

University of Cumbria

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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Introduction

1. This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors supported by a team of specialist inspectors in accordance with the *Framework for the Inspection of Initial Teacher Education (2008-11)*.
2. The inspection draws upon evidence from all aspects of the provision to make judgements against all parts of the inspection evaluation schedule in the framework. Inspectors focused on the overall effectiveness of the training in supporting high quality outcomes for trainees and the capacity of the partnership to bring about further improvements. A summary of the grades awarded is included at the end of this report.

Key to inspection grades

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|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Explanation of terms used in this report

Attainment is defined as the standard reached by a trainee at the end of their training.

Progress is judged in terms of how well a trainee has developed professionally from their starting point to the standard reached at the time of the inspection or at a suitable review point.

Achievement is judged in terms of the progress made and the standard reached by a trainee at the time of the inspection or at a recent assessment review point.

The provider

3. The University of Cumbria is the largest provider of initial teacher education (ITE) with more than 2,200 primary trainees and 500 secondary trainees. For those wishing to train to teach primary pupils, the university offers full-time three- and four-year programmes leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) as well as full-time and flexible modular programmes leading to a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE). For those wishing to teach in the secondary sector, there is a three-year programme leading to QTS in one of six subjects, and a full-time postgraduate programme in 12 different subjects.
4. The Faculty of Education operates on two campuses in the north west, at Carlisle and Lancaster, and also in Tower Hamlets, London.
5. In the last few years, the university has undergone considerable change. The Faculty of Education was restructured for the current academic year and all ITE programmes are being revalidated. In September 2010, the Ambleside site was

re-configured as a 'gateway' campus with reduced, specialist services and all ITE trainees transferred to the Lancaster campus.

6. The university works in partnership with more than 1,850 schools across much of Lancashire, surrounding unitary authorities, Cumbria and parts of North Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland as well as Dumfries and Galloway and the Isle of Man. In London, the partnership includes schools in Newham, Tower Hamlets and the wider south-east region. In 2010, the primary partnership was re-modelled to give more than 40 training areas and clusters of schools.

A commentary on the provision

7. The following are particular features of the provider and its initial teacher training programmes:
 - the high quality of pastoral support which ensures a marked 'personal touch' for all trainees
 - the positive response to change, especially over the last two years, with creative solutions facilitated by strong, determined leadership
 - the continuing strong commitment of schools to training the next generation of teachers and their willingness to develop the partnership
 - the effective training of teachers who gain employment locally and who meet local recruitment needs as in primary special educational needs and in secondary shortage subjects, including design and technology.
8. The following recommendations should be considered to improve the quality of the outcomes for trainees:
 - analyse data more critically and rigorously to prompt changes in the short and longer term that will improve the quality of provision and outcomes for trainees
 - ensure that the quality of mentoring is consistent so that all trainees make the best progress possible
 - make more effective use of placements to ensure that all trainees gain 'timely' experience in linking theory to practice.

Provision in the primary phase

Context

9. The university works in partnership with more than 1,600 early years and primary settings and offers five routes into primary teaching. Of the 1,542 undergraduate trainees, more than 800 are taking the three-year programme leading to a Bachelor of Arts (BA) with QTS; of these trainees, almost 200 are specialising in Early Years (3 to 7 year olds). These two programmes are provided at Carlisle, Lancaster and Tower Hamlets. The 733 trainees taking the

four-year programme, based at Lancaster, are preparing to teach pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. Trainees specialise in one of 10 areas including early childhood education, special educational needs and National Curriculum subjects. Just over 360 trainees are taking the full-time postgraduate programme which is offered at all three campuses; 50 of these trainees at Carlisle and Lancaster are specialising in Early Years. A further 318 trainees nationally are following the flexible modular postgraduate programme which prepares trainees to teach pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Key strengths

10. The key strengths are:

- the wide range of pathways into teaching, especially the proven success of the flexible modular postgraduate programme in providing a route for those unable to take up full-time training
- the high quality of the support and guidance from professional and academic tutors which is highly effective in sustaining trainees' progress and completion of the programme
- the highly effective recruitment to the London-based programmes of trainees from differing social and cultural groups who progress well, meet the Standards, gain posts in East London and stay in teaching
- the strong culture of innovation and research that feeds into challenging modules which foster well the development of trainees' independent learning skills, particularly in reflecting on and presenting findings to a high standard
- the continued support and willingness of schools to host trainees from differing programmes and to share expertise to the benefit of the partnership.

Recommendations

11. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:

- ensure greater consistency in the quality of school-based training especially in the use of guidance documentation, the accurate grading and critical moderation of judgements of trainees' attainment, and the setting of challenging targets to secure the best possible progress for all trainees
- rationalise the organisation of placements to secure trainees' 'timely' application of theory to practice, especially in developing their skills in assessing pupils' attainment and progress
- refine the use of data from the tracking of trainees' progress to increase personalised provision.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

12. By the end of their training, trainees' attainment is good. Marked improvement in 2008/9 in the proportion of trainees judged to be outstanding was not sustained in 2009/10 although more than 80% of trainees were judged to be at least good. The picture across the programmes was complex; for example, Lancaster trainees did best on all programmes and trainees taking the four-year programmes outdid those taking the three-year programmes. The current picture is also mixed. While many trainees are doing well, with some showing marked potential to excel, a very small minority are not making the best possible progress because of inconsistencies in the quality of centre- and school-based training. Half way through their final placement, a few trainees are still dealing with some basic aspects of planning, the assessment of pupils' learning and effective classroom management. Not all trainers specify clearly what trainees need to do to improve; some trainees have too positive a view of their attainment. The effectiveness of all aspects of the provision across the partnership is therefore judged to be good rather than outstanding as in the provider's self-evaluation.
13. Good recruitment and selection procedures ensure that candidates are offered a place on the programme which is suited to their needs. The good range of pathways brings together trainees with very differing prior experiences and personal needs. An increasing number join programmes from foundation courses and do well. Recruitment to the flexible modular postgraduate programme is strong; trainees comment that the programme offers QTS that would not be possible otherwise through any other route. The selection process is rigorous in ensuring that these trainees can cope with the demands of independent learning. Active recruitment in the north west has increased to broadly the regional average the proportion of trainees from minority ethnic communities on the Carlisle and Lancaster programmes. Skewed by the high numbers on the London-based programmes, the overall proportion is above average. The university has been particularly successful in recruiting trainees from the Bangladeshi community and ensuring the London cohort profile strongly represents the differing communities in East London.
14. The general success in selecting suitable candidates is reflected in the rise in completion rates to just below average and in employment rates which are above average, most so for those taking the four-year BA programme. Many on the London-based programmes gain employment in schools in Newham and Tower Hamlets.
15. School-based trainers were largely accurate in their assessment of trainees' current attainment. Occasional generosity undermines the effectiveness of trainers in raising the bar and ensuring that all trainees make best progress in meeting the Standards for QTS. Most trainees showed a good level of professional attributes, knowledge and skills. They managed classes, groups and individual pupils confidently and positively, often drawing on their own strategies to reward pupils. They were planning in detail, drawing on their knowledge of the pupils to plan differentiated activities. Many had made their own resources and made effective use of the interactive whiteboard. They showed a willingness to seek, listen to and act on advice along with growing confidence to try new things. Most also showed a conscientious approach to

carrying out their own research, thus increasing their subject knowledge, and to keeping evidence of their own progress. Trainees on the London-based programmes, for example, were compiling often comprehensive folders of evidence of meeting the Standards. Where trainees' progress was less strong, trainees often skimmed on the paperwork; there was too little to show how well they were evaluating their teaching and not enough detail in their planning to show how they intended to structure learning, especially for the more able pupils. They tended to have a superficial view of what counts as good evidence of meeting the Standards and found it hard to reflect critically on their progress as professionals.

