

# University of Northampton

## Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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**Provider address**

University of Northampton  
School of Education  
Park Campus  
Broughton Green Road  
Northampton  
NN2 7AL

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**Unique reference number**

70050

**Inspection number**

388065

**Inspection dates**

21 – 25 May 2012

**Lead inspector**

Philip Mann HMI

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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 Northampton offers four routes to Qualified Teacher Status in the primary phase. Two are three-year undergraduate programmes: one primary (5-11) and one Early Years (3-7). Two courses are at postgraduate level, also for primary and early years. Postgraduate trainees are eligible for 60 Master's level credits.
4. The university also works with three partner colleges in its locality to provide initial teacher education part-time through in-service modes of study. All provide opportunities for undergraduate trainees to gain a Certificate in Teaching and Learning in the Lifelong Learning Sector and for graduate trainees to gain a Professional Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in the Lifelong Learning Sector. All teaching is based at the colleges: there is no provision based at the university. Trainees are all in-service, mainly staff of the partner colleges.

## A commentary on the provision

5. The following are particular features of the provider and its initial teacher training programmes:
  - trainees in both phases achieve well to attain good outcomes by the end of their respective courses
  - trainees in both phases are effectively prepared to teach in a diverse society
  - the partnership provides support of consistently high quality to ensure trainees make good progress
  - trainees in both phases benefit from the availability of high quality resources to support both their training and teaching
  - the good tracking of trainees progress and achievement leading to intervention when needed.
6. There are particularly strong features in some programmes that could be applied to other programmes or aspects of the provision:
  - the ability of course and subject leaders in the primary phase to use data to track the progress of trainees and support self-evaluation and review in the FE phase
  - the adoption of effective quality assurance procedures from the FE phase to improve the consistency and quality of training in the primary phase.
7. The following recommendation should be considered to improve recruitment and selection:
  - increase the proportion of trainees from under-represented groups and especially those from minority ethnic backgrounds.

## Provision in the primary phase

### Context

8. The University of Northampton works in partnership with around 250 schools in nine local authorities and over a wide geographical area. It provides initial teacher education (ITE) in the 3-7 and 5-11 age ranges for a Bachelor of Arts Honours (BA) courses and 3-7 and 5-11 age range for post graduate trainees. Postgraduate students are eligible for sixty Master's level credits. At the time of the inspection there were 375 trainees following the three year BA courses and 108 following the post graduate programmes.

### Key strengths

9. The key strengths are:
- trainees following the Early Years/Key Stage 1 (3-7) courses on both programmes are well prepared to teach across these key stages by the end of their training
  - trainees present positive role models in schools and are highly committed to furthering their professional development
  - high quality central training equips trainees well for teaching in their school placements
  - the support provided by the partnership to trainees who find the course challenging is effective in increasing their confidence
  - trainees have access to high quality resources at the university to support their teaching in schools, with the result that they effectively plan for, and use a wide range of resources in their lessons
  - the improvements made in the collection and analysis of data which are helping leaders to track the progress of trainees systematically from the outset of their training.

### Recommendations

10. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider/partnership should:
- improve the quality of target setting for trainees to accelerate their progress towards outstanding practice
  - provide good opportunities for trainees to teach a series of phonics lessons at the earliest opportunity within their respective course.
11. In order to improve the quality of the provision, the partnership should:
- implement rigorous quality assurance procedures to ensure greater levels of consistency in training across the partnership.

