

University of Southampton

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

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 Southampton works in partnership with schools across the region to offer initial teacher education (ITE) leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) in the primary and secondary phases. The university also offers an employment-based route (EBR) leading to qualified teacher status in both the primary and secondary phases. It works in partnership with five colleges of further education to offer in-service initial teacher education for teachers in the post-compulsory and further education system. The university also works with the Directorate of the Educational and Training Service (Army) to provide training for army officers; this provision was not included in the inspection.
4. The university has a strong model of research-led teaching that ensures that practice is informed well by the extensive and relevant research undertaken by university teaching staff. Close relationships with other parts of the university provide trainee teachers with a rounded view of their place in the wider spectrum of services to children. The university makes full use of the regional

science centre located on the campus as well as the specialist learning centres in mathematics. The university has recently developed a 'Southampton Model of Initial Teacher Education' in which all the courses and routes offered are better integrated. The Director of Initial Teacher Education was appointed in early spring 2012 and there are new leaders of the primary and secondary phases. Permanent leadership of the further education phase was still to be appointed at the time of the inspection.

A commentary on the provision

5. The following are particular features of the provider and its initial teacher training programmes:
 - enthusiastic and committed trainees
 - the ability of most trainees to link and contextualise taught theory into their teaching practice
 - the highly effective support of most mentors for their trainees.

6. There are particularly strong features in some programmes that could be applied to other programmes or aspects of the provision:
 - the continuation of the process of integrating the programmes and sharing the graduate teacher programme's very effective quality assurance with the other phases to improve the consistency of training.

7. The following recommendations should be considered to improve the quality of the outcomes for trainees:
 - ensure that all trainees have the best opportunities to develop their theoretical understanding of equality and diversity in their teaching.

Provision in the primary phase

Context

8. The university offers undergraduate and postgraduate initial teacher education in the primary phase (ages 5 to 11). The undergraduate programme, which is due to cease in 2013/14, offers a two-year Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree in Education with qualified teacher status (BAQTS); this programme has not recruited for 2012/13 and the current first year trainees are the final cohort. The one-year postgraduate programme leads to a postgraduate certificate of education (PGCE) and the award of qualified teacher status. The university works in partnership with approximately 300 primary, infant and junior schools in rural and urban settings across at least eight local authorities. At the time of the inspection, there were 28 trainees in each year of the BAQTS course and 147 on the PGCE course.

Key strengths

9. The key strengths are:
 - very effective leadership and management which are rapidly driving improvement during a time of change
 - the effectiveness with which recent improvements in the content and structure of the training have been implemented to address past weaknesses
 - the strong cohesion between theory and practice which helps to ensure that trainees become confident and enthusiastic practitioners
 - the highly effective way in which trainees' individual needs are identified and met
 - the excellent communication across the partnership, which results in a common understanding of how the provision needs to improve
 - the commitment of trainers, both in schools and in the university, to ensure that the partnership works together to drive improvement.

Recommendations

10. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the partnership should:
 - evaluate the quality of the training, especially in phonics and early reading, to ensure that recent developments are fully embedded and result in sustained improvement in trainees' confidence and attainment
 - resolve any inconsistencies in pre-placement visits and mentor training

- review lesson observation forms so that they prompt all mentors to provide a more detailed evaluation of how well trainees are developing their teaching skills
- ensure greater consistency in providing trainees with opportunities to experience teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Overall effectiveness	Grade: 2
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11. The provider secures good outcomes for its trainee teachers. Trainees' attainment has been consistently good over recent years in both BAQTS and PGCE programmes. During the past year, however, significant improvements in the content and structure of the training in both courses have started to improve trainees' outcomes further still. This is reflected in the progress of current cohorts: very detailed and accurate assessment data, confirmed by inspection evidence, show that in both programmes, trainees are reaching a higher standard and making better progress than previous cohorts.
12. Systems to recruit and select suitable trainees are good, with evidence of improving effectiveness as seen in the quality of applicants selected, especially in the current PGCE cohort. Selection systems are rigorous and effectively ensure that only candidates with the potential to be good or better teachers are selected, and withdrawal rates are currently below average. Good use is made of senior staff from partnership schools in the selection process, and interviewers are well briefed with clear criteria which ensure consistency and fairness. The interview is very thorough with a range of well-designed activities which accurately assess candidates' potential to be good teachers.
13. The university has been successful in attracting suitable applicants from under-represented groups such as men, mature trainees and those with special needs. Although the percentage of successful applicants from minority ethnic communities is improving, it remains below average. Employment rates are improving and, at the time of the inspection, an above-average percentage of trainees from the previous cohort had gained teaching posts. Following selection, trainees are very well prepared for their training. Feedback letters identify any weaknesses that should be addressed prior to the start of the training and practical support is given to trainees if necessary. For example, pre-course training sessions in mathematics were offered to aspiring trainees with weaker numeracy skills.
14. Training is good. In both programmes, recent changes in timing, content and structure provide particularly good cohesion between theory and practice. Well-written handbooks and progress maps provide a clear indication of how the various elements of both the programmes integrate. Training is further enhanced by directed tasks and assignments which closely link centre-based and school-based training. The outcomes of regular audits and assessments are used very well to inform the training and support individual needs. For example, trainees with prior experience of working with children with

disabilities or special educational needs lead workshops on the subject. Trainees who are identified as underachieving at any point in their training, or who are in danger of failing, are swiftly identified and provided with effective bespoke training to address their needs. As a result, withdrawal rates at this point in the year are currently 5%, which is below the national rate and is a reduction from the previous year.

