

ECTs are likely to have encountered many of the knowledge and skills outlined in the modules during their initial teacher training. However, they may not have fully mastered or consistently applied these in their teaching practice yet.

The results of the diagnostic will give an indication as to whether the ECT should engage with the 'core' materials or the 'summary and stretch' materials of each session of the module. The 'core' materials dive deeply into foundational knowledge and concepts covered in the module, while the 'summary and stretch' materials provide a concise overview of the core knowledge and challenge ECTs critical thinking by applying their knowledge to challenging classroom scenarios.

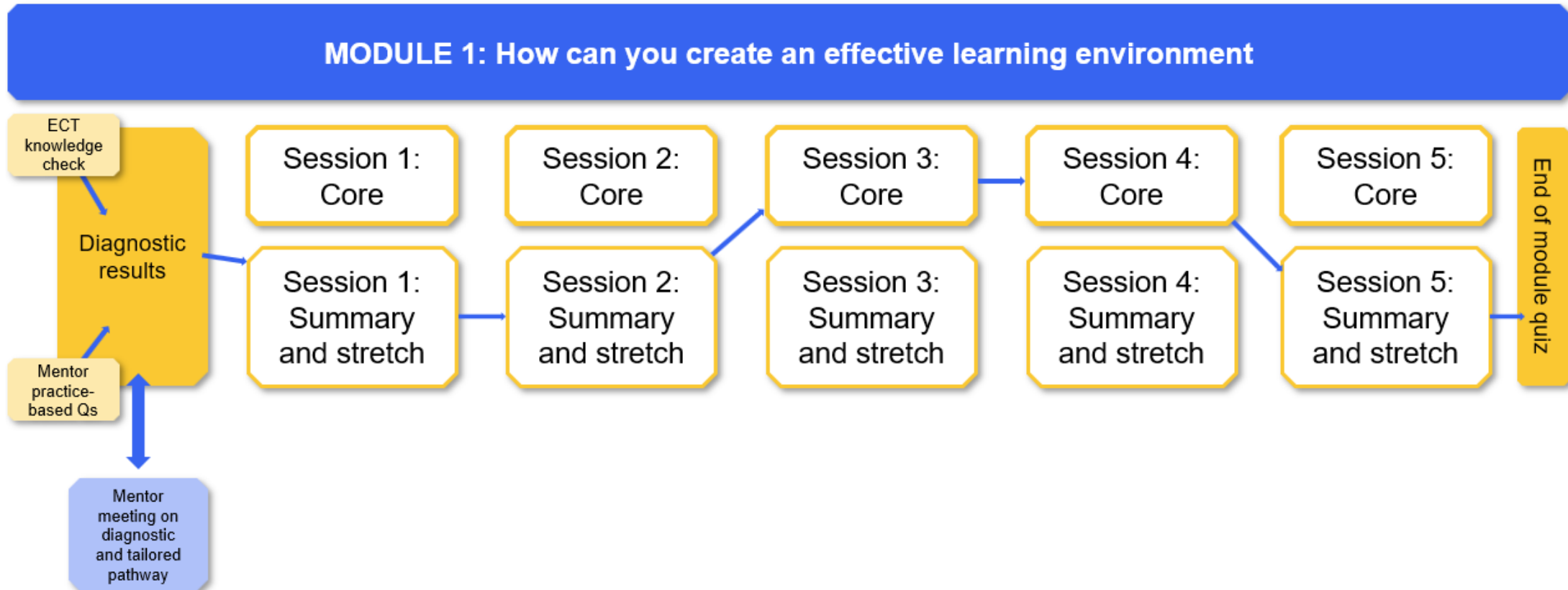
#### **Mentor involvement in tailoring the pathway**

Mentors will also complete a diagnostic activity at the beginning of each module, focusing on the ECT's current understanding and application of the content in their teaching practice. These mentor diagnostics are accessed via the mentor self-directed study area on the Brightspace Learning Platform.

At the first weekly mentor meeting of each module, the ECT and mentor will review their respective diagnostic results and jointly decide on the most appropriate pathway through the module. This ensures the study is tailored to the ECT's specific strengths and areas for growth.

Rather than following a single pathway throughout the module, ECTs may engage with a mix of both pathways—diving deeper into some sessions while extending their thinking in others. The ECT always has access to both pathways, so they can review all the module materials as needed.

A tailored learning pathway for module 1 may look like this:



Whether the ECT accesses the 'core' or 'summary and stretch' materials for each session, all sessions are designed to take the ECT approximately 45 minutes.

## 2. Attend module seminars

ECTs are expected to attend two 90-minute seminars per half term. The specific delivery dates of these seminars will be determined by your delivery partner and may vary across the half term. There is no pre- or post-seminar work required.

These seminars are designed to provide a rich professional development experience. Their core purpose is to:

- **Deepen understanding** of key concepts from the ITTECF through expert-led sessions.
- **Engage with curriculum materials** that build knowledge and practical teaching skills.
- **Reflect on personal classroom practice** in a supportive environment.
- **Collaborate and network** with fellow ECTs, sharing insights and experiences.
- **Apply learning** directly to their teaching with guidance from experienced facilitators.

Your delivery partner will share attendance data with you to support your knowledge and understanding of each ECTs levels of engage with their seminars.

## 3. Attend weekly mentor interactions

In their first year, ECTs are expected to engage in weekly mentoring interactions. These sessions are a vital part of the ECT's professional development and should be scheduled as a regular, protected time slot by the induction tutor. Each weekly interaction should follow an instructional coaching model, which will be explained in more detail later in this guide.

### Structure of weekly interactions

As part of their weekly self-directed study on Brightspace, ECTs will be prompted to complete a short submission to share with their mentor.

This submission may include, for example:

- A lesson plan or part of a plan
- A set of questions they intend to ask pupils
- A reflection on a recent teaching experience

This submission serves as a stimulus for the weekly mentor interaction, which may take the form of:

- a focused discussion, or
- a short classroom observation (no longer than 10 minutes)

The mentor will then use this stimulus to guide the instructional coaching cycle for that week, helping the ECT reflect, refine, and apply their learning in practice.

# Mentor Selection

The role of the mentor is crucial in supporting the successful development of the ECT. At Teach First we believe that the mentor's ability to be effective is shaped by two factors:

1. **Being an effective teacher in the classroom themselves**
2. **Understanding how to best mentor a novice teacher**

As the induction tutor, you may be responsible for selecting a suitable mentor for each ECT. The following criteria are designed to support you in making that decision.

## **Mentor who are selected should:**

- hold Qualified Teacher Status
- be an excellent teacher of the subject/phase in which they are mentoring ECT(s)
- have a solid understanding of the statutory standards and requirements for the ECT induction. This document will support their understanding -[Induction for early career teachers – gov.uk](#)
- be interested in developing as a mentor in the subject or phase within which they are supporting the ECT
- understand the requirements to participate in mentor induction and continuing professional development
- support Teach First's approach to teacher development
- have professional characteristics and competencies that align with the [National Standards for School-Based Initial Teacher Training \(ITT\) Mentors, July 2016](#)

We strongly encourage maintaining the same mentor for your ECT throughout the year, as a consistent and supportive mentoring relationship can significantly enhance professional development. However, we understand that changes may be necessary—whether in the best interest of the ECT or due to unforeseen circumstances.

If a change of mentor is required, please contact your delivery partner with a clear explanation of the reason for the change and details of the proposed new mentor. They will ensure the new mentor receives the appropriate catch-up materials and that Teach First records are updated accordingly.

# Mentor Training and responsibilities

To ensure mentors are well-prepared for the role, they will receive training and ongoing support to develop their expertise in the ECTP and strengthen their core mentoring skills, enabling them to be effective mentors to novice teachers.

One key change from the previous Early Career Framework (ECF) offer is that mentor training is now reduced into a single year as part of the ECTE, rather than spanning two years.

**Below is an overview of the one-year training offer.**

## Mentor Welcome Conference

Mentors will begin by attending a full day Welcome Conference, designed to provide a comprehensive introduction to the programme. This is an in-person aspect of the programme so they will need to be released to attend.

Session	Length	Title
1	75 minutes	The Teach First Early Career Training Programme
2	30 minutes	Using the diagnostic tool to tailor support
3	65 minutes	Instructional Coaching
4	55 minutes	Deliberate practice
5	55 minutes	Workload and wellbeing
6	60 minutes	Building support networks

## Training seminars

Following the Welcome Conference, mentors are expected to attend five in-year training seminars. Each seminar lasts 90 minutes and is designed to support mentors' ongoing development of core mentoring skills. The seminar titles are listed below:

Session	Title
1	Moving from novice to expert
2	Expert instructional coaching and deliberate practice
3	Developing inclusive practice
4	Balancing support and challenge
5	Developing resilience

Delivery partners have the flexibility to schedule and deliver these seminars in a way that best meets the needs of their mentors. This could include delivering sessions in-person or online, spreading them out across the year (e.g. one per half term), or grouping them together (e.g. a morning of back-to-back sessions).