## Overall effectiveness

**Grade:2**

12. The overall effectiveness of the partnership is good. Trainees achieve well during their respective courses and are well prepared to teach within a diverse range of schools. However, the overall effectiveness is no longer judged outstanding because of some low achievement for some trainees in the postgraduate primary course and low completion rates in the primary undergraduate course.
13. Comprehensive recruitment procedures are well established and fully engage partner schools in the interview process. Several initiatives have been implemented with some success to attract greater numbers of minority ethnic trainees into teaching and to increase the numbers of male trainees. The initiation of the 'Ambassador' scheme, and modification of publicity materials, are proving to be successful in the recruitment of trainees from under-represented groups.
14. Rigorous selection procedures are used well to ensure that the best possible candidates are being accepted on to the respective courses. Good use is made of tests such as those for mental mathematics and spelling to determine further helpful activities before trainees start their respective courses. Induction, pre-course tasks and subject audits are used effectively to identify individualised training and further support. Initial subject audits are carried out and depending on the results, additional support is also provided. These audits are also used to good effect to track trainee progress. Procedures for checking qualifications and safeguarding are rigorous and robustly applied.
15. However, despite the improved recruitment and selection procedures, the proportion of minority ethnic trainees selected on all courses remains just below sector norms. Furthermore, the retention rate for the Year 3 cohort on the primary BA course is well below sector norms with just over a quarter of these trainees leaving the course since starting. The provider has recognised and responded to this shortcoming.
16. Trainee attainment is good overall. Most trainees make good progress but there are some variations between the different programmes and courses. The progress made by those on the BA Key Stage 1 Primary and Early Years courses is particularly good where nearly a half of these trainees are predicted to be graded outstanding this academic year. However, PGCE trainees do not reflect this high level of performance, where only about a third of Primary trainees and just under a fifth on the Early Years course, are likely to be graded outstanding this year.
17. A number of common strengths are evident in the performance of trainees in both course routes in both programmes. Trainees are reflective, listen to advice and act quickly on guidance. Trainees following the Early Years/Key Stage 1 (3-7) courses on both programmes are well prepared to teach across these key stages by the end of their training. This is particularly so in the teaching of early reading and literacy skills. Trainees in all courses possess good subject

knowledge and adopt a wide range of behaviour management strategies. They make use of an extensive range of resources and information and communication technology (ICT) to support their teaching. A key strength is that trainees present positive role models in class: they demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities as teachers. As a result of good training, such as that gained through high quality lectures and participation in the 'Inclusion Week', trainees can plan carefully differentiated activities in lessons to support the progress of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities. Trainees from all courses demonstrate a good level of awareness about how to support pupils who speak English as an additional language.

18. Those trainees following the Early Years (3-7) courses demonstrate good levels of confidence and competence in the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics. This contrasts with those on the Primary courses who lack confidence in spite of their good subject knowledge and having had, in many cases, little experience of putting theory into practice.
19. Postgraduate trainees' files contain detailed lesson plans that are regularly evaluated to pinpoint strengths and areas for improvement in future lessons. In the lessons observed, trainees quickly established a good climate for collaborative learning and most lessons moved along at a good pace. In the best lessons these trainees monitor learning in the classroom well and take an opportunity to use questions effectively to advance learning further. However, in the weaker lessons, often there is insufficient focus on assessment in planning and little use is made of ICT to fully engage pupils in lessons.
20. The quality of training and assessment is good overall. Training is well structured and enhanced by some outstanding training at the university. An example seen was a stimulating lecture to further develop the expertise of Year 2 BA trainees in the teaching of phonics. However, such training in phonics is not always followed up by sufficient opportunity to put theory into practice in schools; it is dependent upon the schools' practice as to whether there are sufficient opportunities to observe and teach phonics. The training otherwise has good coherence and in other aspects trainees have good opportunities to build on prior experience and placement experiences in theory lectures. Excellent use is made of expertise from local schools to ensure that lectures include material that is very relevant and up to date. For example a senior member of staff from a partnership school gave a lecture which provided many ideas for trainees to use that would improve their practice in setting achievable targets for pupils and themselves.
21. Schools take their training roles very seriously and trainees speak very highly about the quality of training and guidance they receive from mentors. University tutors provide all trainees with high quality support. They give them confidence when they are challenged and are in need of extra help. Moderating tutors and mentors display an accurate view of trainees' strengths and areas for development. Frequent meetings with mentors and tutorial conferences with moderating tutors are effective in providing trainees with clear guidance for further improvement. These are well documented and used effectively to track the progress trainees make from week to week on placement. Assignments are

well designed, practical and link theory to practice effectively. Overall, school placements generally provide effective training venues. School based trainers provide good levels of support to ensure trainees improve week by week. However, although feedback in the files and that following lessons seen is constructive and developmental it is sometimes too general and targets are not precise enough to accelerate the progress of all trainees.