16. Part of the reason that some trainees find it hard to master key skills is the pattern and timing of school placements. Trainees taking the postgraduate flexible modular route benefit from short periods of time spent in schools when they can apply and try out ideas and practices recommended in centre-based training. This is not the case for trainees on other programmes. Fourth year trainees commented that the lengthy gap between the third and final placement led to a feeling of starting afresh. The intention in the revalidated programmes to 'wrap' placements around centre-based modules is a promising step in ensuring that trainees have more time to rehearse and reflect on their practical skills.
17. Good training overall at the centre and in schools ensures that most trainees make at least good academic and professional progress from their starting points. Although the latest results from the survey of newly qualified teachers indicated only two out of three found support, guidance and the quality of assessment and feedback to be good or better, current trainees are more positive. They particularly praised the high degree of support and guidance from trainers, especially from professional and academic tutors. For some trainees, the boost in confidence and tutors' support at key times, (a good example being the sudden closure of the Ambleside site), had helped them to get the best from their training.
18. The programmes carry a high workload of assignments. Trainees frequently receive very clear feedback on their academic progress through critical and supportive comments on the text, detailed summative reports and helpful points to improve. In some cases, cursory feedback does little to foster trainees' progress. This also typifies some feedback from centre- and school-based trainers to trainees on placement. As in the last inspection, the Red Book (guidance on observation and assessment) is an outstanding mentoring tool but not all trainers use it. For a few trainees, overly positive, descriptive and generic feedback constrains their progress. When coupled with targets couched as things to do, trainees' progress falters. That said, most trainees benefit from good and sometimes excellent support in schools. Trainers are astute in identifying effective and less effective aspects of trainees' teaching, with good coverage of subject content. In several cases, trainees' progress was accelerating markedly because of focussed coaching sessions, such as in assessment for learning, and because of well-defined targets that had resulted in quick returns.

19. The programmes give trainees a secure grounding in all key aspects of teaching although some elements are less coherent than others. A good example is the input on assessment of learning. While assessment is included in subject modules, not all trainees gain a secure overview. School-based training sessions often provide the necessary glue. This also applies to some degree to behaviour management. In contrast, the modules on inclusion are particularly effective in developing trainees' awareness of pupils' differing needs and how to meet them. Drawing on their personal research, Year 2 trainees on the four-year BA programme had organised a conference with national speakers and were making good use of online discussion boards to share knowledge and ideas for teaching. Trainees value highly the elective course in special educational needs; these trainees often attain well and are 'snapped up' by local schools.
20. In centre-based training the focus on independent and collaborative learning is productive. Early Years trainees gave impressive, high quality presentations on comparative education for young children. They analysed competently and referred to recent government reports. Postgraduate trainees also spoke well about the outcomes of their research, such as the use of praise to manage pupils' behaviour.
21. Trainees generally showed a sound grasp of the practicalities of teaching reading, more so those taking the four-year programme and those working in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Some trainees had only a sketchy understanding of the simple view of reading. This is partly because trainees, across the programmes, have had varying experiences in teaching phonics sessions and guided reading. Several trainees commented on how they would have welcomed seeing the teaching of phonics modelled more in centre-based training. They valued the recent conference on reading, the good range of resources available online and the advice from school-based trainers, especially in how to plan guided reading sessions and how to track pupils' progress in reading. In their own teaching, most trainees drew competently on what they had learnt. For instance, working in a reception class, a trainee adapted well her questioning and the range of objects available to ensure that children of differing abilities were successful in linking an object to the initial sound of its name.
22. There is a strong commitment and continuing willingness within the partnership to host trainees, to share expertise and offer suggestions for improvement as seen in the streamlining of documentation regarding placements. Many schools have a long history of supporting trainees and in any one year take a large number from differing programmes. Schools feel confident that issues raised are taken seriously and that partnership tutors offer prompt support if a trainee is a cause for concern. However, they also highlight some aspects of communication that could be better: several schools received very late notification of placements and a lack of information about trainees. The move to clusters of schools in 2009/10 and the holding of regional-and cluster-based sessions has increased the uptake in mentor training. The content of this training is good quality especially in the use of grading criteria and coaching

elements. However, not all school-based trainers showed a secure understanding of the university's expectations of them.

