

Effective teacher training is dependent on having school placements that offer the trainees from King's College London superb experiences of teaching and learning. I have worked with the Religious Studies department at Archbishop Tenison's for many years and I can honestly say, of all the schools I have the pleasure to work with in London, ATS is unashamedly my favourite! That may be due to having a personal link, having worked there myself many years ago! But it is much more than that. When I search for placements, what I want most of all are passionate, informed and committed teachers who can communicate this to the trainees with whom they work. This is exactly what the trainees get at ATS - the quality of support and the quality of teaching in the department is exemplary.

For many years I have been delighted to be able to bring the whole cohort of RE trainees from King's College London to observe members of the RE department teaching. The experience has been consistently superb. The opportunity to observe together allows the trainees to analyse carefully the nature of classroom interactions, and to see for themselves the quality of teaching to aspire to. Natasha, Patrick and Lizzie (and Dave Smith the previous HoD) have all worked in partnership with King's for many years and in many ways, including providing sessions on SEND, Inclusion and Behaviour Management. Each year we have had the privilege of talking with a panel of pupils who explore with us, from their point of view and in a very frank way, what makes teaching and learning effective. In addition to this partnership, members of the RS department have contributed to mentor training and interviewing prospective trainees. At King's we have also developed schemes of work, which use a critical realist pedagogy for RE, one that prioritises the truth claims of religions and embraces enthusiastically and directly the frequently controversial nature of the subject. The department were involved in a pilot of a year 7 scheme of work, and several of these lessons were observed during a recent SIAMS inspection. The quality of the teaching and learning was recognised and praised, which was a delight to both the department and to us at King's.

For me though, the most important contribution of the department has been the kind, encouraging and empowering support that has been given to the trainees over the years, and the example they have lived out, showing how to engage and care for the pupils, showing amazing commitment and having brilliant outcomes in terms of some of the best results in the school.

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