



Name: Darren Barton
Age: 28
Post: Head of Mathematics, secondary school, Dorset
Education and training: BSc in Mathematics; PGCE
Years in teaching: 7

“At the end of my first year of teaching maths, I gained a management pay point for coordinating the IT curriculum and realised that I could progress quickly if I wanted to.

There was a clear structure for moving into management roles and I was keen to progress. A year later I became a mathematics coordinator for Key Stage 3, broadening my experience of managing the curriculum.

My headteacher encouraged me to apply for my current role as head of department after only four years in teaching. I am very motivated by the leadership aspect of this job and it has brought two further management points. I manage a team of 14 and am responsible for the quality and outcomes of our mathematics curriculum and approaches to mathematics teaching. I am also mentoring two trainees on the Graduate Teacher Programme [GTP] and our sessions challenge my teaching ideas as much as theirs. Being a good teacher is at the heart of my job and communication is the main skill. I find the process of teaching and learning about mathematics absolutely fascinating and work continually with teachers, parents and pupils to find strategies for success.

My ambition is to be a headteacher before I am 40. I am currently doing an MA in Mathematics Education for my own interest. I believe in mathematics for its own sake, not just as a utilitarian set of skills – tackling the philosophy of mathematics is exciting. My next step will be the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH).”

"Being a teacher is challenging and rewarding. Every day a new thing, every day on your toes. I think teaching is a journey, a journey you take with the pupils. I love their inquisitiveness, I see them reasoning and coming to a solution. I have a passion for science that I am able to pass on to them. It is very exciting to see them grow in confidence and develop their understanding. I know that I am part of the future of the country and I find that very satisfying. Nothing compares to teaching."

Bruce Choto, 37, Science Teacher, secondary school, Peterborough





"I am a science Advanced Skills Teacher. The skills I have been developing throughout my career are recognised. My work acknowledges my success in making 'even the boring bits of science interesting' as one pupil put it.

I spend one day a week working alongside newly qualified science teachers or science teachers in other schools helping them develop their teaching approaches. I am fascinated by the learning process and I am always seeking new ways to capture pupils' interest and understanding. Teaching other teachers is a new dimension. I wanted to stay rooted in the classroom as my career progressed because I love investigative science. Every lesson can be fun! I do work hard, but my home life has always been very precious to me. The hours and holidays in teaching are very family-friendly. My husband is a teacher too and we have a good quality of life: our salaries are comfortable, our mortgage is paid off, our pension is secure and our work is stimulating and rewarding."

Gill Paterson, 50, Advanced Skills Science Teacher, secondary school, Preston