23. The use of available resources is good overall but with some areas of inconsistency that are reflected in the promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity. Teaching accommodation is being upgraded and the range of teaching resources increased. Good use is being made of schools' areas of specialist expertise to support trainees' development; good examples are trainees' visits to a Forest School and the input from early years' practitioners. Some trainees in the north west apply for placements in East London schools while others may opt for small rural Cumbrian schools. However, a few trainees have not been given the placement sought, nor been in schools that ensure experience of contrasting social and cultural contexts. Given the size of the partnership, there is considerable scope to tailor placements even more closely to individual needs and particularly to ensure that all trainees feel best prepared to teach pupils who speak English as an additional language.
24. The university has sustained the very good level of pastoral support that contributes significantly to trainees' outcomes. Trainees are confident about raising concerns and feel that their voice matters. They know where to go for help and many make good use of the face to face and online support systems to develop the quality of their academic writing.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 2

25. Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in the structure, leadership and administration of the university, Faculty of Education and primary programmes. The positive impact of new appointments, the creation of new positions, such as director of school partnership and partnership managers, along with new management structures is evident in a strengthening culture of working together to drive and bring about improvement. The positive response within the partnership to the changes, and to the revalidation of primary programmes, is reflected in enthusiasm for planned developments and excitement in new possibilities. The university is in a sound position to iron out the inconsistencies in the quality of provision and to improve the outcomes for trainees. The faculty has responded in an outstanding way to change and to tackling national and local initiatives. Strategic decisions have been effective and solutions have been found to problems. However, it is too early to judge the full impact for trainees of many actions taken. Roles, structures, systems and procedures are embedding and not all trainers are fully aware of their responsibilities. Some aspects of quality assurance lack the rigour needed to reduce the inconsistencies in the work of trainers and to give a sharper focus to improvement planning. As a result the overall capacity is good rather than outstanding as judged in the self-evaluation.

26. A focus on improving the outcomes for trainees is now central to the evaluation of provision, performance and improvement planning. This was the point for consideration in the last inspection and reflects the positive response to external evaluation. Although programme and module leaders have data from tracking trainees' academic and professional progress, they have rightly identified the need to refine its collection and use. Current analyses lack the rigour and robustness to provide fine detail regarding emerging trends, or the timely pinpointing of peaks and troughs in performance for individuals, different groups and cohorts across the campuses and programmes.
27. Annual evaluation reports are comprehensive documents linked to the priorities in the self-evaluation document. They draw on qualitative and quantitative evidence from a range of sources including exit surveys and trainees' and trainers' evaluations. Reports from external examiners vary in criticality about the specified focus; the most helpful being direct, constructive and clear in possible factors that account for strengths and weaker aspects. The detailed school partnership report reviews, compares and evaluates how well priorities have been met. It compares outcomes for trainees across the campuses and programmes but focuses mostly on action in organisational and procedural aspects. As a result some targets lack sharpness in relation to specific outcomes for trainees.
28. Change has been steered, managed and considered well. The partnership was consulted over the move in 2009/10 to clusters of schools to build on effective practice of other ITE providers. The appointment of a director for school partnerships and three partnership managers has lifted the profile of partnership, widened the scope for change and provided a new level of quality assurance. Representatives from partnership schools were very positive about the potential for shared training and expertise from within the cluster and university networks. Much relies on the effectiveness of partnership tutors. Some proactive tutors are working extremely well with schools within a cluster to tailor training to the needs of the trainers and to tailor provision to the needs of trainees. Cross-cluster tutoring is starting to provide a suitable means of moderating judgements. However, no protocols have been agreed concerning the quality assurance of partnership tutoring or how schools that are not in a cluster may best be supported.
29. The work with Leading Partners in Literacy schools, the compilation of support materials and a new website about reading, and demonstration lessons relayed via the internet, have boosted trainees' awareness of how to teach systematic phonics. For some trainees, but not all, it has greatly increased their subject knowledge and teaching skills. Those trainees who followed up recommended reading and observations have gained the most. The visits by the English leader to see trainees teach reading, along with the sampling of feedback from trainers, are useful strategies in evaluating the impact for trainees and identifying where more training is required.
30. The recent work to revalidate programmes, to develop a common curriculum across programmes and a common framework for assessment, is reaping benefits. Trainees are positive about many of the new modules, such as that

