



# EYITT Mentor Handbook

## Autumn Cohort

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# Mentoring a Student Teacher Early Years Teacher

## Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to take the role of school/setting mentor to a Student Teacher on the Early Years Initial Teacher Training (EYITT) programme.

These materials have been produced by Best Practice Network to guide and support you in your role as school/setting mentor on the EYITT programme.

Electronic copies of all the documents you will need, can be found on Canvas or Mosaic. An account will be created for you on Canvas and Mosaic, so that you can access the sites to download the latest versions of the forms you need.

## Background and context of EYITT

### Historical context

The first training for Early Years Teacher Status began in September 2013, building on the success of Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) in establishing the importance of graduate practitioners within the early years sector. The DfE (Department for Education) is clear about the importance of Early Years Teachers:

*"In this role, you will be a graduate leader responsible for organising and leading high-quality teaching practice in early years settings. You will make a lasting, positive difference to children's wellbeing, learning and development."*

<http://www.education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/subjects-age-groups/early-years>

Best Practice Network (BPN) has been at the forefront of EYPS and subsequently Early Years Teacher Status since 2006. The next stage of Early Years Initial Teacher Training (EYITT) began in September 2014, aligning systems of training and assessment to initial teacher training and with changes to how contracts for training and assessment were organised.

<http://www.bestpracticenetwork.co.uk/eyitt>

We are proud of the quality of training and assessment we have consistently provided. The Quality Assurance Agency monitored all EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status training providers and on each of our visits we have achieved the highest possible grading. Ofsted now inspects EYITT and our programme, with two partner providers, has been inspected and the outcome was "Good."

There are two routes to Early Years Teacher Status:

- Graduate Entry - 12 months full time (fees paid by the DfE, bursary for 1<sup>st</sup>/PhD, 2:1/Master's degree or 2:2)
- Graduate Employment Based - 12 months part time whilst working (fees paid by the

DfE plus employer incentive of £7,000)

## Contact points

We are here to support you in your role. Each Student Teacher will have their own personal tutor who will support

them throughout the programme.

The personal tutor works with the Student Teacher and the school/setting mentor across the year from September through to July, when recommendations for the award of Early Years Teacher Status are made, or until the end of any extension period that has been applied for and granted.

The personal tutor maintains a dialogue via Microsoft Teams, email, and telephone with the Student Teacher. Feedback is provided on Mosaic which hosts each Student Teacher's training plan and assessment record. This is a very important system. Access to the Student Teacher's Mosaic account will be shared with mentors, tutors and the programme management team. Student Teachers are responsible for keeping an updated record of school/setting mentor meetings that can be shared with their personal tutor. Targets for development are set by the school/setting mentor, personal tutor and in some cases the QA Team or the QA and Curriculum Development Manager.

The personal tutor will come and visit the student teacher in setting 5 times across the course to complete joint observations with the school/ setting mentor.

Each mentor will be assigned a BPN Lead Mentor. The Lead Mentor will be your main point of contact for any queries or support related to observations, mentor training, or coaching and mentoring needs. They will make contact with you at the start of the programme and run some introductory sessions prior to the mentor induction. Throughout the year, your Lead Mentor will deliver three training sessions for the full mentoring cohort, as well as three Keeping in Touch (KIT) sessions with your smaller mentoring group. These sessions are designed to support you in your role as a mentor