The purpose of these seminars is to develop mentors core mentoring skills, with a particular emphasis on instructional coaching. They also provide valuable opportunities for mentors to connect with one another—to share experiences, reflect on practice, and collaboratively problem-solve.

### Weekly overview videos

A key part of the mentor's role is to support ECTs in applying what they've learned through self-directed study and seminars to their classroom practice. However, we understand that mentors may not always have the time to review all the ECT's study materials in detail.

To support mentors in this, weekly overview videos are provided as part of their own self-directed study. These short videos—typically 5 to 10 minutes long—serve two main purposes:

1. **To summarise the week's learning:** They provide a concise overview of the key content the ECT has been engaging with, including the research base that underpins it.
2. **To guide mentor preparation:** They outline what mentors need to do that week to prepare for their one-to-one interaction with their ECT.

These videos are designed to keep mentors informed and equipped, without adding unnecessary workload.

It is important that mentors regularly engage with these materials as these support their evidence of engagement with the programme.

### Engagement with training

It is important that mentors engage fully with all aspects of their training. Induction tutors play a key role in monitoring this engagement and providing support to ensure mentors can participate effectively—not only to help them become effective mentors for their ECTs, but also to ensure eligibility for DfE funding.

To be maintain eligibility for this funding, mentors must demonstrate a minimum of 75% engagement with the training offer across the academic year. As such, it is essential to proactively support mentors in overcoming any challenges they may face in accessing or engaging with their training.

### Mentor Responsibilities

For novice teachers, identifying and articulating what makes teaching effective can be challenging. The mentor's role is to use their expertise to make effective practice visible and accessible. By reflecting on their own teaching, narrating their decision-making, modelling key strategies, and highlighting high-leverage actions, mentors play a crucial role in supporting their ECT's development.

Earlier in this guide, a brief overview of mentor responsibilities within the programme was provided. The following section offers a more detailed explanation of several key responsibilities.

## **Monitor ECT Engagement with self-directed study materials**

Alongside the induction tutor, mentors are responsible for monitoring their ECTs completion of weekly self-directed study on Brightspace.

If there are any concerns regarding an ECT's engagement, attendance, or progress, mentors must inform the induction tutor promptly.

Further guidance on the withdrawal process is available on My Teach First.

## **Arrange weekly interactions**

Mentors should prioritise time each week to facilitate a 60-minute mentoring interaction with their ECT. They are responsible for ensuring these interactions take place consistently and are informed by the relevant module content. Mentors should use the agendas provided in the Mentor Handbook to structure their interactions.

### **Mentors are expected to:**

- Follow the instructional coaching feedback model during each interaction.
- Watch the weekly overview videos in preparation for the interaction, to stay informed about the ECT's self-directed study and curriculum.

## **Engage with their own self-directed study materials – the weekly overview videos**

Mentors are expected to engage with the self-directed study materials available on the Brightspace Learning Platform. These weekly videos are designed to support mentors in developing their knowledge of the ECT curriculum and the research and evidence that underpin it.

## **Attend seminars**

Mentors are expected to attend five 90-minute seminars across the academic year. These sessions provide valuable opportunities for professional development, sharing best practice, problem-solving, and discussing the progress of their ECTs.

If a mentor is unable to attend their allocated seminar due to extenuating circumstances, they should contact their induction tutor and delivery partner in advance of the session.

## **Complete the mentor diagnostic activity**

As outlined earlier in this guide, mentors play an active role in tailoring their ECT's pathway through the module content. To support this, mentors are required to complete a short diagnostic activity by answering questions about their ECT's application of module knowledge and skills in the classroom. This activity should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

The outcomes of the diagnostic activity should then be brought to the first interaction of the module. During which the mentor and ECT will use the results of both the ECTs diagnostic, and mentor diagnostic, to discuss and agree on a tailored learning pathway for the module.

# Mentor training need analysis

From September 2025, a new aspect of the ECTP for mentors is being introduced: a training needs analysis. This change is designed to recognise and value mentors who have already undertaken mentor training—particularly those who have supported trainee teachers during their Initial Teacher Training (ITT) year. It acknowledges the significant time and professional development many mentors have already invested.

This approach also supports mentor workload and wellbeing. For example, mentors who have recently completed ITT training may have already undertaken up to 20 hours of mentor development in the previous academic year. Rather than asking them to repeat similar content, the training needs analysis allows them to build on their existing knowledge and focus on the areas that will have the greatest impact.

