

How to address criteria on a personal statement for a teaching post:

Proven Excellent Practitioner:

I believe am I a strong classroom practitioner and tutor feedback has confirmed this, which has stated that I 'have adopted the role of the teacher very effectively' and 'demonstrated an ability to motivate children'. I thoroughly enjoy teaching and this radiates to the children. My tutor stated my 'enthusiasm was readily transmitted and shared by all the children who were motivated very well'. I have delivered fun, meaningful and successful lessons. For example, when teaching a Year 5 literacy unit, I incorporated drama and role play. The children were reporters and interviewed characters from Goldilocks (played by children). The class then wrote their own newspaper articles from their point of view. The lesson was successful and the children got fully into their characters

Student Engagement:

I consider one of my strengths is engaging the students with novel and interesting starter activities to ensure students are on task as soon as they enter the classroom. For example, my BTEC Business class had a quiz, crossword or puzzle challenge at the beginning of each lesson relating to their subject knowledge. On entering the class, they would automatically pick up the lesson starter with intrigue, wondering what was in store for them that day!

Access to Learning:

I have worked hard to ensure that lessons I have delivered encompass opportunities for children to access the learning whatever their learning style. I have planned lessons that include using the outdoor environment which allows lots of kinaesthetic movement, is stimulating and fun and creates differentiation for all pupils. For example, when looking at 'settings' from the story 'The Polar Express', I took the pupils onto the school field to provide a large space where they could fully explore the activity. I have also devised fun lessons that incorporate home school links. For example, during the maths topic of 'time' I took the children onto the field to play a version of 'What time is it Mr Wolf'. All the children were fully engaged in both lessons and there were no behavioural issues which meant everyone could access learning.

Learning Styles:

When I prepare lessons I ensure I am catering for all learning styles. During a Geography lesson on Mexico my aim was to give children a 'taste' of the country. I used pictures on the interactive whiteboard. The main activity was 'hands on'. I organised the lesson as a carousel approach. Children had the opportunity to look at Mexican artefacts and apparel. They were able to taste the Mexican cuisine, design Mexican pottery and write postcards. This promoted collaborative and independent work.

Barriers to Learning:

I have also liaised with class teachers, subject co-ordinators and outside agencies to ensure that any barriers to learning can be overcome. For example, I have spoken with speech therapists and those with a particular specialised knowledge, such as Down Syndrome, with whom I am currently working with on my final placement. The

Additional Needs module has helped me develop useful provisions for any barriers to learning that I may come across; highlighting to me the importance of quality first teaching and a good network of support that includes both staff within the school and outside agencies. Furthermore, during placements I have been involved in the developing of IEPs and have studied intervention techniques such as Every Child Counts and hope to have the opportunity to implement them on my final practice.

Student Achievement:

The achievement of personalised targets is also a great cause for celebration in my classroom, I am currently working on a method where the children's personalised targets are written on stars and kept in their trays to be referred to when they wish, when these are achieved they are then stuck on the ceiling above their seat to remind themselves how well they have done and so that everybody can 'reach for the stars!'

Behaviour Strategies:

Behaviour can sometimes be challenging in my class as some pupils have specific difficulties or issues which affect the way they act. As the teacher I have to consider these when managing the behaviour of these children; addressing them appropriately and sensitively. I am firm but fair; using time out strategies, giving the children options of how they should next act and I record major incidents in the class' 'Black Book'. If children have 3 records of the same incident in the book by half term then they are not able to attend an out of school trip, for example to the theatre or museum. I also go through class rules with the children when I first enter a new class to establish what is expected of them to prevent any misunderstandings and provide a foundation to build a positive working relationship.

Flexibility & Resourcefulness:

Whilst on a remote placement I stayed in the village inn. For a science investigation testing acids and alkalis, I needed to collect red cabbage, soap, vinegar, washing up liquid, milk and lemon juice. As my accommodation was in an isolated rural location, I did not have the resources readily available, which presented me with a problem. However, with the co-operation of the landlady and the chef (who boiled the red cabbage for me). I was able to acquire all the resources for the lesson to be a success.

Planning and preparing:

When planning and preparing lessons, I make a conscious effort to see lessons through all learners' eyes. I fully understand that children have differing needs and learn in different ways. I myself am a visual learner; however I strive to ensure that my lessons cater for all preferences. For example, when teaching Year 5 children about balancing standard weights, I taught the children how to create 'human scales'. Children came to the front, chose and held a certain standard weight and created 'human scales'. We discussed as a class the required actions needed to balance the scales and the relevant action was taken by the children. Visual learners were catered for, as they could see the 'human scales', auditory learners as we discussed balancing the scales and kinaesthetic learners as the children chose the weights and actually balanced the scales themselves.

Specialist Knowledge:

As a member of the ASE, I have found the School Science Review a good source of ideas and information. It will be interesting to see the results of the current review into the National Curriculum and the recent Government proposals to introduce more vocational routes into Science careers. I would certainly be interested in developing courses around these in the future. Whilst on my most recent teaching practice I observed the planning and implementation of the GCSE Core Science course onto the VLE which created differentiated routes of learning through the syllabus allowing pupils to choose the best route for them.