15. Training in phonics and early reading has recently improved considerably. This is because centre- and school-based training, which effectively uses expertise from partnership schools, has been redesigned this year. It provides an appropriate response to the areas of relative weakness identified in the newly qualified teacher (NQT) survey. Centre-based training provides clear and detailed theoretical tuition and trainees have a number of opportunities to observe first-hand good teaching in phonics, after which they put their training into practice by planning and delivering a series of observed phonics lessons. They share experiences in a range of phonics programmes, and initiatives such as the 'Reading Buddy' enable them to gain an even deeper understanding of early reading and to see the impact of effective teaching on outcomes for pupils. As a result, trainees in the current BAQTS and PGCE cohorts say that they feel very confident and well prepared to teach phonics and early reading.
16. Tutors are well qualified, with recent and relevant experience, and model well primary practice in centre-based training. One trainee reflected the views of many when he commented that all centre-based training was 'enhanced by good practical examples'. The training is resourced well with electronic resources; the virtual learning environment being a particular strength. Training rooms are well equipped and placement schools provide good training venues. As a result of good quality centre-based training in English, mathematics and science, and through the teaching and learning modules, trainees on both courses are skilled and confident. They are very committed to their own professional development and demonstrate strengths in planning and differentiation, managing pupils' behaviour and subject knowledge and pedagogy. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well in trainees' lessons to support their teaching and pupils' learning. For example, one trainee was successfully teaching pupils how to set up a spreadsheet, with every pupil using a laptop.
17. School-based training is well planned and mentors are very committed to ensuring that they meet trainees' needs. Communications across the partnership are excellent and link tutors effectively support the work of mentors. The commitment of schools to ensuring a wide range of training opportunities is illustrated by the frequent use of other staff, such as inclusion managers, to provide specific training as, for example, in writing individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. There are better opportunities on the BAQTS programme for trainees, tutors and mentors to plan and review training together before and during the placements, but on the PGCE course, not all trainees were able to visit their schools before starting their placements, resulting in some feeling less than fully prepared.

18. The training of mentors has improved recently but a few inconsistencies remain. For example, lesson observation feedback forms usually provide evaluative commentary on trainees’ teaching skills, but some lack sufficient detail on how the lesson shows progress towards meeting the Standards. Nevertheless, the overall assessment of trainees’ progress towards achieving the Standards is accurate, evaluative and ensures that trainees have a very clear understanding of what they need to do to improve. Mid- and end-of-placement reviews, supported by clear grade criteria, clearly indicate which Standards have been met and good continuity between placements ensures that targets are followed up in the subsequent placements although, occasionally, weekly review targets are not revisited. Final assessments are supported by detailed evidence files and provide accurate and well-moderated judgements of trainees’ progress and attainment.

19. The provider effectively promotes equality of opportunity and values diversity. Trainees feel well supported and the way in which their individual needs are accurately identified and met is a strength of the provision. Although there have been no incidents of harassment or unlawful discrimination, trainees say that they would feel confident in making any such disclosures. Policies on equality and diversity are compliant. Centre-based training provides a strong theoretical background in teaching pupils from a range of social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. However, some trainees rightly feel that they have not had sufficient opportunity to put this into practice, for example in teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language, because of the nature of their placement schools.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality	Grade: 2
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20. The training provision has gone through a recent period of substantial change and it is of great credit to the newly appointed programme director and leaders of both the PGCE and BAQTS courses that the introduction of necessary changes, especially in English, is resulting in rapid improvements in the quality of the training. Changes are being achieved without undermining past strengths and although it is too soon to judge the full impact of such changes, inspection evidence suggests that they are resulting in raising both the attainment and confidence of trainees.

21. Management systems are efficient and appropriately include all stakeholders. Leaders at all levels have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and are committed to ensuring that recent improvements are maintained and further developed, although they recognise the need to evaluate fully the impact of them on trainees’ final attainment grades. The steering group of partnership representatives has been very effective in working with programme leaders to address specific issues identified by self-evaluation. For example, the group’s working party to improve

phonics training has had a very positive impact. Leaders and members of the steering group recognise that there is scope for developing the working party system further.

22. Systems to assure the quality of the training and provision are very robust, involve all partners and are demonstrably effective, especially with regard to the improvement in trainees' achievement. Trainees are frequently observed by class teacher mentors. Link tutors' visits, which include joint observations with mentors, ensure the consistency of assessment judgements across the partnership. The views of trainers and trainees are actively sought regarding all aspects of the training. Their evaluations are scrupulously analysed and the results taken into full account when planning changes either immediately, such as providing additional training for the current cohort, or in the longer term through the improvement planning process. External examiners' reports are detailed and the university provides a detailed and robust response to the issues raised.
23. Leaders at all levels are proactive in anticipating and responding to change and are committed to ensuring that innovative solutions are found to continue to improve trainees' practice. For example, improvements in training in ICT have been achieved by making better use of expertise in partnership schools. Good quality training in the national priorities supports trainees' understanding, especially in phonics and early reading, as well as helping schools keep up to date in their understanding of these areas. For example, many schools have adopted the university's system to monitor phonics to help raise standards in their own teaching and pupils' learning of phonics and early reading.
24. Strategic planning is very well informed by the analysis of a wide range of evaluations, rigorous analysis of data and careful consideration of local and national priorities. The views of tutors, school staff, trainees and external examiners are taken into full account when identifying priorities for further development. Trainers in schools and at the centre have a clear understanding of their role in securing improved outcomes for trainees and are committed to achieving them. Although a key focus this year has been ensuring that training in phonics improves, there are a number of action plans to ensure that other aspects of the training also continue to improve. For example, while trainees are at least competent in behaviour management, the provider has identified potential further improvement. Plans identify appropriate actions, timescales, roles and resources. Success criteria are both quantitative and qualitative and provide clear measures against which to assess the impact of actions on outcomes for trainees. High quality strategic reviews accurately identify what has been achieved and where work still needs to be done. For example, in spite of a number of developments, leaders recognise that work on improving training in literacy across the curriculum remains a 'work in progress'.
25. The university evaluates its own performance accurately and, with higher expectations of what might be achieved, has improved further both the progress and attainment of trainees from consistently good levels. This is a result of accurate self-evaluation, a commitment across the partnership to improve and strategic planning which focuses on how to achieve this.