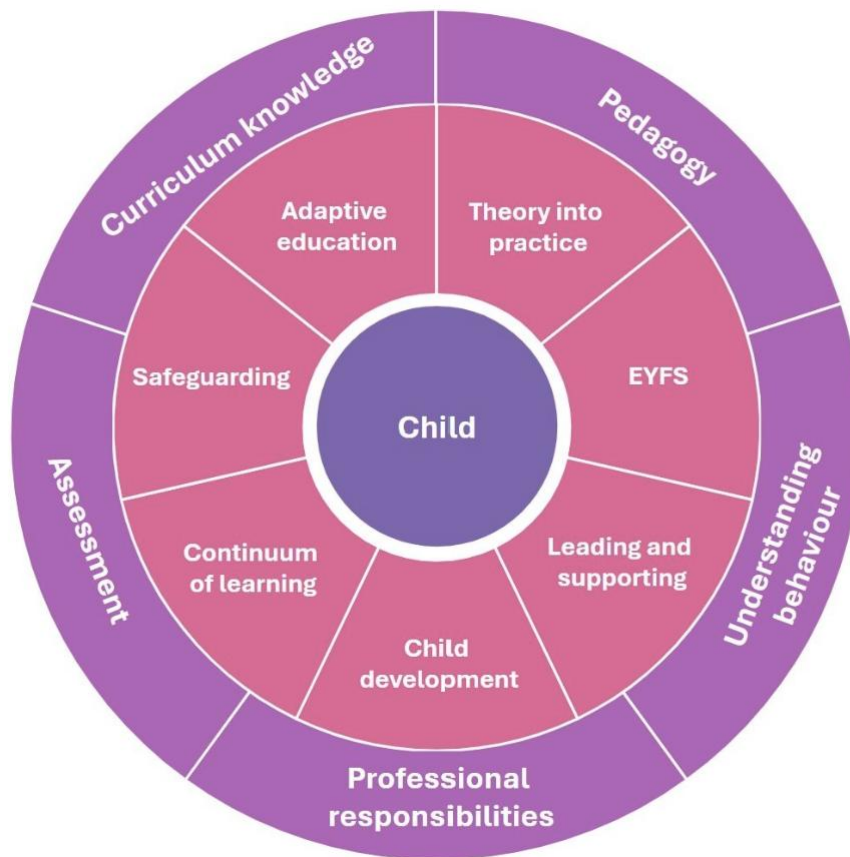
All queries regarding the programme should in the first instance be directed to the personal tutor. Further support can be obtained from the Best Practice Network office-based staff and the leadership team.

## Contacts

| Team/ Role                                         | Email                                                                                              | Telephone     |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Early Years Team                                   | <a href="mailto:eyitt@bestpracticenet.co.uk">eyitt@bestpracticenet.co.uk</a>                       | 0117 920 9200 |
| Accounts Team                                      | <a href="mailto:accounts@bestpracticenet.co.uk">accounts@bestpracticenet.co.uk</a>                 | 0117 920 9207 |
| IT/Helpdesk Support                                | <a href="mailto:helpdesk@bestpracticenet.co.uk">helpdesk@bestpracticenet.co.uk</a>                 | 0117 920 9423 |
| Director, Early Years and Initial Teacher Training | Sian Marsh<br><a href="mailto:sianmarsh@bestpracticenet.co.uk">sianmarsh@bestpracticenet.co.uk</a> |               |

|                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Head of EYITT                  | Helen Markham<br><a href="mailto:helenmarkham@bestpracticenet.co.uk">helenmarkham@bestpracticenet.co.uk</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |
| Head of Quality and Compliance | Chris Garcia<br><a href="mailto:Chrisgarcia@bestpracticenet.co.uk">Chrisgarcia@bestpracticenet.co.uk</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |  |
| Quality Assurance Manager      | Rebecca Martin<br><a href="mailto:rebeccamartin@bestpracticenet.co.uk">rebeccamartin@bestpracticenet.co.uk</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |
| Safeguarding                   | Chris Garcia DSL<br>Sian Marsh DSL<br>Rebecca<br>Martin DSL<br><br><a href="mailto:safeguarding@bestpracticenet.co.uk">safeguarding@bestpracticenet.co.uk</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |
| Lead Mentor Team               | Haley Callahan – Senior Lead Mentor with EYITT<br><a href="mailto:HaleyCallahan@bestpracticenet.co.uk">HaleyCallahan@bestpracticenet.co.uk</a><br>Annette Dapp – Lead Mentor<br><a href="mailto:AnnetteDapp@bpnassociates.net">AnnetteDapp@bpnassociates.net</a><br>Caz Jude<br><a href="mailto:CazJude@bpnassociates.net">CazJude@bpnassociates.net</a><br>Julie Vaccari<br><a href="mailto:JulieVaccari@bpnassociates.net">JulieVaccari@bpnassociates.net</a><br>Manjit Kaur<br><a href="mailto:ManjitKaur@bpnassociates.net">ManjitKaur@bpnassociates.net</a><br>Sharon Hennam-Dale<br><a href="mailto:SharonHennam-Dale@bpnassociates.net">SharonHennam-Dale@bpnassociates.net</a> |  |

## The EYITT Curriculum



The EYITT curriculum encompasses the totality of student teachers learning experiences throughout their time on the programme. Our curriculum is broad, balanced, relevant and forward thinking to meet the needs of the Early Years sector and raise outcomes for all children. Immersion in the curriculum and the experiences it offers will prepare student teachers for their future careers as Early Years Teachers.