on creativity, and schools value the chance to be involved in providing training especially in areas of particular expertise. 'Impact studies' are contributing well to the evaluation of effectiveness and informing planning for improvement.

Provision in the secondary phase

Context

31. The university offers a full-time three-year BA (Hons) with QTS at Lancaster in the subjects of English, information and communication technology (ICT), mathematics, physical education, religious education and science. Currently there are 188 trainees following this programme but there were no ICT or science enrolments in 2010. A full-time one-year PGCE programme is also offered at Lancaster in art and design, design and technology, English, geography, ICT, mathematics, modern foreign languages, music, religious education and science. There are currently 243 postgraduate trainees at the Lancaster campus. A full-time one-year PGCE programme is also offered at Carlisle in citizenship, English, history and modern foreign languages. There are currently 56 trainees. The modern foreign languages PGCE course is also offered in London where there are currently 32 trainees. The undergraduate and postgraduate programmes cover the teaching of pupils in the 11 to 16 age range. The provider also offers a range of subject knowledge enhancement courses. These courses provide applicants with an alternative route into initial teacher training in the shortage subjects of mathematics, chemistry, physics and ICT when applicants do not have the required subject knowledge to gain immediate entry onto the PGCE. The university works in partnership with more than 250 secondary and 11 to 19 settings throughout the north west.

Key strengths

32. The key strengths are:
- the highly effective academic and pastoral support for trainees irrespective of their geographical location in the partnership
 - the university's very good use of the skills and expertise of school-based colleagues to ensure the best quality training for trainees
 - the strong promotion of collaboration across the partnership to secure good or better outcomes for trainees
 - meeting local recruitment needs extremely well
 - the determination and willingness of the university and its partners to develop and improve the partnership in response to local and national initiatives
 - trainees' excellent use of target language to develop pupils' linguistic competence and confidence in modern foreign languages.

Recommendations

33. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the university should:
- use the findings of monitoring and evaluation more incisively and promptly to secure consistently high quality training across the partnership
 - ensure trainees apply their knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity in their teaching to develop pupils' understanding in this respect

- ensure trainees place a greater emphasis on promoting the development of pupils' skills in ICT
- ensure trainees have a secure understanding of the teaching of reading to support pupils at Key Stage 3 in developing their reading and wider literacy skills.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

