

Nottinghamshire has the second best teacher training school in the country

By [DanRussell](#) | Posted: April 04, 2016



Principal Fraser Mitchell.

One of the best teacher training schools in the country is now in Nottinghamshire.

[George Spencer Academy](#) has been named by the Good Teacher Training Guide as one of the top 10 teacher trainer providers in the country and the second best primary teacher trainer nationally.

The Stapleford training unit now finds itself among a number of prestigious providers like Cambridge University.

Vice-principal Mary-Alice Lloyd, who has led the teaching school since the beginning, said: "I am delighted. Over the last 20 years of teacher training, we have built strong and supportive relationships with our partnership of schools."

"We are constantly updating our programmes and making sure our trainees are fit for the jobs they are going to be taking. We do a lot of mentoring and personalise things for our trainees because each one is different.

"We don't just cherry-pick the schools we work with because schools with challenging situations need good teachers too. Once we know which school our trainees are going into we make sure we tailor them to that environment."

The training school works with 13 secondary schools as well as 11 primary and one special school in the East Midlands. Mrs Lloyd said: "Our partnership of schools focuses on what they need in 18 months' time and that is what we work too. Recruitment is challenging more so in some areas than others.

"At the moment one in five maths graduates would have to become teachers to fill the gap in that subject.

"Teaching is a wonderful profession but it is a tough job and we do look after the wellbeing of our trainees and set them up as well as possible for their careers.

"We have to promote Nottinghamshire as a great place to live and train and that way the best candidates will come here and work in our schools."

Each year the school takes between 35 and 45 trainees who are given the skills they need to become qualified teachers over the space of a year.

Maths subject mentor Elizabeth Attwood said: "I help with lesson planning, marking, feedback and everything else.

"We have weekly meetings and regularly talk after school or whenever they need.

"Maths teachers are in high demand and last year we had four trainees and all went on to get great jobs. Because there is a demand it is a great time to get into the career."



Director Caroline Arnold, Lead at ITT Cath Mills, Principal Fraser Mitchell, Vice principal Mary-Alice Lloyd

Maths trainee Danielle Nelson is based at George Spencer. The 22-year-old, of Sandiacre, said: "I wanted to become a teacher to help change lives.

"I wanted to become a teacher to help make a difference and inspire people.

"I am also a big fan and player of netball and I can do that too, as well as share my passion for the sport.

"I have always liked maths and wanted to do this job since I was at school.

"I think that if you want to do a job it is not as stressful as some people say.

"So far I am really impressed with the training and I am up to teaching 10 hours a week."

The Good Teacher Training Guide is written by the Centre for Education and Employment Research, at the University of Buckingham.

It ranked 174 providers by a score derived from a range of factors, including looking at the degree classification of those training, initial teacher education Ofsted grades, the ratings of the newly qualified teachers and the percentage in employment six months after competing training. The school is the second best primary teacher trainer nationally with Billericay Educational Consortium in Essex taking the top position.

Lewis Horsley is based at Chetwynd Primary Academy in Toton. The 23-year-old, of Lenton, said: "When I found out where we were ranked I was so proud and honoured to be picked to be on the training programme.

"It is nice to know you are getting the very best which puts you in a great position to get a job.

"Seeing a smile on kids' faces and knowing you have made a difference to them is a great thing. I have always preferred working with young children and I also like the fact that I can teach a range of subjects.

"I always hear there is a demand for male primary school teachers so that is good news for me."

School-based tutor Scott Doyle has been working at the George Spencer for eight years. The vice-principal said: "I meet each of our trainees for an hour a week to deliver some training and talk about anything they need. It is a support role which is hugely important because it is a daunting career to start in. The training is challenging but there is so much help on hand for everyone.

"The best thing is that we are now known as one of the best in country which is great.

"We are very proud."

[George Spencer's secondary school ranking is 10th](#) – 0.4 marks below a training provider in Durham and 0.7 marks below the University of Birmingham's course.

Chief executive officer Dame Susan Jowett, of the Spencer Academies Trust, said: "It's great to know that the teacher training we deliver is ranked so highly, and to rub shoulders with the very best in the country.

"It's a tribute to the relentless hard work of our staff, trainees, placement schools and their students and parents that we are helping to create the very best of tomorrow's teachers at a time of local and national teacher shortage.

"It also shows we have the balance right between academic rigour and on-the job training on our courses."