

The Ferns Primary Academy

Apprenticeships at The Ferns Primary Academy, part of Northern Education Trust

Northern Education Trust has worked in partnership with GP Strategies since 2017 to design and deliver apprenticeship training to new and existing staff. The Trust currently has over 40 employees undertaking apprenticeships across its network of academies.

Prior to the outbreak of Covid-19 in 2020, GP Strategies held a series of information events at a number of Northern Education Trust academies to promote its apprenticeship offer. This included a session at The Ferns Primary Academy in Bolton, where six staff members enrolled onto the Level 3 Teaching Assistant Apprenticeship and a further three staff members enrolled onto one of the Business Administrator Apprenticeships

Challenges

Both apprenticeship courses have been delivered under challenging circumstances as the academy adapted to the 'new normal' amid Covid-19 restrictions. GP Strategies acted quickly in the early stages of the pandemic to move apprentices' coursework to digital formats and to support remotely via phone, email and online platforms.

Outcome

All staff involved have engaged and progressed well with their training. The individually tailored programmes have enabled the academy to fill skills gaps by growing staff from within, and has significantly improved staff confidence, knowledge and motivation.

In addition, the training has been fully funded through Northern Education Trust's Apprenticeship Levy so there has been no additional cost to The Ferns Academy and no cost to the learners.

Further information

To find out more how apprenticeships can benefit your academy, please contact Christine Hopkins at c.hopkins@northerneducationtrust.org.



"Our staff have felt empowered and confident through clear guidance and friendly support provided by Toni, our Skills Coach, and the rest of the team at GP Strategies. The dedicated programme is outcome focused and child centred, and has enabled staff to focus on their own personal growth and development.."

Danielle Broadbent, Principal, The Ferns Primary Academy

"I have fully enjoyed doing my Teaching Assistant Apprenticeship, and without the support of my work colleague and my skills coach I wouldn't have come so far. I have gained so much incredible knowledge, and the experience has truly boosted by self-esteem and self-confidence. Thank you so much GP Strategies."

Tahera Arshed, Teaching Assistant, The Ferns Primary Academy

"The apprentices have all demonstrated an excellent commitment to learning throughout the lockdown period. They produced reflective logs during this time, which has enabled them to reflect on how they are adapting their work roles to the restrictions, and how this is affecting learning and school routines."

Toni Hughes, Childcare Skills Coach, GP Strategies