A passion for teaching

For alumna Kirsty Johnson, working in education is a vocation and a passion. ‘You become a teacher to make a difference, to be the best you can be for the young lives in your care and those who are the most successful keep this moral purpose at the core of everything they do. For those wishing to seek a career in education, I would say you will not find another career that is more exciting, engaging and rewarding than teaching children. Every day is new and you are constantly learning and developing.’

Kirsty certainly knows what she’s talking about having worked in education for over ten years. Having spent the first part of her career in inner-city London, teaching Key Stage 2 and Years 1,3 and 4, by 2013 she had worked her way up to become Deputy Head and Assessment and Inclusion Leader of a primary school in the London Borough of Islington. Under her guidance, the school went from Requires Improvement to Good with Outstanding Features, with the OFSTED report commenting that the leadership team were moving the school ‘on a journey towards excellence’.

Teaching the teachers

In 2015 Kirsty decided to set up her own business to use her own experience and skills in a way that could support teachers and school leaders in a much wider scope.

‘I wanted to use what I had learned to affect more schools than just my own and I also wanted the opportunity to work in a range of different fields, such as with trainee or newly-qualified teachers, and with other assessment leaders in schools to support them with the changes to assessment taking place nationally. So, in 2015 I decided to leave and set up my own business and I now work with local authorities in London, individual schools and teaching schools.’

Life-long learning

It seems fitting that even as she is teaching others, Kirsty has retained her desire to learn and since achieving her PGCE has also completed the NPQSL with the NCTL and the National SENco Award with Edge Hill University.

‘I am currently studying a PG Cert in SPLD Dyslexia with Edge Hill and am looking into a future career in Special Educational Needs. I intend to study a Master’s degree with Hertfordshire University, with the possibility of training to become an Educational Psychologist.’

Following her experience at Herts, she is positive about studying for a PGCE via distance learning. ‘The distance-learning route meant that I was able to spend much more time working in schools and developing my skills and knowledge as a teacher.

‘The tutors on the courses, as well as the admin support team, meant that I was supported the whole way through. The learning gained on the course is accurate, in-depth and develops the good grounding you need to build upon in future learning - I would highly recommend it to anyone wanting to pursue a career in education.’