

# Get off to a **flying** start

Your years of training and first year of teaching are an exciting, though steep, learning curve. As well as doing the job competently, you need to think about developing a successful career. **Hazel Bennett** offers some top tips

## Tips for students

- 1 When looking for a job, remember it is really important to find one where you feel comfortable. That means you like the atmosphere and can get on with the staff because you will need their support to pass your induction year.
- 2 Look carefully at the ethos of the school. Read their brochure thoroughly to make sure their beliefs match yours. It would be difficult to succeed if you found yourself in needless conflict because your ideals clashed.
- 3 Don't worry about teaching in the 'right' kind of school because every school offers you valuable experience. Whether it is a highly pressurised, independent school or one in special measures in an impoverished inner city area, you can learn a lot. Choose a school where you feel most at home.
- 4 At the interview, the head will probably want to observe you giving a lesson. Prepare an interesting warm-up with activities that are fun and grab the pupils' interest. Involving the pupils in active learning with a challenging activity for the most able, and finishing with a plenary that leaves the pupils on an 'up', will put you firmly into the frame.
- 5 If you find a job and are invited to do some supply teaching at the end of the summer term, this is a chance to lay a firm foundation for your career. You can do this by:
  - letting the staff see that you are pleased to be there and want to learn
  - asking questions to let them see you value their expertise and are eager to fit in — but don't bombard them with questions
  - offering to help — don't wait until you are asked
  - establishing a friendly working relationship with the teaching and non-teaching staff
  - making friends with other NQTs because you can support each other through what will be the most challenging year of your career.