Consequently, the provider's capacity to improve its primary initial teacher education is good.

Provision in the secondary phase

Context

26. The university offers initial teacher education leading to QTS in nine secondary subjects: English, geography, history, ICT, mathematics, modern languages, physical education, religious education and science. At the time of the inspection, there were 157 trainees on secondary programmes. Approximately half of all secondary trainees are in mathematics and science, with significant numbers joining from the 24- or 28-week subject enhancement courses in physics and mathematics. All trainees can be awarded a professional certificate in education, with nearly 90% obtaining the postgraduate certificate (masters-level PGCE). Trainees are assessed against the QTS standards for teaching in the 11 to 16 age range, although trainees are prepared for post-16 teaching and this is assessed within the PGCE. The partnership includes schools across eight local authorities: the City of Southampton, Hampshire, Bournemouth, Poole, Dorset, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Wiltshire.

Key strengths

27. The key strengths are:
- enthusiastic and committed trainees who take responsibility for their own professional development and, consequently, attain a good or better standard
 - very good, and increasing, use of experienced up-to-date school-based practitioners to deliver high quality training, particularly in the national priorities for initial teacher education, leading to most trainees having an incisive understanding of the links between theory and practice
 - the work of course leaders, many of whom are national experts in their field, and committed mentors to develop very effectively the subject knowledge of trainees
 - the commitment of the partnership to recruit, train and employ high quality trainees that leads to most trainees gaining employment in the partnership
 - the outstanding ways in which course leaders and the steering group anticipate local and national changes in education and in initial teacher education in order to drive further innovative improvements to training for the benefit of trainees

- the introduction of the 1* grade, for the most able trainees, that has required mentors systematically to involve them in the wider work of their placement schools.

Recommendations

28. In order to improve trainees’ progress and attainment, the partnership should:

- develop formative assessment documentation that more clearly links the quality of trainees’ teaching to the impact on pupils’ learning, and further develop and centralise current systems to track trainees’ progress in this respect
- be more consistent in providing trainees with opportunities to develop their theoretical understanding of equality and diversity in practice, including teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language
- ensure that all mentors, particularly those of lower-attaining trainees, moderate weekly targets to make them as incisive as possible in order to boost trainees’ progress
- create and use clear milestones and success criteria that are closely linked to trainees’ outcomes for all improvement planning, including subject action plans.

Overall effectiveness	Grade: 2
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29. The provider secures good outcomes for its trainee teachers. Trainees’ level of attainment has been consistently good over the past three years. Over 90% of those completing in 2011 were graded by the provider at a good or better standard of attainment, with just over half of trainees at an outstanding level. The current cohort is predicted by the provider to attain at a level similar to, or slightly better than, that of their predecessors. Inspectors found that the providers’ assessments of trainees, although secure at the pass/fail border, were slightly generous. Assessments were accurate in regard to trainees’ strengths and areas for development.

30. The selection process is rigorous, with candidates carefully assessed for their potential as teachers. Interview tasks are well designed to identify suitable trainees. The provider is keen to move to increasingly school-based selection to replicate the practice in physical education that engages potential trainees in teaching pupils. Nevertheless, nearly all interview panels currently include partnership representation, usually a school-based mentor, and all include presentation tasks. Due to the rigour of the process, trainees are consistently

enthusiastic, committed and passionate about teaching their subject and furthering their professional development. The partnership members share a clear rationale and commitment to provide good quality teachers for their schools. Over time, they have been successful in fulfilling this aim, with most trainees finding employment, largely in partner schools.

31. Subject-knowledge courses, taken before trainees begin the course, are used judiciously to boost aspects of trainees' subject knowledge and broaden participation. The provider works hard to boost minority ethnic recruitment; this is broadly in line with the local population demographic and above the proportions for teaching staff in partner schools. Excellent support for trainees, both from course leaders and in placement schools, is a consistent feature of trainees' evaluations. However, the rate of successful timely completion for trainees is broadly average for similar courses. Withdrawals and suspensions that do occur are monitored carefully and are increasingly, but not exclusively, related to financial pressures. Information gathered at interview is used well in some subjects, for example English, to target pre-course activities that allow trainees to get off to a quick start, but this is not consistent.
32. Trainees usually integrate well into training departments and adopt the best characteristics of school-based trainers. As a result, they develop a professional approach and good relationships with staff and pupils. Centre-based training sessions are highly thought of by trainees. Increasingly, the provider is making use of school-based days in outstanding teaching schools as part of its delivery strategy. The use of experienced up-to-date school-based practitioners to deliver high quality training, particularly in the national priorities for initial teacher education, leads to most trainees having an incisive understanding of the links between theory and practice. Additionally, this approach is further supplemented by sessions led by renowned national experts. For example, behaviour-management training is multi-layered and contextualised throughout the training year. School-based training during judiciously contrasting placements, including feedback on the use of school behaviour policies and trainees' immersion in their schools' policies and procedures, effectively develops most trainees' ability to manage behaviour. Occasionally a lack of contrast between placements, for a few trainees, can inhibit this development.
33. Similarly, centre-based training is good in the teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. School placements usually provide trainees with significant opportunity to put this knowledge into practice, being carefully selected and tailored to the needs of trainees. For example, a few current trainees are carrying out second placements in special schools and the provider is working on an expansion of this scheme. Good contextual training in placement schools usually ensures that trainees are fully conversant with the full range of special educational needs, expected teaching strategies and where best to deploy them in their lessons. Higher attaining trainees apply this preparation very well in their lessons to match tasks carefully to the full range of student ability and need; this is not true of all trainees. Training in the teaching of key skills such as literacy has a high profile in centre-based training. Partner schools, however, are inconsistent in their development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. As a result, trainees' practice in

their day-to-day teaching is variable.