The EYITT programme has a blended approach to training with face-to-face and online learning, written reflection, practical experiences (in at least two settings/ schools), and observations and assessment of teaching, learning and care. Throughout the year, taught sessions will contain a mixture of facilitator and student led discussions with practical activities, which focus on the hands-on role of the Early Years Teacher.

Student teachers will build on their knowledge of the EYFS and the National Curriculum and taught sessions will interlink with the EYFS and complement the student's personal practice. In addition, student teachers will have the opportunity to develop their own leadership skills and ability to support others in the context of the setting, enabling student teachers to demonstrate their achievement of the Teachers' Standards (Early Years).

# What are my responsibilities as an EYITT school/setting mentor?

## Key Responsibilities

- Support Student Teachers so that they have a positive impact on children's progress learning and development from the outset.
- Engage in the BPN Mentor Training.
- Provide any appropriate setting/ school-based training to support the Student Teacher with gaps in subject knowledge.
- Observe the Student Teacher each week using the BPN observation form and upload this form onto Mosaic.
- Give detailed feedback each week in response to the targets set, plus note impact on children's learning, development, and progress.
- Meet with the Student Teacher **each week** to offer guidance and support and to celebrate strengths and developments.
- Set SMART targets to guide the Student Teacher on how to move from A to B (where they are now, where do they need to be, how do they get there).
- Plan and monitor the Student Teacher's placements to ensure coverage of the 0-5 age range.
- Promote Student Teacher development through:
  - ☐ collaborative teaching
  - ☐ structuring appropriate learning opportunities in the setting/school including facilitating dialogue with other expert colleagues and teachers
  - ☐ providing challenges
  - ☐ supporting them with subject and curriculum knowledge development
  - ☐ communicating effectively with colleagues with whom the Student Teacher is also working

## Supporting the Student Teacher to identify their strengths and development needs

As part of their induction to EYITT, the Student Teacher will begin a **initial needs analysis** process where they identify what they do well (strengths) and areas where they lack or feel they need more knowledge, understanding, skills or experience. The initial needs analysis includes a subject knowledge audit. Student Teachers are required to reflect on their knowledge of EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) as well as the National Curriculum expectations. It will provide a starting point for the Student Teacher helping them to identify their own journey towards mastery of the EYITT curriculum. Student Teachers need to discuss the outcomes of the initial needs analysis and subject knowledge audit with their school/setting mentor. It is the mentor's role to challenge the Student Teacher to reflect on their strengths and areas for development. You can help them to identify their priorities for the first term. This might include making arrangements to work with other age groups in your setting or school. The initial needs analysis will be used by the Student Teacher and their personal tutor at the start of the programme to set targets for the first term.



As the Student Teacher progresses through the EYITT programme they should return to the needs analysis and subject knowledge audit and update it, noting progress and any remaining gaps or weaknesses on Mosaic. As school/setting mentor you should continue your involvement, making sure the Student Teacher is positive about their strengths and is supported to address gaps.

## BKSB

Under new legislation from the DfE, ITT (Initial Teacher Training) providers are expected to assess the English and mathematics knowledge of applicants.

Student Teachers are asked to register for BKSB at the beginning of the programme. It is a critical part to continuing developing their competency in Fundamental Skills in mathematics. Their personal tutor will be in touch to monitor and support their progress throughout the programme.

## Communication

It is important that you establish and maintain good communication with your mentee. You will also be required to carry out joint observations and provide feedback to the Student Teacher's **personal tutor** each time they visit. You will be linked to a **Lead mentor** who will be available to answer questions in relation to your role and listen to your feedback throughout the programme. If it is necessary to change the mentor during the programme, you must inform us immediately. This will ensure we have the correct contact details for the new mentor, so that they can access Canvas and Mosaic and receive mentor information that we send out. Please also keep us informed of any Ofsted inspection outcomes at your setting, as on occasion, this can have a direct impact on the needs of the Student Teacher during the course.

Each setting has also been asked to identify a **lead trainer in the setting**, normally a manager or senior colleague in the setting, who maintains an overview of the Student Teacher's progress on the EYITT programme. As school/setting mentor you will need to liaise with the lead trainer too. For example, to release the EYITT Student Teacher for their 10% study time to work on their teaching file, modules and reflective account. As school/setting mentor, you will be able to reinforce the importance of this to the lead trainer.

The EYITT requirement 4.1 states.

*"No Student Teacher will be required to perform more than 90% of the duties normally required of a full-time early years teacher"*

If you have any questions or would like to share any information with us, please feel free to email your Student Teacher's personal tutor. If you are unsure of the contact details for either of these please call our office number 0117 920 9200 or email [eyitt@bestpracticenetwork.co.uk](mailto:eyitt@bestpracticenetwork.co.uk)

## Support

Your mentee will value your support during the programme.

One of the main challenges for your Student Teacher will be **managing their time** to undertake the work required for successful completion of the programme. Please help by encouraging your mentee to keep up with their reading and study. Little and often is a good way to tackle this. It is also an excellent use of the



£7,000 Employer Incentive to arrange regular study days for the Student Teacher. Agreeing a schedule of work can aid completion. There is funding guidance available on Canvas to explain the Employer Incentive in more detail.

Before every training day, the Student Teachers have **reading and preparatory tasks** to complete. Please ask your mentee to summarise their learning from this pre-reading as we have found this is a good way to ensure that they keep on track with this requirement. The monthly reflections section on Mosaic contains prompts to support your school/setting mentor discussions and encourage the Student Teacher to reflect on their development. These reflections, which are part of the assessment records, must be completed by the end of each month.

There is an excellent set of **online study modules** available to the Student Teacher to introduce them to new areas of teaching and care, or to further develop existing knowledge. GE (Graduate Entry) Student Teachers are expected to complete **all the online study modules**. GEB (Graduate Employment Based) Student Teachers can select modules and will be guided by their personal tutors to support those most suited to their needs. They must, however, complete the **Induction Module** and **Module 8**. There are also online forum discussions which enable Student Teachers to discuss and share ideas with others on different topics. From time-to-time lead mentors will pose provocations on the forum to encourage reflective practice.

It is very important that if you have any worries or concerns about the Student Teacher that you let us know immediately, as it is easier to get them back on track if we are aware of any issues or obstacles as early as possible.

Please support your mentee to make **full attendance on the training days** and on their placements. It is also advisable to arrange for them to have some study time before and after a training day that is covered by the Employer Incentive. It is helpful to get all the dates mapped into a main diary so that everyone is well informed.

## Observation

You will need to observe your mentee each week and give feedback to them. Your observations of the Student Teacher should focus on the way the Student Teacher has demonstrated mastery of the EYITT curriculum and in turn the Teachers' Standards (Early Years).

The observations can be handwritten or typed straight onto the best practice observation templates.

You will also need to share your observations with the visiting personal tutor during their visits and upload observations to Mosaic each week. You can check progress towards the weekly targets that you set and view targets on Mosaic set by the personal tutor.

We need you to observe your mentee once a week and ensure that you see them working in different contexts. For example, you should observe the Student Teacher in different areas of the provision, working with differing group sizes and in indoor and outdoor locations.

The observations should last 30 minutes. We understand that Student Teachers may plan an activity that lasts 15-20 minutes, so we ask that the remaining time is spent observing the Student Teacher engaging

with the children in the continuous provision. Regular observations are important so that you can set targets for the Student Teacher and record their progress over time. We have provided an **observation form and guidance** for you to use which you will find in course files on mosaic. It is acceptable to hand write your observations, these can also be scanned and uploaded onto Mosaic.

The employer can legitimately use some of the Employer Incentive money to cover your time to complete your **mentoring tasks** when observing and meeting with the Student Teacher. Discuss this with the setting trainer/manager/head of early years.

The Student Teacher's personal tutor will arrange to complete joint observations with you. This provides a very useful opportunity for you to share your assessment of the Student Teacher's teaching and care for the children.

The personal tutor will also meet with you to check you are clear about your mentoring tasks and that you have the support of the setting/school management to be released to complete the necessary mentoring.

## Placements

All Student Teachers need recent assessed experience in at least two settings across the birth to five age range.

For most Student Teachers, this means at least one placement. This second setting experience **must be of at least 25-30 days** (depending on whether it is for school experience or babies/toddlers/nursery) which can be in blocks of no less than 2 weeks, but longer, if more convenient.

A third setting placement may be needed to ensure all age group experience is fulfilled. This placement could be shorter in length i.e., a minimum of 10-15 days. Babies, Toddlers, Pre-school, and School experience is needed (Reception 20 days plus engagement of 5 days with KS1 and 2) Second and third placements should be in settings that have a different Ofsted registration to your own setting. All placements must be in settings rated good or outstanding.

If a Student Teacher does not currently work in a school, one placement must be in a school where they can work in Reception, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

It is often difficult for Student Teachers to arrange their own placements as they may lack the confidence to initiate discussions. We suggest that if this is the case, that the lead trainer or school/setting mentor contacts potential schools and other placement settings. While your mentee is away from your setting on placement it is a good idea to contact them by email or phone to check that everything is going well. You do not need to visit the Student Teacher while they are on placement, but a discussion will help you to maintain an overview of how they are getting on and to offer support as needed. If you discover that the Student Teacher is struggling or has any issues, please let the personal tutor know as soon as possible.

## Teaching file

The teaching file is a professional electronic file that all Student Teacher teachers are required to maintain within Mosaic. In the file they need to show high quality examples of teaching and care for babies and children through "learning sequences." These sequences show the observe/assess/plan cycle for individual children, groups of children and the associated record keeping and tracking of a cohort of children against

the early learning goals. It is essential that the tutor and mentor can see the intention, implementation, and impact of their work with the children.

Learning sequences show progress over time and are evidence of how a Student Teacher's teaching and care has made a positive impact on outcomes for children's learning and development.

The teaching file will need to show **five learning sequences** consisting of:

- a series of high-quality BPN teaching and learning plans that have been evaluated (a minimum of 5, except Maths sequence which is a minimum of 6). These plans should be linked, for example a sequence of activities for the teaching of early mathematics, across a period of a fortnight or a month and will be in addition to 'in the moment' activities and plans for continuous provision.
- relevant literature research template for each sequence, including referencing and building evidence of critical reflection skills.
- assessments of children's progress which link to future planning for their learning.
- cohort trackers of the children with whom the Student Teacher works (key group children, focus group of children, age group, class).
- evidence of developing subject knowledge
- information about the room/class/group the Student Teacher is working in.
- observations of their practice. It is crucial that quality interactions, assessment, and positive behaviours are demonstrated in their varied approaches to teaching. Each learning sequence must include an observation from the mentor or personal tutor.

Student Teachers must include a completed cover sheet for each learning sequence that shows what is included and why and links the learning sequence to the themes of the curriculum. There is also a review sheet where Student Teachers reflect on each completed learning sequence. They need to show how their teaching has advanced children's learning. They also need to demonstrate how through completing the learning sequence that have developed their own subject knowledge in an area of the EYFS or aspect of the National Curriculum.

A structure for the teaching file is in place so that the Student Teachers can organise their work effectively. The following model should be used:

- Cover Sheet
- Assessment
- Research template
- Teaching and Learning plans and supplementary evidence
- Review of the sequence
- Observations of practice
- Other evidence e.g., photos, mind-maps
- Teaching File Assessment (Personal Tutor completes this once the Sequence is complete)

*How many learning sequences will Student Teachers complete?*

By the end of the programme Student Teachers will need to have produced 5 learning sequences:

- one for babies in a prime area of EYFS\*
- one for toddlers in a prime area of EYFS\*  
(\*either babies or toddlers MUST focus on Communication and Language, the other can be PSED or Physical)
- one for reception children on early reading with a specific focus on Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP).
- one for young children on maths. This is in two parts. Part A is pre-school (3-4 years), and part B is with reception children (4-5 years) following the same mathematical theme. (Student Teachers are advised to research Maths Mastery in readiness for their school placement)
- One with a SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) focus covering an age range of the Student Teacher's choice.

The learning sequences can be for one or more key children or for a focus group that the Student Teacher is working with or a larger group/class. Two sequences can be for a single child, but this must not be a sequence that is for young children (YC) these must be a group or class.

