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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

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 Grand Union Training Partnership (GUTP) is a consortium of seven schools providing secondary initial teacher training (ITT) courses for the 11-18 age range. The consortium offers training in business studies, English, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages and science. The course leads to qualified teacher status (QTS) and also leads to the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) validated by the University of Leicester. At the time of the inspection there were 18 trainees.

## Provision in the secondary phase

### Key strengths

4. The key strengths are:
  - the high regard in which the trainees and training are held which helps to ensure trainees' subsequent high levels of employment, meeting the needs of local schools
  - the high level of individual support, and adaption of the programme in response to individual needs, which ensure that trainees' progression through the course is at least good
  - strong support for subject knowledge and pedagogy resulting in trainees who are well qualified to take on their teaching responsibilities
  - the excellent preparation of trainees to address issues of equality and diversity in schools
  - the high level of reflection among trainees found especially in their electronic Standards logs
  - the excellent recruitment arrangements ensuring that trainees selected meet the needs of local schools.

### Recommendations

5. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:
  - sharpen improvement planning through the use of incisive analysis of trainee outcomes
  - reduce further the variation in the quality of mentoring across the partnership.

## Overall effectiveness

**Grade: 2**

6. The GUTP training programme is held in high regard in the local area. As a result, trainees are highly sought after both for training placements and for employment. Last year, all 18 trainees who completed the course took up teaching posts in local schools with seven of those being in schools participating in the partnership. Relationships with local schools are exceptionally strong. For example, in one of the partner schools, four current members of the mathematics department, including the head of department, have been recruited from the GUTP. In each school visited by inspectors, several former trainees were available for interview as a result of being employed at the school. Once in employment, trainees often rise quickly to posts of responsibility. The provider is too small to have surveys of newly qualified teachers recorded by the Training and Development Agency and therefore comparisons with the national average have not been made.

7. High quality selection procedures, together with rigorous entry requirements, make a very positive contribution to the good attainment of trainees. Selection interviews involve a range of useful tasks. As a result of the entirely school-based nature of all aspects of the training, the selection process also involves school staff throughout. The subject leaders are involved in the selection process and this adds to the strength of recruitment and selection in evaluating candidates' subject knowledge.
8. The recruitment and retention of black and ethnic minority trainees has consistently exceeded locally adjusted targets by a fair margin. The provider has monitored and analysed this data well. The provider analyses extensively all data related to recruitment. It analyses in great detail, for example, the publicity that has led to applications and offers of interviews. The effective selection of trainees with the potential to be good teachers is a major factor in the consistently good and often outstanding progress made by trainees.
9. The quality of training across the partnership is generally high, but in a small number of instances trainees are not set challenging enough targets to accelerate their progress sufficiently. In all instances, target setting is done on a weekly basis. Mostly, mentors identify clear developmental targets that ensure accelerated progress, building on trainees' previous skills and learning. By the end of the course, trainees teach lessons that range from satisfactory to outstanding. The provider has correctly identified the consistency of the quality of target setting as an area for further improvement. Variations exist in the quality of school-based training despite excellent quality assurance processes. The processes to review and monitor the quality of the trainees' performance are rigorous and coherent and effectively track trainees' progress against the Standards. Trainees receive written feedback from a range of colleagues including the senior course team and this adds to the accuracy of assessment. While the processes are well developed the reality is more variable, for example, occasional over-generous feedback occurs. In a minority of cases, feedback to trainees tends to be more focused on management issues, while being less strong on pupil progress and subject matters.
10. A key feature of the training is that trainees work in supportive subject departments. Subject knowledge for teaching develops through formal input from, and informal liaison with, the whole department rather than just the mentor. Trainees tend to be seen as part of the department to a far greater extent than is often found in initial teacher training school placements. As a result, trainees benefit from a wide range of expertise and experience and find the transition to their first teaching post to be smooth.
11. Trainees are known exceptionally well by partnership staff. Each subject has a small group of mentors co-ordinated by a subject leader. The mentors and other subject staff from host and teaching placement schools are involved in leading training through the year. As a result, the transition between teaching placement schools is unusually smooth. The provider has very strong processes for ensuring consistency of training and assessment, chiefly through joint observation. Each mentor undertakes a joint observation with the subject leader and another with

either the director or deputy director. It is at subject leader level where some lack of consistency exists.

