



### **Overview of the school**

Herne Bay Junior School is a four-form entry school situated in Herne Bay. Herne Bay Junior School works closely with Canterbury Christ Church University and is a lead partnership school in mentoring students. The school supports between 4-6 placements per year across a range of routes including School Direct.

During 2021-2022, the schools hosted one School Direct placement, four BA Year 2 students and one PGCE placement. In 2022-2023, the school will host one School Direct placement, four Year 2 placements, one Year 3 placement and two ECTs.

### **Approaches to ITT at Herne Bay Junior School**

Students are warmly welcomed into the school and are encouraged to become an active member of our staff and school ethos. Each student is placed in a class where the class teacher works with them on a day to day basis, offering informal feedback, support and training during their placement. The class teacher works with the student in order to develop their pedagogy, knowledge of the children and assessment of the class and individuals in line with the guidance from CCCU.

Class teachers are mentor trained or supported by the Lead Mentor. Each student is allocated a mentor. The mentor meets with their student weekly and works to ensure that the student teacher is developing and moving towards meeting the teaching standards. The mentor and class teachers will regularly carry out formal observations of their teaching providing written feedback in line with guidance from the university. From this, the mentor and class teacher will set clear targets for progression and will write reports across the year in discussion with the student teacher.

The Lead Mentor has responsibility for all mentors within the school. A key role of the Lead Mentor is that of quality assurance. As part of the quality assurance process, the Lead Mentor carries out joint observations with mentors, supports in writing reports, offers feedback to the mentors and acts as an additional source of opinion when necessary.

The Lead Mentor and mentors also co-ordinate placement-based training that is offered to the student teachers. CPD includes support with assessment, subject specific training, behaviour and phonics. Link Tutors regularly visit to support mentors and students and to observe.

### **Feedback from previous students:**

- As an ECT, it has been invaluable to be offered the level of support I have been given at HBJS. Knowing that someone friendly and approachable is always there to guide me, gives me confidence. Regular mentor meetings encourage me to be a reflective

professional. Overall, the support I am given as an Early Career Teacher is helping me to develop my skills and become a better teacher.

- The School Direct program connects you with someone more knowledgeable and experienced in the role which offers a bridge between what you already know and what you want and need to learn. Having someone more experienced to share advice, offer guidance and support and listen to your thoughts and ideas is invaluable. The opportunity to observe other teachers across the school has provided me with new strategies and ideas to apply in my daily teaching, and working with my mentor has given me the confidence to challenge myself and step outside of my comfort zone. This has had a significant impact on my learning and pedagogy. The positive guidance and constructive feedback offered by my mentor helps me to reflect on my practice and seek ways to adapt my teaching whilst always feeling supported. Not only are they a great sounding board for thoughts and ideas, they are also open to new ideas and ready to learn from your fresh perspective which makes you a valued member of the team.
- My experience of being a School Direct student was brilliant. The staff at Herne Bay Junior School are incredibly supportive, friendly and helpful. They are fully invested in helping to create great teachers and will support you through each part of your training. The weekly mentor sessions are brilliant for identifying targets and organising upcoming lessons but they also allow you to reflect on the targets you have achieved the previous week, which is incredibly important. The structure of the training allows you to observe great practice, speak to staff and share ideas. You are then able to gradually implement your ideas in the classroom. I am now a first-year ECT and the high level of support has not been reduced. I still have my weekly mentor meetings and I am given the time to observe other teachers. This is allowing me to develop my practice and continue to implement ideas in my classroom.
- The School Direct program is a great way to begin your teaching career. Training at HBJS gave me the knowledge and confidence I need to become the teacher that I am today. HBJS staff were always willing to help and provide the support needed throughout the program.