## Assessment

As school/setting mentor, you will play an important part in the assessment of the Student Teacher you are supporting. This will be through your observations of their practice with children and of their leadership and support of colleagues. The personal tutor will ask you to describe examples of the Student Teacher's achievements and standard of teaching and care in your setting and they will record this on Mosaic. The professional conversations at the end of each term help the Student Teacher and the tutor to track progress throughout the programme, to identify whether the Student Teacher is on track towards mastering the EYITT curriculum and meeting the Teachers' Standards (Early Years) or whether their progress is a cause for concern. Use is also made of the Progress Milestones on Mosaic. When the tutor visits your setting, you will be asked to spend some time looking at them with the tutor. In addition, your completed observation forms will help give you examples to share with the tutor.

## Cause for Concern Procedure

Cause for concern is a developmental and supportive process and can be raised at any stage in the programme.

### Possible concerns are:

- Setting Ofsted inspection – where grade 3 or 4 is the outcome
- Serious accidents/health and safety concerns
- Changes of management that could lead to instability in the setting
- Inappropriate conduct by the Student Teacher or setting staff
- Suspected plagiarism
- Personal Issues
- Change of personal tutor
- Lack of mentoring records

## What training and support will I receive as a school/setting mentor?

All school/setting mentors are required to attend Induction training at the beginning of the programme. During the initial visit/remote meeting the personal tutor will talk through all the requirements and documents with you. They will also observe the Student Teacher and discuss their practice with you. They will be able to give you feedback on your observations and target setting with the Student Teacher. The personal tutor can also help you with any questions or concerns that you may have during the year. Throughout the year you will be invited to remote mentor update sessions.

We will provide regular training sessions for mentors to support your knowledge and provide CPD opportunities. We appreciate that you may not be able to attend every session, however these will be recorded and posted on canvas. The personal tutors will also discuss the sessions with you during their visits.

There are also regular online keeping in touch (KIT) sessions run by a Lead Mentor where you can keep up to date with the programme and raise any queries about your role. You will have access to a mentoring course that you can work through whilst on programme or select appropriate areas to upskill your knowledge; This is accessible through Canvas.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can also call the Programme Coordinators on 0117 920 9200 or email [eyitt@bestpracticenetwork.co.uk](mailto:eyitt@bestpracticenetwork.co.uk)

## Best Practice Network Mentor Training for all Autumn 2025 Mentors

| Training Activity                                                                                         | Where do I access this training?                                                                          | Timescale                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Induction:<br><br>Meet your Lead Mentor - introductory session.<br><br>Attend the online Induction event. | Teams link shared by your Lead Mentor.<br><br>Zoom link accessed shared via e-mail from your Lead Mentor. | September 2025<br><br>Online event 01/10/25 9.30-11.30. A recording will be available for those unable to attend. Please watch and complete the engagement quiz if unable to attend in person. |
| Engage with and complete the Online Induction Module.                                                     | Mosaic Platform                                                                                           | Please engage in the Induction Module and complete the quiz by the 01/10/2025                                                                                                                  |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <p>Mentors should engage with the EYITT Programme Overview and review the key handbooks (including the mentor welcome pack and handbook)</p> <p>Mentors should access the Frequently asked questions information.</p> | Mosaic platform                                                                                                                                             | Please review key documentation by 01/10/2025 and access whenever required.                                                                                                                                                          |
| Mentors should engage with the EYITT Mentor Information – Observations, Target Setting/Feedback, Learning Sequences, Placement Forms and EYITT Reflective Account. Once reviewed please complete the engagement quiz. | Mosaic Platform                                                                                                                                             | Ongoing as necessary                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <p>Attend Mentor Training Sessions x3.</p> <p>Attend Mentor Keeping in Touch (KIT) Meetings.</p>                                                                                                                      | <p>Links sent to each mentor from the Lead Mentor. Sessions held on Zoom.</p> <p>Links sent to each mentor from the Lead Mentor. Sessions held on Zoom.</p> | <p>Day 1 November 2025, Day 2 February 2026, Day 3 May 2026 (actual dates tbc)</p> <p>Please watch and complete the engagement quiz if unable to attend in person.</p> <p>KIT 1 December 2025, KIT 2 March 2026, KIT 3 June 2026</p> |

