

# Education Management Direct GTP Consortium

## 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 partnership provides initial teacher training in the primary and secondary phases through the Graduate Teacher Programme leading to the award of Qualified Teacher Status. A small minority of primary trainees specialises in training for teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are fourteen secondary subjects represented in the current cohort with the largest trainee groups being in mathematics, chemistry and design technology. The provider covers a very large geographical area which includes a number of smaller consortia that contribute to the recruitment and training of trainees in regions, including the north-east of England, West Yorkshire and Humberside. In September 2011, the number of trainees in the cohort increased from 54 to 132 in the primary phase and from 56 to 71 in the secondary phase. At the time of the inspection there were 117 primary trainees and 65 secondary trainees. There are currently 174 partnership schools, over half of which were new to the partnership in 2011/12. All current senior leaders have joined the partnership

since September 2011. The provider is part of a national pilot for 'assessment-only' employment-based routes into teaching.

## Employment-based routes to qualified teacher status

### Key strengths

4. The key strengths are:

- the trainees' ability to reflect critically on their practice, and their high level of motivation and commitment to securing their own professional development
- the depth and breadth of training elements that combine well to enable most trainees to make good progress
- good quality training in the national priorities so that primary trainees are well prepared to teach reading using a systematic phonics approach and all trainees are well prepared to teach pupils with disabilities or special educational needs, and to manage pupils' behaviour effectively
- the provider's high expectations of trainees, which successfully promote trainees' good learning and progress
- the commitment of school-based trainers in main placement schools to supporting trainees and providing training that meets their needs well
- leaders' determination to sustain good outcomes for trainees and their clarity of vision for the future of the partnership.

### Recommendations

5. In order to improve trainees' progress and increase the proportion of trainees graded as outstanding the provider should:

- ensure that all trainees are set challenging targets throughout the course, which focus clearly on moving trainees from good to outstanding attainment
- provide more focused support for new mentors and senior mentors in schools in order to promote consistently high quality training across the partnership
- ensure monitoring and quality assurance procedures place greater emphasis on the quality of trainees' learning and progress
- enhance the functionality of e-portfolio systems so that they better support trainees' learning and progress
- engage stakeholders more fully in formal evaluation and ensure the outcomes are disseminated across the partnership in order to drive further improvement.

## Overall effectiveness

**Grade:2**

6. The overall effectiveness of the training is good. