

Practice Interview – Primary NQT

Usual format of the day:

Tour around the school. Occasionally interviewed by children from school. Then teaching an example lesson. Finally a formal interview by the Head and other senior staff.

Tips:

Interview with School council/kids:

This is generally fairly informal. Questions are sometimes prepared by staff and sometimes thought up by the kids.

Aim is to be friendly and positive. Usual questions are about ideas for school trips, making lessons fun, best lesson you have taught and occasionally random crazy questions (for the random ones, e.g. What's better: Pokemon or Minions? What animal do you want to be? Be positive, answer as best you can and tell them what a great question it is!).

Most importantly – Listen to them!!! Ask them questions. (if you can include: “When I talked to the school council, they said...” in your main interview it will go down well)

Example lesson:

They give minimal info beforehand about the class and the topic. Part of the test is what you ask for. Think about an outstanding lesson and the knowledge you need beforehand (e.g. prior knowledge, SEN, resources and technology available, ability of the class, behaviour strategies used in the school/class, whether there is an additional adult in the room and their role etc) and make sure you ask these questions before the interview day. Ask for name badges for the children (or do name stickers etc). Be aware that with the Headteacher and Governors in the room, the class will be better behaved, but less responsive.

You usually have a short lesson to teach, so be realistic about what you can achieve. Think carefully about progress and how you will measure this.

All interviewees may be given the same topic, so you might be the fourth person in a row to teach a particular topic to that class. So they may know it already. Therefore make sure you prepare plenty of different stretching activities.

Expect that any technology will not work and plan accordingly. Above all, make sure it is fun and stimulating for the kids.

In your main interview, you will be asked to reflect on the lesson. So start thinking about this straight away (Use the “what went well and “even better if” model of reflection).

General:

You will be assessed and judged from the moment you make contact with the school. The office staff, the students, the teachers, everyone will be giving feedback to the Head.

They will usually ask at the end of the interview whether you still want the job. Make sure you are honest. If you don't want to accept, tell them. (You can't accept the job then turn them down later)

If you want to negotiate pay (only to be done if you have concrete experience to demonstrate you exceed the competencies of the usual NQT candidate), then do this after they offer you the job.

Questions:	What they usually look for:	Notes:
What attracted you to the post at this school?	<p>Have they done lots of research on the school? Do they talk about the strategy/demographics of the school, observations they have made and how the ethos of the school is shown in practice?</p> <p>Have they compared it with positive things they liked from other placement schools they have been at?</p>	
What would you change about this school?	<p>Does the applicant demonstrate positivity in their answer? Do they have any positive ideas or best practice to share from their placement schools? Have they been observant when touring/visiting the school?</p>	
Why do you want to be a teacher?	<p>Have they told a personal story which shows that teaching / helping students learn provides them with sufficient rewards to compensate for the challenges and stress of the role?</p> <p>Have they been realistic about the challenges of an NQT job?</p> <p>Have they talked about why they want to teach this age group?</p> <p>Are you satisfied that they are sufficiently motivated by the job (having used concrete examples) to get through an NQT year?</p>	
<p>What is your biggest weakness? (or top 3)</p> <p>Or</p> <p>What skills and competencies are you looking to develop during your NQT year?</p>	<p>We want reflective practitioners.</p> <p>Have they been honest about their weakness?</p> <p>Have they identified areas to improve?</p> <p>What have they already done to improve/compensate?</p> <p>Do they have a plan to improve further?</p>	
What do you think is the most important change happening in Primary education at the moment?	<p>Do they show a strong understanding of the current context in primary education? Do they focus on one area (i.e. have they researched just this) or do they refer to other wider factors (i.e. demonstrate a broad understanding of issues)</p>	

<p>During a lesson, you notice a child has a round burn mark on their arm. You make a casual remark about it and the child tells you their father did it last night with his cigarette. What do you do next?</p>	<p>Safeguarding is always asked about.</p> <p>Do they show a concern for the child? Do you feel that they care?</p> <p>Do they show an understanding of safeguarding policy?</p> <p>Do they have an example of having dealt with a disclosure?</p>	
<p>How would you contribute to the spiritual life of the school?</p>	<p>If they share the same religious beliefs, do they practice this? Can they join/lead collective worship? Have they been involved in religious activities?</p> <p>If they do not share the same religious beliefs, have they understood our ethos and values? Can they 'buy-in' to the broader aims of our ethos and values?</p> <p>Can they show an example of their pastoral care with students which demonstrates their commitment to our values?</p>	
<p>How would you ensure that you respond effectively to the differing needs and abilities of individual pupils?</p>	<p>Have they given a concrete example of a class and how they have differentiated learning? Have they demonstrated that all students have made progress? What approach/es did they take? (peer to peer learning, streaming ability levels, use of teaching assistant, use of stretching and challenging work etc)</p>	
<p>What would we see if we visited your classroom?</p>	<p>Do they mention the children and whether they are happy/working well/challenged making progress etc?</p> <p>Do they mention displays of children's work?</p> <p>Do they mention if it is well organised?</p> <p>Technology?</p>	
<p>Can you give me an example of when you have communicated effectively with a parent?</p>	<p>Have they got a concrete example? (if not, recommend that student tries to talk to a parent during their placement soon!)</p> <p>Have they demonstrated good:</p> <p>Listening, understanding the issues/opinions of the parent, staying calm, being positive, being clear and concise, not using jargon or being condescending, highlighting that they</p>	



	care about the child, finding a positive solution.	
Do you have any questions for us?	<p>Have they asked a question/s which shows their research into the school?</p> <p>Have they focussed their questions on the NQT support, mentor, training, strategy of the school and/or resources available?</p> <p>Have they thought about where they can add value? (e.g. asking about specific extra curricular stuff that they can contribute to).</p> <p>Have they asked about money? (this is bad, and shows the wrong motivation)</p> <p>(Many questions will be answered during the tour round the school, so make sure you have plenty of questions prepared.)</p>	

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