34. Communication across the partnership is frequent and very effective. The provider knows the strengths of its schools and personnel very well through often long-standing relationships at subject level. This is of particular benefit to trainees in the development of their subject knowledge and its pedagogy. The work of the course leaders, many of whom are national experts in their subject field, and that of the committed mentors combine very effectively in this respect. This aspect has been enhanced by increased attendance at mentor meetings, which is now over 90% in the smaller subject areas.
35. The structure of the course, with clear progression through a series of six phases, supports trainees' progress well. Assessment procedures are comprehensive and use Ofsted's published criteria for the characteristics of trainees towards the end of their training. Interim assessment for earlier phases of the training, using the provider's own criteria, gives trainees a good understanding of their progress against these criteria. However, the criteria are focused on what they do as teachers and, as a result, do not always give trainees an incisive understanding of the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning. The provider is aware that with the advent of new teacher standards, there is scope to sharpen the link between teaching and learning; this would particularly benefit lower attaining trainees.
36. Feedback from trainers following lesson observation usually provides trainees with an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their teaching. Occasionally, the use of assessment criteria to focus this feedback means trainees are less clear about which of the areas for development have the biggest impact on the learning of pupils. However, most mentors are highly skilled in coaching their trainees towards improvement. Trainees receive their entitlement of one-to-one meetings and the record of the outcomes of these meetings demonstrates an effective process of target setting and review. The development of targets, quite rightly, is in the hands of the trainee. The result is that higher attaining trainees often have precise targets backed up by identified training activities which are incisively reviewed. Occasionally trainees' weekly targets for development are not explicit enough. This can result in repeated targets, slowing progress. The work of a few mentors in moderating self-generated targets is underdeveloped.
37. Resources in schools are good and many at the university are outstanding. Resources are targeted well to support trainees' progress with excellent use of specialist facilities, such as the regional science centre at the university. Trainees report very high levels of care from school-based mentors, mentors and course tutors. Trainees and NQTs all describe their training experience with warmth. Centre-based training in the teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. However, many placement schools have limited linguistic and ethnic diversity. Due to this, trainees' classroom experience of putting learnt theory into practice can be dependent on the trainees' timetable and/or their school placements. Consequently, trainees' confidence in teaching pupils from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds

and their ability to promote equality and diversity through their teaching remains variable. There is no evidence of harassment or discrimination.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality	Grade: 2
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38. The provider has good capacity to sustain high quality outcomes for trainees and demonstrates determination to take any actions required to secure further improvements when necessary. Since the last inspection, the provider has maintained levels of completion and employment and improved the attainment of trainees. However, there have been significant changes of leadership and some systems for evaluating the performance of the programme are still being developed. For example, the systems to track trainees' progress are currently held at subject tutor level; it is difficult to analyse the performance of trainees across subjects to ensure all are making good progress. Additionally, the tracking is linked to formative assessment that does not yet incisively evaluate the impact of trainees' teaching on students' learning.
39. There is a clear and effective cycle of quality assurance. Self-evaluation builds on extensive feedback on all aspects of the course from trainees, school-based mentors, university mentors and other stakeholders; this is an improvement since the previous inspection. External examiners' reports feed well into quality assurance and evaluation processes and the priorities for development identified by the provider generally concur well with the inspection evidence. Evidence from monitoring and evaluation is shared well with schools, through mentor meetings and the steering committee. This leads to a good understanding of the provider's strengths and areas for development. However, the inspection team was not able to support the providers' self-evaluation that the overall effectiveness and capacity to improve were outstanding.
40. Professional mentors carry out their quality assurance role in line with expectations, regularly observing trainees with mentors or tutors and organising professional themes training in school. The provider is aware that this role could be more flexibly undertaken according to need, for example observing one-to-one meetings or quality checking targets set by mentors. As a result, some well-thought-out systems agreed throughout the partnership are not always applied consistently, for example the monitoring of target-setting for trainees' development. However, additional layers of quality assurance are quickly put in place when needed, such as extra tutor visits to struggling trainees.
41. The provider has an outstanding ability to anticipate change and to prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives and priorities. The steering group has strong headteacher and professional mentor representation that provides the provider with a strong focus on local need, for example, actively building understanding of the use of phonics in secondary contexts. Changes to provider leadership have brought a strong focus on developing initial teacher

education that is highly innovative and anticipatory. For example, the university is developing an international dimension to training by using new communication technologies to communicate with, and develop trainees' understanding of, education systems across the world. The provider actively engages with special schools across the region and has already enhanced the number and diversity of trainee placements in them and, as a result, enhanced trainees' understanding of special educational needs. Trainees are exposed to the most current and relevant strategies in this field.

42. Successful initiatives since the previous inspection have led to strong improvements to provision. Responding to partnership schools' requests for ways to stretch the most able trainees towards the end of their training, a 1* category of attainment was added. While not expressly targeting a higher level of performance in the classroom, the criteria have been successful in leading mentors systematically to plan innovative ways for trainees to contribute to the wider school; this improves their employability.
43. The improvement plan is aspirational and clearly informed by self-evaluation. Priorities are focused on improving provision and meeting changing local and national needs. Each improvement priority is clearly focused on the future development of the provider with a very strong anticipation of change. Planning is linked to trainees' outcomes with identified success criteria but these are not consistently incisive or measurable and lack milestones for effective tracking of progress over time. Similarly, subject-level action planning, closely aligned to the main improvement plan, draws on the intimate knowledge of programmes by subject tutors and identifies accurately necessary developments. However, although previous plans had success criteria, current ones do not. This means that although plans specify appropriate actions, it is difficult for the overall secondary programme leader to assess their efficacy. For example, the science action plan identifies the general need to improve retention but does not quantify what an acceptable or good level might be.

Employment-based routes to qualified teacher status

Context

44. The university provides an employment-based route (EBR) to initial teacher education for graduates, the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP), in partnership with schools and settings across seven local authorities in the south of England. This year, the EBR has 23 primary trainees covering the age range 4 to 11 and 40 secondary trainees in the age ranges 11 to 16 and 11 to 18. Secondary subjects offered include English, mathematics, science, physical education and ICT. There is close alignment of the university's primary and secondary initial teacher education provision and the EBR.

Key strengths

45. The key strengths are:

- the trainees’ determination to become high quality, reflective teachers who engage learners and match learning opportunities to individuals’ needs
- the rigorous selection of self-motivated well-qualified trainees with relevant subject knowledge, significant practical experience of schools and the potential to become good and outstanding teachers
- high completion and employment rates resulting from the very rigorous recruitment and selection process and the outstanding, flexible and personalised training
- the consistently excellent and comprehensive mentoring support trainees receive
- the very effective personalised training that enables trainees to apply their own individual and shared pedagogical research to classroom practice successfully
- the strength and consistency of partnership working in creating a culture and ethos for collaborative working and a commitment to trainees’ continual professional development
- the effectiveness of leaders in driving change that continues to enhance the quality of provision and that has led to a marked improvement in trainees’ outcomes.

Recommendations

46. In order to improve trainees’ progress and attainment, the provider should:

- ensure greater consistency in providing trainees with opportunities to experience teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language
- optimise the timing and extent of primary and post-16 education experiences for secondary trainees.

Overall effectiveness	Grade: 1
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47. The overwhelming majority of trainees make good or better progress during their time on the programme. Inspection evidence confirms the accuracy of the provider’s assessment procedures. The proportion of trainees attaining at an outstanding level has improved considerably since the last inspection in both

the primary and secondary phases. Trainees achieve so well because the training programme is very well tailored to their individual needs. There is a shared commitment across the partnership to securing the best outcomes for trainees.

48. The trainees typically exhibit very good classroom skills and personal qualities, with many utilising very well their prior experience of working in schools to explore how to support pupils' individual needs through their teaching. Trainees used technology expertly to model new learning, used resources effectively to stimulate pupils' creativity and made learning very practical for pupils. They were able to use a good range of assessment techniques to check pupils' understanding. Trainees possessed a secure knowledge and understanding of their subject which was used effectively to give explanations and to ask and answer thought-provoking questions. Their behaviour management skills are highly effective, with trainees utilising a good knowledge of the pupils they are teaching to inform their approaches.
49. Trainees show high levels of reflection, professionalism and a strong drive for self-improvement. They reach good and better levels of attainment because of their commitment to their own professional development. This is encouraged through the high expectations of the schools within the partnership and the excellent levels of personal, professional and academic support.
50. A rigorous recruitment and selection process identifies candidates who possess the relevant subject knowledge, the necessary personal attributes and significant practical experience of schools. Partnership school headteachers are involved in selection processes at the university. Selection procedures are exacting. The provider tests trainees' professional attributes, skills and understanding through interviews, group presentations and written assignments. Trainees are left in no doubt about the demands of the programme, including the need for them to take their full part in the shared responsibility for developing their own training plan. Consequently, those selected show the potential to become good and outstanding teachers. Their eminent suitability for the programme is reflected in the high completion and recruitment rates. The large majority of trainees take up posts in partnership schools.
51. The provider works hard to widen participation from groups under-represented in the teaching workforce. Provider-led initiatives to attract more male applicants onto the primary phase training programme have been successful, and rates are now above the national average. The proportion of mature trainees is also above the national average. However, the recruitment of minority ethnic trainees has been less successful, despite every effort being taken to market the programme locally and more widely.
52. The personalised training meets the needs of the overwhelming majority of trainees, as seen in the marked rise in those attaining the highest grade by the end of the programme. A key factor underpinning trainees' good or better progress is the high quality mentoring trainees receive. There is robust tracking of their progress against the QTS Standards. The individual training plans are

carefully constructed and this helps secure the very good coherence between centre- and school-based training. Trainees particularly benefit from the opportunities derived from working intensively in a placement school, from being able to apply new learning in the classroom and from receiving regular focused feedback on this from a range of expert colleagues within and beyond their placement school. The very regular contact with their school-based mentors and other colleagues facilitates a high level of professional dialogue, feedback and reflection. The access to wider expertise, through the emerging networks that schools have established for professional development, exemplifies the successful targeting of resources to address trainees' individual needs and to accelerate their progress. Trainees have access to good resources in schools and a wealth of centrally held computing hardware, which trainees utilise very skilfully in their teaching, for example, the use of video cameras to construct mini-movies when modelling role play for pupils.

53. Trainees receive very good university- and school-based training. A wide range of school-based practitioners and external experts deliver this training, modelling best practice and encouraging trainees to undertake and evaluate action research both individually and collectively. An improvement since the last inspection is that directed tasks, set before and after session delivery, better enable trainees to apply new theoretical learning in practical contexts in the classroom and to share and peer-evaluate their experiences back at the university. The central element of the training is expanding, in response to trainees' demand and the consistently strong evaluations of the sessions. In addition to the ongoing professional studies programme, two very well received conference days are offered to secondary trainees, who can select from a wide range of workshops. These raise trainees' awareness of how to develop pupils' thinking skills, consider their learning styles, utilise new technologies such as podcasting and teach for creativity.
54. Primary trainees are effectively prepared for teaching across all curriculum areas, including art, physical education and ICT. They know and understand the key features of systematic synthetic phonics and how these relate to the effective teaching of early reading skills. During the inspection, highly effective training sessions were observed for secondary trainees, which are helping them develop a more secure understanding of how to develop pupils' literacy skills through their subject teaching.
55. The quality of training is consistently high across the partnership. The expertise of individual schools is used very effectively to enhance the centre-based training and provide additional learning opportunities for trainees. Communications are very effective and documentation citing roles, responsibilities and processes is very clear. University tutors make a very good contribution in involving schools in the partnership and ensuring high expectations of training quality. Leaders are highly responsive to the needs of school-based trainers and trainees. The personalisation of individual trainees' programmes means that those trainees capable of attaining the highest standard are well challenged to develop potential leadership skills, for example, by using their ability to assess and analyse pupil performance data in order to give a presentation to school governors.

56. Feedback gathered from NQTs and current trainees confirms that they receive good preparation for teaching minority ethnic pupils and in a diverse society generally. Training promotes trainees’ awareness of inclusion issues very well, and trainees, with their mentors, carefully weigh up the implications of this learning for their classroom practice. Valuable visits are arranged for trainees to see teaching in special schools in the partnership. Inspectors also observed highly effective centre-based training through which secondary trainees were able to talk with pupils who speak English as an additional language about their experiences of school. They benefitted from observing intervention programmes being taught with pupils new to English and finding out how the curriculum was appropriately adapted for these and also more fluent speakers.
57. During the programme, trainees take up a placement in a second school. This often entails gaining experience in teaching in different socio-economic contexts and settings that offer new professional challenges. However, some trainees are less well prepared to teach in multi-cultural settings or to apply strategies for teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language because they have limited opportunities for practical experience. On the secondary route, the timing and extent of primary and post-16 education experiences are not optimised to promote rapid progress for all trainees. For example, some secondary trainees undertake a primary placement towards the end of their training after teaching Year 7 for some time. This means trainees are not always fully aware of the prior ability and/or curriculum coverage of students they teach.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality	Grade: 1
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58. Since the last inspection, there have been clear improvements in outcomes for trainees. The provider takes particular care to ensure that schools offering placements fully understand the programme and can offer the trainees expert support and commitment from mentors. Trainees’ attainment has risen, including at the highest grade, and completion and employment rates are well above national averages. Recruitment to shortage secondary subjects is notably in excess of agreed quotas. NQT survey ratings are equally positive, showing trainees’ high levels of satisfaction with the programme, including the extent to which the programme prepares them to teach early reading and phonics and to manage pupils’ behaviour successfully.
59. The rigour with which the provider reviews and evaluates provision has increased sharply since the last inspection. Of particular note is the close analysis of trainees’ outcomes, including the performance of different groups, which is utilised very well in helping to ensure a personalised offer to the trainees. The programme director uses this information very well to check further on how well the provision is matched to individual needs and to take prompt corrective action where issues arise. The approach to programme planning at the university and from mentors and headteachers in schools is

flexible, responsive to feedback and to national priorities. Trainees report that modifications to the central programme are made very promptly when requested. The provider ensures it appropriately benchmarks provision against sector norms. Mentors, tutors and trainees all contribute to course evaluations, which are requested very regularly. Moderation visits confirm that the school-based programme is consistently strong and areas for further development are clearly identified. There is a continual focus upon improvement and cultures for sharing best practice are well established.

60. Schools in the partnership engage in effective moderation activities by ensuring that mentors visit colleagues' schools to self- and peer-evaluate their own provision. External examiners provide suitably rigorous evaluations of the provision and their recommendations are carefully noted by the university and acted upon. University tutors have very regular links with their schools and school-based training is quality assured very effectively. Consequently, the strengths of individual partnership schools are well known and utilised. Evaluations are comprehensive and shared across the partnership. In particular, the partnership steering group uses this information and its direct contact with mentors at their well-attended training to gauge, very accurately, the central priorities for improvement.
61. This information is used extremely well to help the university anticipate change and respond incisively to national initiatives. In particular, the partnership now includes schools with particular expertise in supporting pupils with special educational needs and in behaviour management. It is also forming effective links with Teaching Schools within and beyond the partnership. This expertise has been used very well to help the provider evaluate, extend and improve the quality of the centre-based training. Feedback from trainees about these aspects of the provision is very positive, with improvements evident in their perceptions in 2011 and again this year, reflecting the developments in training. Training and Development Agency (TDA) evaluations show that in respect of the quality of training on the teaching of early reading and phonics, trainees in the primary phase of the graduate teacher programme have consistently rated this very highly, with evaluations well above the national average for five years. Training has been enhanced by the incorporation of research-led practice. For example, secondary trainees explore, through bi-annual conferences, the links between neurological development in young people and their learning. The trainees benefit by learning from practising researchers and expert school-based practitioners, in seeking to understand, apply and evaluate theoretical principles in their classroom practice. A continued strength, too, has been the emphasis on the value of digital technology to enhance classroom practice. Trainees have embraced this to improve the quality of their subject-specific demonstrations, to model new learning and to secure more imaginative stimuli for pupils' own ideas.
62. The provider has made considerable improvements in all the areas identified at the last inspection as requiring remedial attention: trainee performance analysis, improvement planning and recruitment and selection arrangements. Candidates applying for a place on the programme have their communication skills thoroughly tested through the oral presentation and written assignment

tasks during selection. Planning takes full account of the range of evidence emanating from the enhanced quality assurance procedures. The areas for improvement now identified in the plans take full account of the analysis of performance data, external reviews, stakeholder feedback and developments of the national priorities. Expertise within the partnership has been used effectively to ensure that action planning is sharply focused on trainees' outcomes and that challenging targets for improvement are set. Success criteria to evaluate the impact of improvement actions are robust and quantified, focused on securing improvements in trainees' outcomes and perceptions. The positive impact of these changes is evident in the rate of improvement in key outcomes seen since the last inspection.

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Context

63. The university works in partnership with five further education colleges in the region to provide initial teacher education for teachers and trainers in the post-compulsory sector. All trainees are in-service, and the courses lead to either a Certificate in Education (Cert Ed) or a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE). Provision at two of the partner colleges is very small; one is currently inactive. At the time of the inspection, there were 159 trainees, with 82 on the Cert Ed and 77 on the PGCE. Around one fifth of the trainees receive their training at the university, with the remainder at the partner colleges. Just over half of the trainees work in further education colleges, with the rest in a wide range of public sector, private and voluntary providers.

Key strengths

64. The key strengths are:
- trainees are highly motivated and committed to their professional development; they enjoy much high quality training, which enables them to make good progress and develop well as teachers and trainers
 - the effectiveness of the training in enabling trainees to apply their theoretical understanding to their classroom practice
 - most trainees are adept at devising teaching strategies and assessment activities that take good account of the differing needs of learners
 - the very good assessment of most trainees' progress, both in their academic work and in their teaching, that enables them to know exactly what they need to do to improve

- most trainees benefit from highly effective mentoring that helps them to evaluate and improve their knowledge and understanding of their specialist subject teaching skills.

Required actions

65. In order to improve the quality of provision, the provider must:
- develop rapidly a clear and detailed strategy for the future development of the provision in partnership with others
 - strengthen the leadership of the provider at the university by ensuring that there is sufficient expertise in current further education to plan for the future.

Recommendations

66. In order to improve trainees’ progress and attainment, the provider should:
- take steps to ensure that the high quality training sessions delivered by teacher trainers in most of the partnership are replicated throughout the partnership
 - improve further the good standard of mentoring by enabling mentors to collaborate more through collective training and other means to improve the sharing of good practice
 - improve further trainees’ understanding of how to apply their learning about the promotion of equality and diversity in their classroom practice, by ensuring that tutors and mentors raise trainees’ awareness of these issues in discussions with trainees about their teaching and other aspects of their work.
67. In order to improve the quality of provision, the provider should:
- improve administrative systems at the university so that trainees’ enrolment on to the course is more efficient and all trainees are given access to the university’s resources.

Overall effectiveness	Grade: 2
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68. The provider secures good outcomes for its trainee teachers. The provision at the partner colleges is very effective in helping trainees to make good progress, and most trainees develop into good or better teachers. The proportion of trainees who complete their training successfully fluctuates both over time and between partners, but is satisfactory overall. Financial pressures

in the further education sector have led to some trainees finding it difficult to secure and maintain sufficient teaching, but the partnership does all it can to support trainees affected by this. The provider's use of data to analyse successful completion and trainees' progress remains weak, although in recent months university staff have made a concerted effort to ensure centrally held data are accurate. However, within some partners there remains a tendency for success to be judged over individual years, rather than the full two-year programme. The partnership as a whole is yet to have a clear and shared understanding of exactly how to measure progress, and attainment. This has a negative impact on the provider's ability to evaluate trainees' achievements as a whole and to plan for improvement.

69. Despite these weaknesses, inspection evidence supports the provider's judgement that the standard of trainees' attainment is good. In the partner colleges, judgements made on trainees' teaching ability and progress are accurate. In the provision based at the university, on occasions, judgements of trainees' teaching are over-generous. University tutors do not always make judgements based on current standards and the high expectations of the quality of teaching in the further education sector. In a number of cases, written evidence indicated a very significant improvement in trainees' teaching, but this progress was not accompanied by a commensurate improvement in the grades awarded to trainees' teaching over the second year of the course.
70. Trainees are very motivated and committed to their professional development; they are highly engaged and enjoy their training. Many trainees report that the training has transformed their teaching and has empowered them to become better reflective practitioners. Many trainees, especially those working with learners on courses at foundation level, are adept at managing learning activities to take into account the specific needs of learners with varying prior experiences and aptitudes. Trainees are ready to try alternative strategies; they are flexible and adaptable. Trainees' subject knowledge and use of this to enliven lessons are strong. Most trainees are very good at using their vocational expertise to contextualise their lessons and make them relevant to the real world of industry. This expertise gives them high levels of credibility with their learners.
71. Most trainees, especially those with modest prior academic qualifications, make good progress in developing their academic skills, and many produce written work of a good standard. Most trainees can link their theoretical training to their classroom practice. Those trainees who approach their academic studies with a degree of scepticism as to their relevance can, towards the end of the course, articulate the impact of theoretical thinking on their practice.
72. Recruitment and selection arrangements are good. The vast majority of trainees are of an appropriate calibre, with good subject expertise and mathematics and English qualifications at or above Level 2. Although trainees are already employed as teachers or trainers, they are keen to do the course. Interviews and initial assessment are effective at identifying trainees who may need additional help, for example with academic writing or as a result of dyslexia, and such help is offered by committed tutors and support staff. A

small number of trainees are recruited without having access to sufficient breadth of teaching experience. The provider has been successful in recruiting trainees from a particularly wide range of teaching and training contexts outside further education colleges, for example the police, the army, the NHS, and several small private training providers. The breadth of trainees' prior experiences is valued highly, as trainees learn much from their peers who work in very different contexts.

73. Trainees report that the university's administrative systems are flawed and that enrolment on the course is unnecessarily complicated. They also report that communications prior to commencing the course are poor; for example, several trainees reported that they were not informed of the date of the first taught session. Arrangements are weak for ensuring that all trainees have university identification cards that give them access to the library.
74. The quality of training and assessment is good. In most of the partnership, trainees benefit from high quality training that inspires them to apply their learning to their classroom practice and encourages them to become thoughtful reflective practitioners. However, trainees report that the training sessions at the university itself, and at one of the partner colleges, are not always of high quality. A small minority of trainers and/or training sessions were judged by trainees not to be modelling good practice.
75. Despite this variation in the quality of training sessions, inspection evidence confirms that other key aspects of the training are consistently good. Assessment of trainees' teaching and of their written work is highly effective and is instrumental in helping them to develop into knowledgeable and self-confident teachers. In a very small minority of cases, for university-based trainees, evaluations following lesson observations failed to identify significant weaknesses, or attached insufficient weight to shortcomings, resulting in an over-generous judgement of the quality of lessons. Most trainees make very good use of their individual learning plans to record their targets, plan for improvement and gauge their progress in discussion with their mentors and tutors. For a small number of trainees, individual learning plans are more perfunctory and are perceived as a bureaucratic requirement.
76. Nearly all trainees benefit from highly effective mentoring that helps them to evaluate and improve their knowledge and understanding of their specialist teaching skills in their subject. Throughout the partnership, mentors devote considerable time, energy and skill to supporting trainees. Although the take-up of mentor training has been inconsistent, mentors seen by inspectors were clear about their role and, in the majority of cases, were diligent in ensuring that they monitored trainees' progress carefully. In some instances, three-way communications between trainees, trainers and mentors were insufficiently frequent, resulting in few opportunities to discuss trainees' overall progress and plan for improvement. Mentors largely work in isolation from one another, and there are few opportunities to share effective practice through collective training or other methods of dissemination.

- 77. The availability and use of partnership resources is satisfactory. Resources available to trainees across the partnership are sufficient to enable them to access appropriate research materials to complete assignments. Staffing resources in the partner colleges are good. At the university, course tutors are well informed about developments in the sector and use this knowledge well to inform their training. However, they are not all as secure in their expertise about the standards, expectations, and quality assurance systems prevailing in the sector.

- 78. Access for trainees to the university’s virtual learning environment has improved since the last inspection, although a minority of trainees still report difficulties. The electronic resources available to trainees are satisfactory, but underdeveloped. Trainees from the partner colleges do not visit the university to use its resources. Although they appreciate the fact that their qualification bears the university’s name, they see themselves as trainees of the partner colleges rather than of the university.

- 79. The quality of provision across the partnership is good. Most trainees make good progress and achieve well. Provision in the partner colleges has improved since the last inspection. Significant efforts have been made, particularly recently, to iron out the variations in trainees’ experience between the partners, and these have met with some success. The good quality of the provision is secured primarily by effective leadership in the colleges rather than through quality assurance interventions by the university.

- 80. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Analysis of data on progress and attainment by different groups has started, but is at an early stage. The training itself is highly inclusive, and issues around equality and diversity are well integrated into the programme. However, the variety of mechanisms to evaluate trainees’ progress does not include sufficient evaluation of how well trainees are prepared to teach in a diverse multicultural society. There is insufficient discussion of the application of trainees’ learning on these aspects to their practice.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality	Grade: 3
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- 81. The provider has satisfactory capacity to promote high quality outcomes for trainees and to take the actions required to secure improvements. The university recognises that the rate of improvement since the last inspection has been slow in some key respects, particularly in tackling the required actions from that inspection. This is partly because of significant staffing upheavals over the last two years. However, other important aspects of the provision have improved. For example, trainees now benefit from good mentoring, an improved range of assessment techniques, and very good quality of training in most partner colleges. In recent months, a determined effort has been made to improve self-evaluation and to plan for improvement. By the time of this

inspection, the university had formulated a realistic appraisal of the current quality of the provision. This appraisal concluded, rightly, that trainees were making good progress, despite the difficulties facing the provider at the centre.

82. Provision in the partner colleges continues to be good due to their own effective quality assurance, rather than as a result of effective partnership-wide self-evaluation systems. Partner colleges use their own quality assurance systems effectively to evaluate their teacher training provision and plan for improvement. However, they have been insufficiently involved in the self-evaluation of the partnership as a whole, led by the university. Self-evaluation is not informed by any detailed collaborative analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Although the use of data to inform planning is improving, the provider has struggled to collect accurate data on straightforward measures such as successful completion rates, and has made insufficient progress in using data on trainees' progress and attainment effectively to plan for improvements in trainees' outcomes. Trainees' views, although sought and often responded to in partner colleges, are not used effectively in self-evaluation.
83. Leaders are well informed about local, regional and national initiatives, and the likely impact of these on the shape of the provision in the future. Partners have responded well to the demand for teacher training from a wide range of external organisations. The partnership is well informed about key developments in teacher training in the sector, and expertise at the university is being used to develop a response to the significant policy changes around post-compulsory teacher training currently being implemented. The university has decided to suspend the in-service programme from the next academic year while it reviews the future of teacher training in the post-compulsory sector. A plan is being considered to develop a new pre-service programme to respond to specific markets in the sector, but at the time of the inspection there was no clear and detailed strategy to chart the future of the provision in conjunction with partners. As a consequence, the partnership is facing a period of significant uncertainty.
84. Leadership by the university is in a state of flux and, since the last inspection, there have been significant weaknesses in the overall management of the provision; however, in recent months there have been improvements. Local leadership at the partner colleges has been highly effective. The university recognises that its capacity to develop high quality new provision is limited by a shortage of specialist expertise in current practice in further education and training.

Annex: Partnership colleges

The partnership includes the following colleges:

The Bournemouth and Poole College

The Isle of Wight College

Sparsholt College

Totton College

Alton College

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	Employment-based routes	ITE for FE
How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?		2	2	1	2
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2	2	1	2
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	2	2	1	2
	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	1	2
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	2	2	1	3
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	2	2	1	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	2	3

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

		Primary	Secondary	Employment-based routes	ITE for FE
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	1	3
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		2	2	1	3
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		2	1	1	3
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		2	2	1	3

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.

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