As mentors access their self-directed study materials on the Brightspace Learning Platform, they will be asked to identify their prior mentoring experience and provider. Those eligible for a reduction in training hours will then complete a short training needs analysis. This will assess their confidence and competence across key areas of the training offer and generate a personalised training plan for the year.

As an induction tutor, you do not need to determine eligibility or manage this process. However, it is important to be aware that some mentors may not be required to attend all training sessions, depending on the outcome of their needs analysis. You should continue to monitor mentor engagement and ensure they are supported to meet their responsibilities within the programme.

Profile	Description	Training requirement	Eligible to complete the training needs analysis?
1	New ECTE mentor with no prior mentor training	Must complete the full ECTP mentor training offer. This mentor is fully funded.	No
2	Trained ECF mentor (Already completed two years of ECF training via the early roll out or national roll out)	No need to undertake any further training, but will need access to the Trained Mentor Handbook and Mentor Programme Guide. This mentor has already received funding to complete their ECF mentor training and is not eligible for further funding on the ECTP.	No
3	ITT- trained mentor ( <b>post</b> September 2024) <b>not</b> with Teach First	This mentor has received some recent mentor training with another provider and they would be eligible to complete the training needs analysis to potentially gain a reduction in their training offer. This mentor is fully funded.	Yes
4	ITT trained mentor ( <b>prior</b> to September 2024) <b>not with</b> Teach First	This mentor has received some prior ITT mentor training with another provider, but it was not within the last year. This mentor is fully funded and eligible to complete the needs analysis.	Yes
5	ITT trained mentor (post September 2025) <b>with</b> Teach First	This mentor has received some recent ITT mentor training with Teach First.  This mentor is not eligible for further funding on the ECTP. Their attendance at the Welcome Conference and seminars is at the discretion of the school and delivery partner. The induction tutor should ensure they have the Mentor Handbook and Programme Guide and access to relevant catch-up recording if not able to attend seminars. They are eligible to complete the training needs analysis.	Yes

The training needs analysis is designed to assess a mentor's knowledge and skills in relation to the content covered in the in-year seminars and self-directed study materials. While the training offer may be tailored based on prior experience, attendance at the Mentor Welcome Conference remains mandatory for all funded mentors, as it provides essential grounding in the programme and their role.

If a mentor completes the training needs analysis and it identifies that they are required to engage with only a portion of the full training offer, their total training hours will be adjusted accordingly.

**For example, if the analysis determines that a mentor should complete:**

- 3 out of the 5 self-directed study units (equivalent to 3 hours), and
- 2 specific in-year seminars (equivalent to 3 hours).

**Then their total training requirement for the year would be:**

- 6 hours for the Mentor Welcome Conference (mandatory for all funded mentors),
- 3 hours of self-directed study,
- 3 hours of in-year seminars.

Resulting in a total of 12 hours of training for that mentor across the academic year.



# Instructional Coaching – what it is and why we use it

As part of the ECTE, mentors will use a specific feedback model grounded in the principles of instructional coaching. This model underpins the structure of the programme and is central to how mentors support their ECTs development.

During their Welcome Conference, mentors will receive training on how to deliver this model effectively. High-impact feedback goes beyond identifying strengths and areas for development—it creates a space for ECTs to plan, rehearse, and refine specific actions that can be immediately applied to their classroom practice.

## Why instructional coaching?

Instructional coaching is a well-evidenced approach used to develop expertise across a range of domains—including sport, music, and teaching—and is effective for novices, intermediates, and experts alike. Research shows that instructional coaching has a greater impact on pupil outcomes than many other forms of professional development.

Unlike traditional lesson observations, which can be broad and lack actionable guidance, instructional coaching focuses on:

- **Precise, high-leverage actions** identified by the mentor.
- **Directed, specific feedback** rather than open-ended questioning.
- **Mentor-led interactions**, where the mentor adopts the role of expert and guides the ECT through modelling and rehearsal.

This approach contrasts with traditional coaching models, which often rely on reflective questioning led by the teacher. Instead, instructional coaching is mentor-directed, ensuring clarity, focus, and practical next steps.

## The feedback model

The feedback model that the mentor should follow is shown below. There is also a script that may act as a stimulus when feeding back using the model found in the appendices of this guide.



Mentors and ECTs should spend the majority of their during the interaction in the final three stages of the model.

## Setting precise action steps

One of the more challenging aspects of the feedback cycle is selecting and articulating the right precise action step—one that is both high-leverage and aligned with the principles of deliberate practice. During the ‘probe’ stage of the feedback model, mentors guide their ECT toward a specific area for development. From there, the mentor and ECT work together to identify one to three small, clear, and actionable steps that will have the greatest impact on classroom practice. These steps should focus on the *how*, not just the *what*, and be specific enough to allow for rehearsal and immediate application.

