

Charlotte Bird

Teaching has been my lifelong passion and throughout my time at Spalding High School I always knew that teaching was the career me for.

When it came to choosing my A Levels, I wanted to choose subjects that were of interest to me but that would also help with my university application. Psychology has always been an interest of mine and I knew that the course would cover some elements of child psychology therefore taking Psychology was my first choice. I also had an interest in Modern Foreign Languages and had taken both French and German at GCSE. I knew from speaking to teachers in a local primary school that they were (and still are) lacking teachers who can speak and teach a Modern Foreign Language therefore I chose to continue both German and French at A Level as I knew that having a skill such as a language would make me stand out both when applying for a university place and when applying for a job in the future. Finally, I chose History as this was a subject that I enjoyed!

When it came to choosing a university and a course, I decided to do a Primary Education degree as I knew that I definitely wanted to be a primary school teacher, so I chose to specialise in Primary Education rather than study a single subject with a PGCE. In terms of choosing a university to study at I chose the University of Chester. Chester is a small city with a small campus meaning that everyone knows each other and you have the opportunity to meet lots of different people from lots of different courses! At the time the university offered a four-year degree programme and I felt that this would make a job application stand out; I would have had four different teaching placements in four different primary schools and any extra experiences would support me further when it came to applying and interviewing for jobs. The degree programme also asked for students to specialise in a subject area and looking for a degree that does this is something I would highly recommend. I chose to specialise in Modern Foreign Languages and spent a month teaching in Belgium; it is experiences like this that will boost a teaching job application. Schools can receive many applications for one vacancy and its 'extra' skills and experiences such as this that can make an application really stand out.

I am now nearly ten years into my teaching career and still absolutely love my job! During the last ten years I have been fortunate enough to have had many opportunities to develop my leadership skills and have been a subject leader for English, Phonics, Modern Foreign Languages, History, Geography and many more! I have also been an Acting Deputy Head and an Acting Head Teacher and I am now moving back into Core Subject leadership after having a few years away to raise my young family. Depending on the area of the country that you are in, teaching can be a very competitive career to get into. In my own

experience, I have found that it is harder to get a job in schools in the bigger towns and cities that are closer to universities, however it is essential to make an impression whilst you are in schools on teaching placements. I completed my training in Chester but came back to Lincolnshire to begin my teaching career before returning to Cheshire a few years later.

I consider teaching to be one of the most rewarding careers and I would highly recommend it to anyone. The days may sometimes be long, especially with weekly staff meetings and termly parents' evenings, the holidays can sometimes be spent in the classroom preparing for the upcoming term and there are the many extra-curricular activities to prepare for; assemblies, concerts, trips and residential but as soon as you see a child grasp a concept that you have taught them it makes it all worth it. It feels so incredibly special to be a part of a child's journey through education and it is a privilege to walk into the classroom every day and to play a role in helping every child become the very best that they can be!