34. Trainees' attainment is good and most trainees on the undergraduate and postgraduate courses make good progress relative to their starting points. In addition, the large majority of trainees successfully gain employment in the areas that the university serves, thus meeting local recruitment needs extremely well and confirming the good overall effectiveness of the provider. The university was right to judge two aspects of the provision to be outstanding, namely the impact of recruitment and selection and the use of resources especially to enhance the training programme. Both are sustained strengths since the last inspection. In other aspects, the self-evaluation of outstanding was generous given inconsistencies in the training.
35. During the training, the overwhelming majority of trainees develop well their ability to reflect critically on their own practice and to make considered suggestions as to how they might improve. Trainers in placement schools note trainees' professional approach and their readiness, even from the very start of the course, to ask questions to extend their understanding or to develop their classroom skills. Most trainees, including postgraduate trainees who have entered via the subject knowledge enhancement route, have good knowledge in their specialist subject which allows them to tackle pupils' misconceptions effectively, to respond positively to their questions and to promote well pupils' use of technical language. Modern foreign language trainees, in London and the north west, develop confidence in using the 'University of Cumbria methodology' in their language teaching; most notably, the excellent use of target language to develop pupils' linguistic competence and confidence in speaking modern foreign languages.
36. Trainees manage pupils' behaviour confidently using a range of techniques. Postgraduate trainees receive very good training in this respect from school-based colleagues and are further supported through individual online placement-specific advice and guidance. Trainees' lessons typically incorporate a good variety of activities to support the intended learning, including the use of ICT as a tool to enhance their teaching. Trainees noted that school-based and university-based trainers have supported their development well in this respect by modelling effective classroom practice. The majority of trainees consider the needs of different pupils in their planning. A very good example was seen of the thoughtful inclusion in physical education activities of a pupil with a specific special educational need and a physically disabled pupil.
37. Trainees benefit from good, coherent centre-based and school-based training programmes which are well supported by contrasting placements. Academic

assignments and timely tasks throughout the course effectively promote critical reflection and the development of trainees' professional knowledge. The coherence of training has been improved because the provider has ensured schools have a clear understanding of, and online access to, resources linked to centre-based training sessions. This is used very well by placement schools to promote trainees' application of their learning in a school-based context. However, trainees do not consistently apply in the classroom the knowledge and understanding they gain through training. For example, trainees do not always consider how they might provide opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills, nor do trainees exploit fully the possibilities to promote pupils' understanding and appreciation of social and cultural diversity. Trainees also demonstrate a limited knowledge of the teaching of reading so they are not fully prepared to support pupils at Key Stage 3 in developing their reading and wider literacy skills.

38. As judged by the university, the extent to which recruitment and selection support high quality outcomes is outstanding. Completion rates have improved for the undergraduate and postgraduate courses and are now above average for many subjects. This reflects the increased rigour of the recruitment and selection process and also the high quality academic and pastoral support that trainees receive. The subject knowledge enhancement courses provide a very effective route for a wider range of trainees to gain access to ITE; notably, with equally successful outcomes. The university meets local recruitment needs extremely well with the large majority of trainees gaining employment in schools linked with the partnership, including placements in Scotland and the Isle of Man. All undergraduate trainees gained employment in teaching at the end of the course in 2010, and progression into employment was high in many subjects at postgraduate level. When local recruitment difficulties have arisen, the university has worked very productively with partnership schools to seek creative solutions. Resources have been targeted to secure training in subjects, including design and technology and music, to meet an identified need. Similarly, the development of modern foreign languages provision in London, involving direct recruitment of trainees at universities in Europe, is a further example of effective action to ensure local recruitment needs are very well met.
39. Many trainees make rapid progress from the start of their programme because university subject staff make very good use of the information gained at interview to inform conditional offers, pre-course tasks and choice of first school placement. In most instances, training is carefully adapted to meet trainees' developmental needs with very good use made of expertise in schools and the local authority to ensure training draws on good practice. For example, a conference day for all trainees, focusing on the use of assessment, had a direct and positive impact on trainees' ability to use assessment more confidently in the classroom. Similarly, some subject courses make effective use of post-16 provision in schools to ensure trainees develop a good knowledge of their subject beyond Key Stage 4. However, this example of effective practice is not consistent.