Mentor training—particularly through the seminars—places strong emphasis on how to set these action steps effectively. While worked examples of precise action steps are not included in the main body of this guide, they can be found in the appendices for reference and support.

As part of their quality assurance role, induction tutors should actively review how mentors are using the feedback model, with particular attention to the clarity, relevance, and precision of the action steps being set. This ensures that feedback remains high-impact and aligned with the intended coaching approach.

## Responding to ECTs highest leverage areas for development

The inclusion of the diagnostic activity and tailored learning pathways is designed to ensure that each ECT receives support that is responsive to their individual development needs. Each module in the programme has been carefully sequenced to build on prior learning, helping ECTs to secure and deepen their understanding over time. Key concepts are revisited throughout the programme—such as metacognition and effective classroom practice—to support long-term retention and meaningful application in the classroom.

We strongly recommend following the designed sequence to ensure ECTs benefit from the cumulative structure of the programme. However, we recognise that there may be occasions where an ECT requires targeted support in an area not yet covered in the current module. In line with the principles of instructional coaching, mentors are encouraged to identify the highest-leverage area for development—the one change that will have the greatest impact on the ECT’s practice. If this area falls outside the current module, it may be appropriate to adapt the sequence and draw on content from a different module to address that need.

If mentors and ECTs are choosing to adapt the sequence and access content from other modules, it is important to be aware of the following:

- Be mindful that this may affect the alignment between the ECT’s self-directed study and their weekly mentor interactions.
- Consider the implications for seminar attendance and content, particularly if multiple ECTs in your school are working through different modules.
- Ensure that any adaptations are purposeful, clearly linked to the ECT’s development goals, and supported by the mentor’s instructional coaching approach.

Ultimately, the goal is to ensure that ECTs receive the right support at the right time—whether that means following the planned sequence or flexing it to meet an immediate need identified through coaching.

# Supporting ECTs through an effective induction

This section takes a closer look at the key responsibilities of induction tutors related to monitoring, reporting, and assessing the progress of ECTs. These duties are essential to ensuring a rigorous and supportive induction process, aligned with statutory requirements and professional standards.

## Complements statutory induction

The ECTP is designed to be an integral part of statutory induction, not an additional or standalone training offer. As an induction tutor, it's important to ensure that the ECTP is fully embedded within your school's induction arrangements, supporting ECTs through structured, high-quality training and development.

The appropriate body holds the primary responsibility for quality assurance throughout the induction process. This includes confirming that headteachers or principals have established a comprehensive induction programme.

While the ECTP complements statutory induction, it does not replace it. The Teach First ECTP provides the training and resources your ECTs will follow, forming a core part of their professional development during the induction period.

## Ensure timetable enable engagement

As the induction tutor, you play a key role in ensuring that both the ECT and their mentor have the time and structure needed to fully engage with their training and the programme. Effective timetabling is essential to enable meaningful participation in all aspects of the programme and to support the professional development of both parties.

**When planning timetables, please ensure that the following time allocations are built in:**

### For ECTs:

- Attendance at two seminars per half term
- 3 hours and 45 minutes of self-directed study per half term
- A weekly meeting with their mentor

### For Mentors:

- Attendance at five seminars across the year
- Engagement with weekly overview videos
- A weekly meeting with their ECT
- Ongoing monitoring of the ECT's engagement with self-directed study

By securing this protected time, you help create the conditions for a successful induction experience, ensuring that ECTs and mentors can make the most of the ECTP's high-quality training and support.

## Register you ECTs and mentors

As part of your responsibilities, you must ensure that all ECTs and their mentors are registered with both:

1. The Department for Education (DfE) – to access the Early Career Teachers Programme (ECTP) and ensure entitlement to funded training and support.
2. An Appropriate Body – to oversee statutory induction, provide quality assurance, and carry out formal assessment requirements.

Registration with the DfE should be completed via the DfE's online service. This ensures that ECTs are correctly enrolled on the ECTP and that mentors are linked to their ECTs within the system.

For full guidance on how to set up and manage the ECT entitlement, including registration steps, please refer to the official DfE guidance here:

### [Set up and manage the early career teacher \(ECT\) induction](#)

Please ensure this process is completed promptly at the start of induction to avoid delays in programme access or statutory compliance.

## Conduct professional progress reviews

To ensure the statutory induction requirements are met alongside the ECTP, time must be allocated for you as the induction tutor to carry out a 30-minute professional progress review each term where a formal assessment is not scheduled.