## Best Practice Network Mentor Enhancement options for all mentors

In addition to the mentor package above, all mentors have the option to engage in the following activities:

| Training Activity                                    | Where do I access this training? | Timescale                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Mentors can engage with the online mentor module and | Mosaic Platform                  | Available from the start of your mentoring journey and |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| complete the reflection activity (there is a shortened refresher option available for returning mentors).                                                                                               |                                                                                  | open to you throughout your time as a mentor.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Mentors can engage with the Mentor Development Review (MDR) process and receive one to one coaching support from their Lead Mentor.                                                                     | Mosaic Platform<br><br>Lead Mentor coaching session on Zoom or on the telephone. | Complete MDR Part 1 following the Induction Session 01/10/2025 (submit part 1 by 07/10/2025).<br><br>Your Lead Mentor is available to support you throughout this process and contactable by e-mail.<br><br>Deadline for completion 31/12/2025<br><br>Final coaching conversation will open 05/01/2026 and close 27/02/2026. |
| Mentors can engage in online discussion forums. These forums provide an opportunity to discuss relevant research and learn from fellow mentors. The Lead Mentors will facilitate the discussion forums. | Mosaic Platform                                                                  | 3 discussion forums – November 2026, February 2026 and April 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

## Continuing professional development

Mentoring is a professional skill that will enhance your own professional development and is something you can include on your own CV and any application form in the future.

By becoming a school/setting mentor with Best Practice Network as part of the programme for EYITT you will demonstrate evidence of your involvement in this professional role. It is useful if you can identify areas of training that you, your mentee, and your setting would benefit from. We can help you by providing ideas for “think pieces” for team discussions on a wide range of practical and professional themes.

In addition, you will have skills and knowledge and perhaps a specialism that will be valuable to develop as setting-based training for your mentee and for any EYITT Student Teachers who might attend your setting,



and this will be something we will discuss with you further.

## The Mentor Development Review (MDR):

To support mentors to refine their knowledge and skills of effective mentoring practices, we will encourage you to complete an MDR during the induction cycle and revisit this throughout the time that you are mentoring your Student Teacher. You will reflect on your overall progress in June with your Lead Mentor (LM).

The MDR consists of a series of areas with statements that you, as a mentor, will rate yourself against. The initial ratings will identify the priority mentoring area for development during the Induction Cycle. This should focus on one section of the MDR e.g. 'Professional Knowledge' and then you will identify actions to improve this area. There are suggested actions that you can choose from, or you can add your own. The final document will be uploaded to Canvas. This will form the start of a mentor portfolio for mentors who return to BPN and will enable us to monitor development and progress within mentoring and develop the mentoring training curriculum as appropriate.



## How often should I meet with my Student Teacher?

You need to set a time to meet with your Student Teacher each week. You will cover elements of the programme such as:

- training days
- your observations
- visits from their personal tutor
- placements

## What do we discuss in our school/setting mentor sessions?

We suggest you focus your school/setting mentor discussions on examples of the Student Teacher's practice and link this to the EYITT Curriculum themes. You could focus on a few aspects of the curriculum each time. Student Teachers will be required to summarise their discussions and reflections in Mosaic. The personal tutor will make a comment on their progress and set targets for development within Mosaic.

Look at the Student Teacher's teaching and care of the children in your setting and focus on what is "working well" and what would be "even better if..." Guide your mentee to explore these points to encourage professional self-evaluation.

It is a good idea to agree a theme ahead of each of your conversations. Examples of discussions will relate to Pedagogy, Assessment, Professional responsibilities, Understanding Behaviour, and Curriculum Knowledge. It is the mastery of the curriculum which is key to the Student Teacher's success. Mentors are expert professionals who are well placed to advise and guide Student Teachers.

Associated subject specific mentor meetings might include:

- Understanding Behaviour: helping children to demonstrate positive behaviour and regulate their own behaviour.
- Pedagogy: Effective strategies to support children, including those with SEND.
- Assessment: Effective tools to support assessment. The importance of observation in early years settings.
- Curriculum Knowledge: Sharing useful articles, books and networks linked to the development of subject knowledge.
- Professional Responsibilities: Conduct in the setting, appropriateness of dress, contribution to teamwork, valuing opportunities to lead, working with parents and other professionals.

## When will the personal tutor visit?

The personal tutor will contact the Student Teacher and you (at the same time) to make arrangements for their visits. If you prefer that they contact you directly, rather than through your setting or school you may exchange contact details if you wish.

The visits will be at regular intervals across the year. The personal tutor will arrange to meet with you for an initial visit (virtually) and then an observation in the early stages of the programme i.e., in September/October. Subsequent observation visits will be approximately one per half term, to a minimum of five. The personal tutor will also be visiting the Student Teacher at their placement setting.

# Working Towards EYITT