40. Throughout the course and at the end of placements, trainees' progress is carefully and effectively monitored in meetings involving all parties in reviewing the evidence, to moderate judgements and to set developmental targets. The university recognises rightly that there is a more to do to ensure the accurate application of the assessment criteria by all across the partnership. Communication across the partnership is very good and where a trainee is making less progress than expected this is quickly identified. The trainee receives support through targeted resources from school and university.
41. Most trainees benefit from good mentoring in schools which encourages reflection, clearly identifies strengths and areas for development and makes helpful suggestions on how to improve. Trainees also recognise the value of formative feedback from university tutors during placements. These developmental opportunities are less frequent for trainees judged to be good. However, for a few trainees the quality of mentoring is not consistently effective or sharp enough in pinpointing areas for development; this results in targets that are too vague. In some cases, the mentor's skills are insufficiently well developed to support the trainee in making progress from, for example, being good to outstanding.
42. The university's significant investment in organisational restructuring has improved collaboration across the partnership. It has also increased the rigour of quality assurance and is continuing to drive improvements in quality and consistency across the partnership. For example, meetings involving a cluster of schools in a particular geographical area, supported by a partnership tutor, are enabling the systematic sharing of good practice. They also provide a mechanism for useful informal feedback and ensure school-based trainers feel fully involved in course and partnership developments. There is a strong sense of 'working together' across the partnership because schools recognise the mutual benefits of their involvement and feel very well supported by the university.
43. Resource allocation is very carefully reviewed. Recent and ongoing partnership developments reflect the balanced decisions taken between competing priorities, while sustaining a clear focus on improving trainees' outcomes and meeting local needs. A good example is the decision to base the programme for design and technology trainees in a school setting in order to provide training in the locality. Provision in music is moving to a similar model from September 2011. The professional development of new and experienced mentors is effective. Recent improvements, in response to feedback from schools, have resulted in a higher uptake of mentor training with a consequent positive impact on the skills of professional and subject mentors in working with trainees.
44. The pastoral and academic support for all trainees is flexible and of high quality. It contributes very positively to trainees' progress and the successful completion of the programme. The university has rightly recognised the need to improve trainees' preparedness for teaching in a diverse society and has taken a range of appropriate actions to improve provision. However, it is still

too soon to see the full impact of this work in trainees' classroom practice. The issue of ensuring an equitable experience for all trainees remains a challenge.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 2

45. Overall, the university's capacity for further improvement is good rather than outstanding as judged by the university. It correctly judged the anticipation of change and response to initiatives to be outstanding. Successful action has been taken in response to outcomes from processes to review and evaluate performance. This has brought about some measurable improvements in trainees' attainment and progress but it is too soon to evaluate the full impact on outcomes for trainees of the action taken to improve centre-based training and the consistency across the partnership.
46. The university has a secure understanding of its strengths and areas for development underpinned by a reliable qualitative and quantitative evidence base. The university is systematic in seeking the views of trainees about different aspects of their training including placement reviews and their evaluation of the impact of training on their progress. Regular opportunities are taken for the informal gathering of views from professional and subject mentors in schools; these are used effectively to decide the focus for programme development sessions at cluster meetings and partnership conferences. Improvement plans reflect that appropriate priorities are identified through self-evaluation and such development sessions. The actions ensure training covers the implications of national and local changes but do not always identify precisely enough the intended impact on outcomes for trainees.
47. Quality assurance of school-based training, for example, the sessions in general education studies, has been introduced and has contributed to improved coherence in training across the partnership. Appropriate use is made of external evaluations including the annual examiners' reports. The university acknowledges that until quite recently they had not drawn sufficiently on the findings of the surveys of newly qualified teachers as part of the process of continuous improvement. The university is now undertaking more detailed analysis of trainees' outcomes, including those for individual and identifiable groups of trainees. Similarly, there is a sharp focus on evaluating the impact of actions on the outcomes for trainees. It is too soon for the university to identify significant trends over time. In some instances, there is scope to evaluate data more incisively in order to identify more sharply the priorities for improvement.
48. The university has been very responsive to the changing demands of national initiatives and local priorities. Work in relation to modern foreign languages is highly innovative and effective. The impact is clearly evident in the quality of trainees' practice, the success in meeting local recruitment needs and the improving picture of teaching and language uptake at GCSE in schools involved in the partnership.