As the induction tutor, you are responsible for meeting with the ECT to review their progress against the Teachers' Standards, in line with the latest guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and your school's appropriate body.

According to the DfE's updated guidance (April 2025), professional progress reviews should:

- Be informed by existing evidence of the ECT's teaching practice. ECTs are not required to produce new evidence specifically for the review, but should share relevant materials already gathered, as agreed with you.
- Be developmental, not evaluative. These reviews are not formal assessments, but should be detailed enough to ensure there are no surprises at formal assessment points.
- Be documented. A written summary of each review must be retained and shared with the ECT. This should clearly state whether the ECT is on track to successfully complete induction.
- Be communicated. If you are not the headteacher, you must update them on the ECT's progress following each review.
- Be reported. You must inform both the ECT and the appropriate body of the outcome. If the ECT is not on track, you are required to outline the support plan you have put in place to help them improve.

These reviews are a vital part of your role in ensuring that ECTs receive timely, constructive feedback and that any concerns are addressed early and effectively.

For full guidance, refer to the DfE's official document: [Induction for early career teachers \(England\) – GOV.UK](#)

### Formal assessments

In addition to termly progress reviews, time is allocated for the induction tutor to carry out a formal assessment at the end of each year of the ECT's induction. These assessments are a statutory requirement and must be conducted in line with guidance from your school's appropriate body and the Department for Education (DfE).

**According to the DfE's *Induction for early career teachers* guidance (April 2025), the following expectations apply:**

- Formal assessments must be carried out by the headteacher/principal or the induction tutor. Mentors should not conduct formal assessments unless they are also acting as the induction tutor.
- One formal assessment should take place in the final term of Year 1 and Year 2 of induction.
- ECTs are not required to produce new evidence for the assessment. Judgements should be based on existing evidence from their teaching practice and engagement with the induction programme.
- Judgements must be made against the Teachers' Standards, not the ECTP or Early Career Framework (ECF).
- ECTs should be kept informed of their progress throughout the induction period.
- A formal assessment report must be completed following each assessment.
- The final assessment will inform the headteacher's/principal's recommendation to the appropriate body on whether the ECT has met the Teachers' Standards satisfactorily, whether their performance is unsatisfactory, or whether an extension to the induction period should be considered.
- Once completed, the assessment report should be signed by the ECT, the induction tutor, and the headteacher/principal. The ECT should retain the original, and a copy must be sent to the appropriate body—within ten working days of the final assessment meeting.

The first formal assessment will be carried out by the induction tutor at the end of Year 1. For more information on how the ECTP supports statutory induction, please refer to Appendix D.

## Quality assure the programme

As an induction tutor, you are encouraged to carry out quality assurance activities throughout the year to ensure the ECTP is being delivered effectively and consistently.

These activities should align with your school's wider quality assurance processes and may include:

- Observing weekly mentor–ECT meetings
- Conducting joint lesson observations with the mentor
- Reviewing attendance and engagement data provided by your delivery partner, which includes ECT progress through programme modules and attendance at training sessions for both ECTs and mentors

Teach First will also carry out its own quality assurance of ECT and mentor seminar facilitation to support programme consistency and impact.

In addition, all programme members—including ECTs, mentors, and induction tutors—are expected to adhere to the Teach First Programme Member Code of Conduct.

This can be found in Appendix C and should be read in full by all involved.



## Appendix A: Feedback model

PHASE	PURPOSE	POSSIBLE SCRIPT
<b>Praise strengths</b>	Highlight key areas of strength <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain what went well</li> <li>• Be precise</li> <li>• Backed up by evidence</li> <li>• Reference progress towards previous week's actions</li> </ul>	'Thank you for allowing me to observe your lesson today.' 'One thing I thought was effective about your practice was...' 'One real strength in the lesson I saw was...' 'This was evidenced when you...' 'A great example of this from the lesson was when you/pupils/etc.' 'Your previous area for development was... I saw progress towards this when...' 
<b>Probe areas for development</b>	Guide the trainee to reflect on their areas of development through a series of precise and direct questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan questions in advance</li> <li>• Use precise questions</li> <li>• Use data and evidence</li> <li>• Don't labour it – explain and tell if necessary</li> <li>• Summarise specific areas for their development based on your probing of them</li> </ul>	'I'd like to explore with you some areas of development in your practice.' 'When the pupils were on the carpet, what was the key learning point you wanted the pupils to grasp?' 'How do you know what the pupils had learned from the reading activity?' 'What did you expect the behaviour to be like when the pupils left the classroom/what did you want the behaviour to be?' 'Why did you choose that specific task / what did you want the pupils to achieve / how would you know if they had been successful?' 'What evidence do you have to show the lesson outcomes were met?' 'We're now going to choose the area for development which will have the most impact on your practice. There were examples in the lesson when students did not fully understand teacher instruction in independent tasks (for example in the carpet task and the independent writing).'
<b>Set precise actions</b>	Identify the highest-leverage area(s) of development to address and set precise action step(s) linked to this. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find highest-leverage area/s</li> <li>• Choose one to three key areas</li> <li>• Make sure they are actionable</li> <li>• Be precise not generic</li> <li>• Give a 'how' not just a what</li> </ul>	'We're now going to focus on setting actions for this area of development which we will then plan and practise.' 'To address this development area, your actions are to ...' Give clear precise instructions using 'what to do', with as few words as possible. Script a basic 'I do' using 'name the steps' as a core part of the lesson before each task.

## Appendix B: Setting precise action steps

For this model of feedback, the mentor will have spent time thinking about the precise action step or steps they want to set based on the teacher's area for development. The 'probe' section of the model should be used to guide the teacher to a precise area for development. It is then the role of the mentor along with the mentee to choose the highest-leverage action step(s) to plan and practise in the later stages of the model. By 'high leverage' we mean the one to three action(s) that would have the most impact on the teacher's practice. What should be noted here is that there may be several areas for development and, therefore, many action steps which could be set. It is the role of the mentor and, where relevant, the mentee to isolate the most crucial area for development and then pick out the highest-leverage action(s) to address this area for development. Mentors should focus on actions which are clear and specific; an action that gives the 'how' and not just the 'what'. The key is to make these action steps small, precise and explicit.

Worked examples of precise actions steps are set out in the table that follows:

*“Even the most motivated and intelligent student will advance more quickly under the tutelage of someone who knows the best order in which to learn things, who understands and can demonstrate the proper way to perform various skills, who can provide useful feedback, and who can devise practice activities designed to overcome particular weaknesses.”*

**(Ericsson & Pool, 2016)**

AREA FOR DEVELOPMENT	INEFFECTIVE ACTION STEP EXAMPLE	EFFECTIVE ACTION STEP EXAMPLE
<b>Pupils are not all complying after being asked to do something, especially at transitions.</b>	'Improve behaviour at transition 'The classroom is left tidy at the end of the lesson'	Create the illusion of speed by using a visible or the classroom clock to motivate pupil focus during and between tasks. <i>E.g. "You've got two minutes to finish your sentence—keep your eyes on the clock."</i> Establish a smooth exit by planning and practising a clear routine: give specific, step-by-step directions using 'what to do' language and repeat until it becomes automatic. <i>E.g. "When I say go: close your books, stand behind your chairs, and wait silently."</i>
<b>At the end of the lesson pupils do not tidy away properly, meaning that the next class come into a chaotic environment.</b>	'The classroom is left tidy at the end of the lesson'	Embed a consistent exit routine by teaching clear step-by-step instructions using 'what to do' language, and practising until it becomes automatic. <i>E.g. "When I say go: close your books, push in your chairs, and line up silently."</i>

## Appendix B: Setting precise action steps

A key area for development could be that pupils are not all complying after being asked to do something, especially at transitions. This would be identified in the 'probe' section of the model. It is now the role of the mentor to choose the action step or steps which may address this. An example of an ineffective action step may be 'improve behaviour at transitions'; this is neither helpful nor impactful as it does not clearly specify exactly 'what' to do and 'how' to do it. A better example would be 'create the illusion of speed using the clock to support pupil engagement during and between activities'. This gives the teacher a clear directive of 'what' to do specifically and more importantly, the actual technique to use.

Another example of an area for development may be that at the end of the lesson pupils do not tidy away properly, meaning that the next class comes into a chaotic environment. Rather than setting an action for the teacher to simply make sure the classroom is left tidy at the end of the lesson, a better action would be for the teacher to plan and practise a roll out of an exit routine using 'from procedure to routine' and 'what to do' giving clear, precise directions. The mentor would then follow the 'plan' section of the feedback model as detailed in the table above; looking to a future lesson, scripting and modelling and setting a success criteria ahead of the practise section. In the practise section, the trainee would practise the plan and receive feedback from the mentor before redoing the practise, making the suggested changes.

Further details can be found in the Mentor Programme Guide.