12. The assignments, and particularly the e-portfolio, are strong features of the training. For example, the third assignment has provided trainees with a platform for a serious examination of group work and differentiation in their subject teaching. The e-portfolio is built up over the course and enables trainees to be reflective while clearly demonstrating that they meet the Standards.
13. Trainees have good subject knowledge and an understanding of the associated pedagogy. They plan lessons in detail and incorporate a range of interesting activities to help maintain good pace and good levels of learners' engagement. Central training has a very strong emphasis on the national priorities of behaviour management, teaching pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, basic literacy and phonics; the successful impact of this emphasis is demonstrated in trainees' practice in schools. The inclusion week in the middle of the course prepares trainees exceptionally well for dealing with issues of equality and diversity.
14. Communication with programme managers is very effective, resulting in a swift response and a rapidly arranged visit to the school when required. For example, arrangements were quickly put in place to cover for an absent mentor. The course director and other leaders respond appropriately to forestall potential problems by adapting trainees' experiences. Regular meetings of school-based trainers enable frequent reviews of both the trainees' progress and the course content.
15. Staff resources at the centre are exceptionally well deployed to support trainees. The pastoral support and structure are outstanding. Excellent pastoral support has made a significant difference to trainees' achievements in a number of partner schools. Administrative staff make a valuable contribution to supporting the trainees and surveys of former trainees identify this as an important contribution to their success.
16. The provider has allocated a budget specifically aimed at providing resources to trainees where these are lacking in schools. This is also seen as useful by the schools. For example, in one case, the subject department did not have an interactive white board and one was provided. In another case, a visualiser was provided for the trainee's use but was used widely within her department.

## **The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality**

**Grade: 2**

17. Roles and responsibilities are well defined within the management structure enabling decisions to be made effectively when required. There have been many changes since the last inspection and all of the recommendations from that

inspection have been addressed. As a result, the overall effectiveness has improved from satisfactory to good with excellence in some areas.

18. One of the key drivers for improvement has been the positive role of governance. A governing body, comprising headteachers and chairs of governors from partnership schools, sets strategic direction. A small steering group has a closer monitoring role and acts as an effective link with the leadership of the partnership. This binds in the senior leaders of partner schools and ensures that teacher training is integrated into the life of the schools, and the life of the schools is integrated into the trainees' experience, to a much greater extent than is usual.
19. The provider has a strong reputation as a listening institution. During the year, it holds regular meetings with stakeholders, regularly carries out satisfaction surveys and discusses with trainees their perceptions and views of the provision. Based on the outcomes from these discussions, changes are made where feasible. For example, different sessions in the general professional studies programme receive variable degrees of satisfaction from trainees. Both content and personnel are amended in the light of these comments. Sessions receive the most positive feedback when the content is directly linked to practical application in the classroom.
20. The provider's own surveys of newly qualified teachers each spring, show that former trainees' satisfaction with aspects of provision is constantly improving. This is the result of very strong mechanisms to consider feedback from a range of stakeholders including governors, subject leaders, mentors, school-based professional tutors and, most importantly, trainees. The provider collects and analyses a large amount of information on perceptions. It does not currently analyse trainees' outcomes to identify strengths and weaknesses.
21. External examiners' reports help to inform improvement each year. These reports cover generic aspects of the programme and are not subject specific. Some subject moderation is carried out by the awarding university, but within the constraints of the small number of trainees for each subject, there is scope for further subject specific external review to aid improvement planning at subject level.
22. Since the last inspection, there has been a substantial improvement in the robustness of quality assurance. One improvement has been the appointment of a successful subject leader to the role of deputy director with a remit to replicate existing best practice across all subjects. There has been good progress in developing both the role and skill of the subject leader but as yet it is not completely consistent across subjects. The role of subject leader has been created in response to the recommendations of the last inspection and is having clearly positive impact on improving the consistency of training and assessment.
23. Trainees are well prepared for current pedagogical developments, such as those relating to the assessment of pupils' progress and the teaching of basic literacy skills; trainees are kept abreast of the latest reports and legislation. For example, both business studies trainees spoke of involvement in discussions around the

Ofsted report on economics and business education published less than two weeks before the inspection. Current thinking around special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the changing provision for students who speak English as an additional language, are incorporated into the course. Other national priorities, such as behaviour management and literacy and phonics, are given an appropriately high profile. Centre-based training in these areas always involves expert practitioners from local schools. Leaders have responded very well to the 2010 Equality Act by ensuring that issues of race and equality are well integrated in the course material.

24. Planning for improvement has been effective. Governors and managers have identified weaknesses and found solutions leading to increased effectiveness since the last inspection. On-going review through regular meetings of partnership staff ensures good communication.



## Summary of inspection grades<sup>1</sup>

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

### Overall effectiveness

		Secondary
<b>How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?</b>		<b>2</b>
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	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
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	2
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	2
Promoting equalities and diversity	To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination?	1

### Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

		Secondary
<b>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?</b>		<b>2</b>
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		2
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		2
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		2

<sup>1</sup> 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.

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