49. Research by university colleagues has directly influenced the approach to the professional development of school-based mentors and ensured that trainees receive very good training to address nationally recognised subject-specific issues, for example, the teaching of dance in physical education. The enrichment of training in the large majority of subjects is very strong. Trainees' first-hand experience of planning a cross-curricular day has ensured they have a greater understanding of their role in supporting the development of the whole child and the breadth of opportunities for learning beyond the classroom. In addition, these experiences allow trainees to gain the confidence to incorporate creative approaches into their own subject teaching.
50. The university has taken very effective steps to ensure training has kept pace with curriculum developments in secondary schools. For example, collaboration between school-based trainers in humanities subjects has prepared trainees very effectively for teaching integrated humanities at Key Stage 3 in addition to their specialist subject. The university utilises very well the skills and expertise of trainers across the partnership to ensure that training is high quality and up-to-date. The contributions of advanced skills teachers, local authority staff and the opportunities to use specialist facilities in different schools are valued by trainees and have a direct impact on their subject knowledge, professional skills and educational understanding. The university is strongly committed to workforce developments. This is evident in their support for school-based staff to undertake Masters level studies to refine their skills as reflective practitioners and in the university's proactive engagement in wider school improvement activity across the partnership.
51. Leaders have effectively managed a high degree of change at organisational level which has been professionally and personally challenging for many staff at the university. Nevertheless, high quality support for trainees has been sustained and improvements in trainee outcomes have been secured in a number of key areas. Schools feel much more involved in the partnership. Partnership tutors play a key role in developing productive working relationships with schools and ensuring all partners are aware of their role in supporting the priorities for improvement. Individual developments across all subjects have brought about improvements in the breadth of trainees' subject knowledge. They have enhanced trainees' teaching skills and increased their confidence in the use of new technologies to support learning. Strong recruitment, including into shortage subjects, along with increasingly personalised training and highly effective pastoral support, are reducing the number of withdrawals and enabling trainees to make more rapid progress from the start of their course.
52. The provider has taken appropriate steps to rectify areas of lowest satisfaction arising from the national survey of newly qualified teachers. It is too soon to see the full impact of developments to centre-based training on trainees' classroom practice. Improvements to quality assurance across the partnership highlight a challenging variability in aspects of school-based training. The findings of monitoring and evaluation are increasingly being used to drive improvement aided by deeper interrogation of data gathered. However, there

is scope to respond more swiftly to feedback from trainees to bring about timely improvements for current trainees as well as future cohorts.

Summary of inspection grades¹

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is satisfactory; grade 4 is inadequate.

Overall effectiveness

| | | Primary | Secondary |
|---|--|----------|-----------|
| How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees? | | 2 | 2 |
| Trainees' attainment | How well do trainees attain? | 2 | 2 |
| Factors contributing to trainees' attainment | To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes? | 2 | 1 |
| | To what extent does the training and assessment ensure that all trainees progress to fulfil their potential given their ability and starting points? | 2 | 2 |
| | To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently? | 2 | 1 |
| The quality of the provision | To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality? | 2 | 2 |
| Promoting equalities and diversity | To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination? | 2 | 2 |

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

| | | Primary | Secondary |
|--|--|----------|-----------|
| To what extent do the leadership and management at all levels have the capacity to secure further improvements and/or to sustain high quality outcomes? | | 2 | 2 |
| How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality? | | 2 | 2 |
| How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives? | | 1 | 1 |
| How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement? | | 2 | 2 |

¹ The criteria for making these graded judgements are in the *Grade criteria for the inspection of ITE 2008-11*; Ofsted November 2009; Reference no: 080128.

Any complaints about the inspection or the reports should be made following the procedure set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk