

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER



As the term gathers pace and signs of the new season begin to appear, there is a real sense of focus and momentum across the course. Our Primary PGCE trainees are now enjoying their Early Years placements, embracing the opportunity to develop their practice with our youngest learners and deepen their understanding of early development and pedagogy. We are, as always, incredibly grateful for the expertise, care and commitment of our school partners in supporting this vital stage of their training.

NEWS

Active Lives, Natural Spaces: Supporting Children and Young People's Wellbeing and Mental Health

As part of the ESRC Festival of Social Science, colleagues from the Manchester Institute of Education hosted Active Lives, Natural Spaces, an interactive exhibition exploring how play, physical activity, and access to green spaces can support children and young people's wellbeing and mental health.

Led by Sarah MacQuarrie and Alexandra Hennessey, the event brought together professionals from education, health and community settings to engage with research-informed, practical strategies. Through themed displays and expert insights, attendees were encouraged to reflect on how movement and natural environments can be embedded into everyday practice. The Primary PGCE team contributed their expertise in primary education and school-based practice.

To extend the impact of the event and enable continued engagement with the ideas and practices shared, you can access the resource hub [here](#).

The event was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, part of UK Research and Innovation.

KEY DATES

20th March - Meet your mentor day for trainees in school

23rd March - 25th June - School Experience 2

20th April - all trainees attend the university for their placement tutorial so will not be in school.

Interested in supporting trainees in your school?

Email:
karen.kilkenny@manchester.ac.uk

Invitation to UoM Primary PGCE 'AI in Primary Education' Conference

Online Friday March 6th - 1.30-3.30pm



What is it?

An online conference of short presentations from different perspectives to allow participants to share and consider how AI is being used across primary classrooms, schools and an ITT programme

Who is it for?

Headteachers, senior leaders, governors, teachers, teaching assistants and anyone interested in AI in education.

Presentations will include insights into the use of AI from school leaders, teacher educators, trainees and school mentors.

Sign-up for your FREE ticket [here](#).

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MANCHESTER
1824
The University of Manchester

Primary
PGCE



● GET INVOLVED!

This term, we invite you to support our students beyond the Primary PGCE and engage in a CPD.

Seeking any colleagues who would be interested in hosting University of Manchester, International Education masters students for a short school visit

Hello, I am Lise Hopwood, the deputy programme director for the MA International Education course at UoM. Our student reps have asked if there might be any opportunities for them to visit an English school whilst they are studying in Manchester. Some of our students have teaching experience in their own countries, many have undergraduate degrees in education related fields and all have an interest in exploring the differences and similarities in education globally.

I would love to hear from any partnership schools who would be willing to host a few of our masters students for a visit of a few hours or maybe half a day. The kinds of activity that our students would be interested in include joining a class for a lesson or two; chatting to students; shadowing a teacher and just generally being able to observe and participate briefly in an English educational environment. If your school would like in return to have some input from our students talking about education in their home countries and their journey to study overseas, then I'm sure that our students would all be happy to do so.

Might this be something that you and your schools could accommodate at the end of June/beginning of July when the pressures of assessment lessen? It would obviously be a great experience for our students but hopefully also something that schools could find interesting. Our students will *not* have DBS certificates.

If you are interested please do contact me lise.hopwood@manchester.ac.uk and/or complete this brief survey https://www.qualtrics.manchester.ac.uk/jfe/form/SV_9B0JWAvsVk7aBcW.

I am initially just seeking expressions of interest so you are not committing yourself, your school or your students to anything at this early stage.

Thank you,

Lise

Invitation to Participate in Maths Education

My name is Laiba Shezadi and I am completing my dissertation at the University of Manchester. I am inviting teachers to take part in a study exploring perceptions of maths apps and their role in enhancing pupil engagement, as digital technology becomes increasingly embedded in classrooms.

Participation involves a 20–25 minute semi-structured interview, either online or in person. All data will be fully anonymised.

If you are willing to take part or would like further information, please contact me at: laiba.shezadi@student.manchester.ac.uk

UKLA
UK LITERACY ASSOCIATION

Applications to become a Teacher Judge for the UKLA 2027 Book Awards are now open! This year we're looking for teachers within travelling distance of MANCHESTER!

The only national children's book awards judged by teachers, taking part in the UKLA Book Awards is a wonderful opportunity to connect with colleagues over a shared passion for children's literature. The process also involves valuable CPD opportunities, receiving the books to share with your class and an invitation to the awards ceremony at the UKLA 2027 International Conference in Manchester!

Interested? Follow the [link](#) to find out more.