22. The high quality resources noted at the time of the previous inspection have been extended further and remain outstanding. Excellent use is made of human resources to support the training programmes. The new resource centre is outstanding and all trainees have easy access to an extensive range of resources and technology to support the completion of assignments and enhancement of pupils' learning experiences in schools.
23. Provision across the partnership is generally good. Schools are very pleased with the rapid response of university staff to any concerns or problems that they might have with a trainee. Partnership handbooks are helpful and well written. Annual training events provide good opportunities to keep schools up to date on national developments in ITE. However, the expectations for the training of mentors are unclear in some schools and circumstances. As a result, the quality of feedback from mentors and setting of targets is variable, leading to some inconsistencies in the rate of trainee progress. The response of schools to partnership ideas is a strength with the university now playing a greater role in the development of teaching and learning across the region; such as in the sharing of expertise and high quality resources in schools. In contrast, feedback from the university to schools about the quality of their ITE provision is based on informal discussions between tutors and the school rather than a formal quality assurance process to improve ITE provision further.
24. Trainees demonstrate good understanding about aspects of inclusion and diversity such as those related to teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language. Issues related to safeguarding and child protection are covered very effectively with the training programme. Regular monitoring of equality and diversity ensures that trainees' needs are being met well and that those in need of extra support are given every opportunity to succeed.

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

**Grade:2**

25. The capacity for further improvement is good. There is clear evidence that the achievement of trainees following the Early Years and Key Stage 1 courses is improving and a trend of overall improvement is emerging for trainees in other courses. Key issues from the previous inspection related to improving the gathering and use of data to support self-evaluation and improvement planning have been tackled with determination. The restructuring of programme and subject leadership, under the guidance of the new head of ITE following a period of interim management, has strengthened the ability of the ITE team to

consolidate and further improve provision within a changing national perspective.

26. Self-evaluation, although a little over generous is based on a detailed annual review of course programmes. This is enhanced by comprehensive data and trainee evaluations to initiate further review and development of the course programmes; for example, the rapid implementation of the phonics audit. The university engages key stakeholders such as headteachers in annual reviews and thus in improving provision further. The reorganisation of the staffing structure now provides improved lines of accountability for course/programme review and improvements in performance management. Internal and external moderation of trainee performance is secure. Data is used extensively to monitor the progress of individual trainees and the impact of the university's equal opportunities policies. The issue of the low retention rates in the BA primary course has been accurately identified and action taken to improve progress from Year 2 into Year 3 for 2012/13. Course leaders and subject tutors demonstrate a good understanding of the strengths and understanding of the programmes because of the accuracy of subject review.
27. Overall, moderation tutors provide an effective role in ensuring that the quality of training and assessment across the partnership is effective. However, this quality assurance is insufficiently rigorous to ensure training is consistently good or better in all partnership schools. Consequently some inconsistencies in school based training and mentoring still exist and corroborated by comments from external examiners.
28. Overall the provider responds well to change but the partnership has been a little slow to put measures in place to ensure that all trainees gain experience of teaching a series of lessons in systematic synthetic phonics. However, the recent initiatives to strengthen the skills of trainees on the Early Years and Key Stage 1 course in teaching these important early literacy skills has been effective. The provider has also been quick to respond to other aspects of training such as the review of subjects taught in light of a more creative curriculum and changes to the National Curriculum. Training in aspects related to inclusion have been enhanced with the addition of an 'Inclusion Week' and increased activity related to teaching pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. A range of projects and use of transition placements in other settings, such as a special school, enhance provision further. The provider has been particularly proactive in developing a training programme for newly qualified teachers in the locality.
29. The overall quality of improvement planning is good. The provider's ITE plan sets out clear priorities for programme and course improvement linked closely to trainee outcomes. Course and subject actions plans now follow a common structure and directly linked to the overall priorities within the ITE plan for improvement and self-evaluation activity. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. The full impact of this improved planning is yet to be fully reflected in a sustained trend in trainee outcomes for all routes. However, the comprehensive action plan for phonics is well conceived and actions are already having a positive impact on trainee performance. The development of a comprehensive and dynamic database that utilises both quantitative and

qualitative data to record trainee achievement is impressive. For instance, regular reference to a colour coded achievement rating system quickly identifies those trainees in need of extra support before any major concerns arise. Senior staff, programme leaders and subject tutors are now in strong a position to use accurate summative data to monitor the progress of both individual and groups of trainees effectively.

## **Initial teacher education for the further education system**

### **Context**

30. The University of Northampton works in partnership with three partner colleges to offer ITE for the further education (FE) sector. One college will be leaving the partnership when the current year two trainees graduate. All teaching is based at the colleges; there is no endorsed provision based at the university. Trainees are all in-service and often are employed by the partner colleges. The Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) qualification is offered at level 5 for non-graduates and at level 6 for graduates. Trainees complete a common first year. In the second year, both courses are delivered jointly with differentiation being achieved through the personal tutorial system and assessments. Of the 120 trainees, 47 are in the first year and of the 73 in the second year, 34 study at level 5. The qualifications meet the statutory requirements and are endorsed by Standards Verification UK.

### **Key strengths**

31. The key strengths are:
- good self-reflection and target setting by trainees which helps them to focus on their main areas for development and facilitates their progress
  - very informative and constructive feedback to trainees on their teaching and assignments which plays a key role in helping them to make good progress
  - much improved and good tracking systems which monitor trainees' progress and initiate intervention when required
  - very effective mentoring and tutorial support which enables trainees to develop their subject-specific teaching skills for the benefit of their learners
  - very good resources which trainers and trainees use effectively and sensibly to improve their teaching and learning, including for those with disabilities
  - very rigorous periodic subject review which used trainees' views very effectively to instigate improvement to the quality of the provision.

### **Required actions**

32. In order to improve the quality of provision, the provider/partnership must:
- improve the collation and analysis of aggregated partnership data on success rates and attainments by different groups of trainees, in order to inform the self-evaluation process and the resulting action plan.

## Recommendations

33. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the partnership should:
  - improve trainees' understanding of community cohesion, 14-19 curriculum development, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and the diverse settings of the lifelong learning sector.
34. In order to improve recruitment and selection processes, the partnership should:
  - increase the partnership's promotion of this provision to groups under-represented in the learning and skills sector.
35. In order to improve the quality of the provision, the partnership should:
  - increase the systematic monitoring of the quality of mentoring, the involvement of mentors in quality assurance processes and the sharing of best practice amongst mentors.
36. In order to improve its capacity to improve, the partnership should:
  - implement a systematic process to obtain the views of mentors and external stakeholders to inform the self-evaluation process.

## Overall effectiveness

**Grade:2**

37. The overall effectiveness of the partnership in securing high quality outcomes for its trainees is good. Trainees' attainment is good. Their attainments have been consistently high for three years, and the proportion of trainees with good or better attainments increased slightly in 2010/11. The proportion of trainees judged outstanding, however, is relatively small. Trainees' success rates have decreased over the last three-year period although the decline has been arrested. Although there are no significant differences in success rates by age, ethnicity, learning difficulty, disability or additional learning support needs, the success rates of female trainees are higher than those for male trainees.
38. Most trainees make good progress on the course. They accept constructive criticism and try to improve their skills. Most trainees write assignments which are well written and referenced. They write very good and detailed self-reflections. Their targets are clear and highly relevant. For instance, they include short, medium and long-term aims that aid improvement. Trainees maintain well produced individual learning plans that enable their progress. They are articulate and enthusiastic. They are creative and invent new methods and activities for their learners in order to meet their needs and interests. Trainees have a good knowledge of their subject and many have diverse employment experiences. Trainees often use these to good effect in their lessons to relate topics to real-life applications. In the best lessons, trainees use good lesson planning which focuses on learners and learning. They provide a wide range of different, short-term activities to engage diverse groups of learners with various abilities.

Trainees collaborate well with learning support assistants to meet their learners' additional learning needs. They direct questions to named learners to ensure their inclusion and attention.

39. Trainees use information learning technology (ILT) appropriately to add interest and aid learning. In the less effective lessons, trainees fail to plan activities to meet their learners' individual learning needs. Their questioning is often too general and so the same learners answer each time and other learners are excluded. Trainees do not always manage their learning environment effectively, in order to encourage their learners' involvement. Occasionally, trainees give insufficient challenge to their learners and consequently learners' progress is slow. Trainees are well prepared by the course to teach learners with a special educational needs or disabilities and learners who require help with literacy and/or numeracy. They are increasing their skills of behaviour management, but this is an ongoing developmental need. They are aware of equality and diversity and issues of safeguarding. Trainees are less well prepared, however, to work in the different settings of the lifelong learning sector. Their understanding of community cohesion, the 14-19 curriculum and ESOL is underdeveloped.
40. The recruitment and selection processes are good. Strong recruitment and selection systems enable trainees to be referred to the most appropriate programmes and to receive the most appropriate support. Employees new to teaching are allowed time before they begin the DTLLS course. During this period, they may take the Preparing to Teach in the Life Long Sector (PTLLS) course, assessor awards and short bridging courses to increase their knowledge and understanding of study skills, critical thinking and referencing. All trainees are interviewed to determine their suitability and potential and they are selected on the basis of their qualifications and experience. Initial assessment is thorough and includes the screening of literacy and numeracy, self-assessment of ICT skills and a hand-written exercise. Further diagnostic assessment takes place, if required, following an ipsative assignment and a two-week induction programme. The outcomes of the screening and diagnosis inform individual learning plans and initial targets. Those identified with the potential to be outstanding are given even more challenging targets. All trainees receive very effective and challenging support from their tutors and from their subject-specific mentors. Highly effective and specialist learning support is available and trainees receiving support do at least as well as other trainees. Trainees are encouraged to achieve intermediate level literacy and numeracy qualifications during the course but not all do so. Although separate colleges run ITE taster courses, proactive promotion on behalf of the partnership to promote the ITE for FE provision to under-represented groups is insufficient.
41. Training and assessment are good. Trainees receive very good feedback from their mentors and tutors on their lessons and academic writing. Feedback is challenging and constructively critical with clear action points. Targets emanating from feedback are specific and demanding. They are reviewed frequently to ensure that trainees are making good progress. The moderation by college and university staff of tutors' marking and feedback is rigorous. It includes relevant developmental points to improve assessment practices. Observations are standardised across the partnership to ensure that correct level and grading

judgements apply. The feedback on the identification and development of the minimum core in trainees' assignments, however, is insufficient. Although initially challenging to trainees and staff, the introduction of an alternative assessment form - the academic poster - is innovative and worthwhile. It required a creative and concise response and collaboration between trainees from different backgrounds. Tutors revisit trainees' targets from their previous assignment/observation at the next one to check that trainees have taken action to improve and to measure progress. Since the last inspection, the partnership has introduced an effective process to track trainees' progress. This presents a clear and complete picture of tutors' and mentors' feedback, trainees' targets and their development. This enables managers to realise which trainees are at risk and to take appropriate action. The tracking of former trainees helps to ensure that trainees undergo professional formation and obtain their qualified teacher learning and skills status (QTLS) in a timely manner. Trainees benefit from the outcomes of action research projects. For example, one trainee had extended her range of teaching and learning strategies to address different learning styles and another trainee had learned useful strategies for motivating learners. Mentors meet frequently with their trainees and their feedback informs trainees and their individual learning plans effectively.

42. The use of resources is good and promotes learning well. Learning environments are welcoming, accessible and well maintained. The libraries and learning resource centres contain a good and wide selection of specialist texts and e-books, including those for the teaching of literacy and numeracy, which are well used by trainees. Trainers use ILT facilities effectively in training sessions. Trainers and trainees have good access to specialist software, hardware and adaptive technology to support trainees and learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The ITE teams are well qualified and experienced. They benefit from well-planned professional development opportunities. Trainees make good use of colleges' virtual learning environments (VLE) to upload and download assignments, access learning materials and interact with each other and with tutors. They make little use, however, of the university's VLE and very few trainees use the university's resources. The college and university VLEs have different platforms and the partnership is working to improve access.
43. The quality of provision across the partnership is good. Tutors rightly appreciate the communication, support and guidance they receive from the university and from other colleges. The sharing of good practice across the partnership occurs at partnership meetings and development days. The partnership has taken effective action to improve the quality of feedback on trainees' assignments through increased moderation. The increased attendance of student representatives at boards of studies has led to improvements in the quality of trainees' experiences. In response to feedback from trainees, the university has reduced the number of critical incidents; trainees' reflections on individual incidents are more detailed and analytical and trainees make better links between theory and practice. Staff development for mentors explains the mentoring role and trainees' entitlement effectively and the mentors' handbook is very useful. University staff have carried out a few joint observations in each partner college. The systematic monitoring of the observations of trainees by

mentors and tutors, however, is underdeveloped. Mentors do not meet as a group to share best practice, nor are all mentors trained lesson observers.

44. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Trainees feel confident about challenging inappropriate attitudes, behaviour and language. They are well aware of educational and social inclusion matters and frequently refer to such issues in their teaching and learning. Trainees demonstrate mutual respect through the use of inclusive language and attitudes which are modelled well by tutors. They are less confident about using naturally occurring opportunities in lessons to raise equality and diversity issues. Trainees' ability to plan for and implement good equality and diversity practices in their lessons is variable. In a very good example, a trainee promoted equality and diversity aspects very effectively by reference to film practices in different cultures and by the use of diverse images in a video clip. In the less effective examples, trainees miss opportunities to discuss issues relating to equality and diversity. The coverage of equality and diversity by trainers is good. All trainees receive very good support. Additional tutorial support meets trainees' individual learning needs very well. Trainees rightly rate tutorial support as very good. Support structures that involve subject specialist mentors, course tutors and specialist staff, including librarians and learning technology staff, are very effective. No particular group of trainees has been disadvantaged or been less successful over the past three years, by virtue of their ethnicity, learning difficulty, disability or additional learning need.

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

**Grade:2**

45. The evaluation of performance to improve the quality of provision is good. The university's detailed 'Periodic Subject Review' (PSR) has had a strong impact on the evaluation of the ITE provision and resulted in clear actions to benefit trainees. This process involved internal and external scrutiny, included all partners and led to changes to assessment. The trainees' voice impacted strongly on the considerations and ensuing actions. Successful outcomes were: the reduction of the 'tyranny of the PowerPoint presentation'; more interactive seminars; the reduction of the number of written assignments; and the introduction of 'Academic Posters' for creativity and conciseness. Staff designed more interesting alternative assessments whilst being determined to retain academic rigour. The PSR process added value to the normal self-evaluation process. Trainees' views are obtained at end of the course and at end of each module and inform self-assessment reports and the self-evaluation document (SED) effectively and lead to improvements in provision. Trainee representatives feed back to course leaders and at partnership meetings. The formal eliciting and use of mentors' and external stakeholders' views to inform the SED and the action plan across the partnership, however, are underdeveloped. Although each college has many data about trainees' outcomes, the collation and analysis of success rate data by different groups of trainees over time are underdeveloped.

46. The partnership's capacity to anticipate change and prepare for, and respond to, national and local initiatives is good. The provider is involved in local and national networks which enables staff to keep abreast of national and local initiatives. The programme manager has been involved in writing the new standards for DTLLS and the course is already aligned to the new DTLLS learning outcomes so that trainers are prepared to deliver the new requirements with effect from September 2012. The provider is also involved in the Higher Education in Further Education working party on the unification of standards. The provider keeps the ITE for FE teams and trainees well informed of changes in response to particular initiatives. For example, possible changes that may occur as a result of the Lingfield Report have been discussed with partners. The partnership is aware of the implications of the report concerning legislation, but maintains that the course will sustain its relevance.
47. The effectiveness of the partnership in planning and taking action for improvement is good. Managers have done much to address the required actions and recommendations from the previous inspection. Team members benefit from an increased sharing of good practice, such as in implementing effective tutorials. This has a positive impact on improving trainees' progress. Partners have received training in the new web based 'cloud' which will host cross partnership interactive forums, blogs and postings. External mentors can, and do, access mentor training on YouTube. Managers have introduced a common approach to trainees' transition from the first to the second year and trainees begin their action research project in the summer break, leading to earlier completion. Managers have given a much higher focus to the trainees' voice, resulting in increased attendance of trainee representatives at the board of studies and an improved dialogue with them. Good planning links exist between college senior managers, tutors and course leaders and university staff through quality assurance meetings. The ITE for FE teams are aware of the key priorities for improvement and their role in securing these. Managers and staff monitor progress against the action plan frequently. Ipsative assessments and October observations, which have been used to identify and challenge trainees, have resulted in the likelihood of an increased number of trainees gaining outstanding attainment across the partnership. Managers have devised a postgraduate further and higher education course which has been approved by the senate to meet the needs of more academic trainees and those teaching higher education in FE.

## **Annex: Partnership colleges**

The partnership includes the following colleges:

Northampton College

Moulton College

South Leicestershire College

## 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

		Primary	ITE for FE
<b>How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
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	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
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	1	2
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	ITE for FE
<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>	<b>2</b>
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?		2	2
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		2	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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