

**‘TEACHING ON INSECURE FOUNDATIONS?’
PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS IN ENGLAND'S PERCEPTIONS OF
THE WIDER CURRICULUM SUBJECTS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To investigate opportunities for ITE students to teach the foundation subjects of geography, history, art, computing and physical education

To examine ITE student perceptions of their opportunities to teach foundation subjects

To evaluate the impact of these perceptions in relation to broader contexts

**BASE LINE ANALYSIS
BA STUDENTS
2016/17**

Subject audit tracker data (39% of students responded to audit n=126)

45% taught at least one lesson of geography

43% marked pupil work in geography

20% were formally observed teaching geography

METHODOLOGY

- Data is drawn from final Year 3 cohort on BA Primary Education (QTS) programme, graduating in 2019
- Subjects related to expertise of our team – PE, history, computing, geography, art (foundation) and mathematics (core)
- Systematic sampling to ensure students were selected across all groups and specialisms
- Shared interviews between team members, cross checking data
- Semi structured interviews, with one focus group

FINDINGS

Variability in ITE experience

- Welcomed opportunity to learn all subjects in university
- Identified dominance of core subjects
- This imbalance compounded when on school placement

Restricted curriculum

- Hierarchy of subjects
- Timetabling restrictions
- Resources
- Use of specialist teachers/coaches

“And in school I would say it is the timetable restraints as well so I’ve not taught that much curriculum stuff. I’ve taught maths every time...but for example I haven’t taught geography or RE or much computing in schools cos they just haven’t been either at the time in term that they’re doing that or they haven’t wanted it in the curriculum.”

Practical experience

- Positive response to practical experiences provided in the university
- University experiences made links between theory and practice
- Greater freedom when teaching foundation subjects

Cross-curricular teaching

- Both advantages and disadvantages were identified
- Requires more planning to ensure subjects taught in appropriate depth


Confidence

- Lack of knowledge and skills
- Lack of opportunities to teach
- School mentor expertise

FINDINGS

“it just massively differs on what school you're in, so in terms of if it's linked back to the university, it was quite difficult...”

DISCUSSION

- Need to address imbalance between core and foundation subjects in university provision
 - Many students feel unprepared to teach in cross-curricular way – consider increased time to explore subject/cross curricular approaches
 - Variability in experience is more challenging. Need for university to strengthen links with schools – sensitive and methodical work with partners to share expertise and provide more joined-up experience.
 - What is evident is that those ITE students who are self-directed can develop the skills to adapt and learn from changes to curriculums, pedagogies and policies. Case for focusing on student dispositions.
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ANY QUESTIONS?