# Appendix C: Programme member code of conduct

Teach First programmes are designed for you to learn, progress and gain knowledge and insight so that you can excel professionally and make a difference in your school. To enable learning for all, it is important that a professional, safe, supportive, and open environment is maintained to allow everyone to succeed and thrive.

This code of conduct sets out the expectations that we have of our programme members on all Teach First programmes. By taking up your place on a Teach First programme, you are agreeing to abide by these expectations. Teach First reserves the right to take disciplinary action in response to any behaviour which we consider to be a breach of our expectations, whether a pattern of behaviour over time or a one-off incident. This includes Teach First's right, in our sole discretion, to remove you from the programme.

## GENERAL CONDUCT

- Recognise your position as a representative of Teach First and behave accordingly. Do not engage in any activity or behaviour which would bring Teach First or the teaching profession into disrepute.
- Do not engage in the bullying or harassment of others.
- We will not tolerate language that seeks to undermine or intimidate others. This includes but is not limited to; racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or ableist language.
- Ensure that your language comes from an intention of being respectful and open.
- Consider the impact of your actions or lack of action (including support through silence) on others.
- Be polite and tolerant of the contributions of others; ensure everybody can speak and be heard on discussion forums, at events or in event chat functions if online.

## UNDERSTANDING

- Recognise the diversity of the Teach First community.

- Be tolerant, respect and act in accordance with everyone's lived experiences, boundaries, stated personal pronouns, circumstances, and wishes.
- Recognise that some programme members may have reasonable adjustments in place to allow them fair and equal access to the programme.

## OPENNESS

- Be willing and open to hearing different points of view and engage in debate where you feel comfortable to support the development of others, including constructive challenge and peer support.

## PROFESSIONALISM

- Be punctual: join each live session on time, use the stated attendance policy, and follow the absence process if you are unable to attend.
- Adhere to any specific dress codes for your learning environment: this may include standards of professional dress laid down by the setting you are in (for example, a school).
- Complete all work on time, on your own (unless it is a collaborative task), and ahead of any live interaction if required. Any pre work will be made clear to you via My Teach First, including the dates for completion.
- Respond in a timely manner to any communications, requests, or instructions from Teach First and delivery partner staff.

## ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

- Use Teach First online discussions or forums as a place to exchange professional information and engage in constructive exchanges that are directly focused on the outcomes of the programmatic content.
- Do not share any Zoom links or other joining instructions on any public platform, or with anyone who is not authorised to attend the event.

## Appendix C: Programme member code of conduct

- Do not share personal details, inappropriate messages, or content, or use discussions or forums as a platform to harass, bully or victimise.
- If uploading videos, ensure that there is no one else in the background, especially children.
- Ensure you have adequate technology, tools, materials for your session and you have tested them beforehand. This may include video, microphone and speakers.
- Ensure that, where possible, you have turned off or silenced your mobile phone to avoid distracting others.
- Ensure that, where possible, you have joined a live session from a suitable location (not a noisy or public place, for example) to avoid distracting others.
- If sharing screens, ensure that you only share the material relevant to the programme.
- Always keep your contact details up to date (via My Teach First) to ensure we can provide you with relevant information.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

- Use social media in a responsible and respectful manner - whether using a social media account which refers to Teach First (including a Teach First Facebook group) or your own personal account (whether or not it refers to your role).
- Do not post or share content which is abusive, threatening, defamatory, discriminatory or otherwise harmful or offensive.
- Teach First is an independent charity and must remain politically neutral. You must ensure that your social media activity does not suggest, explicitly or implicitly that Teach First has any party-political stance or allegiance to a particular political party.

### REPORTING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

If you are being subject to or notice that someone else is being subject to behaviour that contravenes this agreement, or have any other concerns, please take one of the following actions:

1. If you feel comfortable and able, raise it directly with the individual causing the problem, at the time it arises, or with the event lead at an appropriate opportunity.
2. If you are not able to do this, then please report the incident to Teach First in any of the following ways (telling whoever you feel most comfortable):
  - Share it directly with your Teach First support role, if you have one.
  - Report it using the '[contact us](#)' function on My Teach First to send an email to the Teach First contact centre.
  - Send an email to [teachfirstwelfare@teachfirst.org.uk](mailto:teachfirstwelfare@teachfirst.org.uk) which enables programme members to make safe and confidential disclosures outside of their personal support network. This is managed confidentially by the Teach First legal team.
  - Report it directly to any other Teach First contact.

We commit to taking all incidents seriously and will work with you to ensure your concerns are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

### CHILD SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

You should report any child safeguarding incidents in line with your school's child safeguarding policy. Where you are not yet employed by a school, please report any concern to your Teach First support role.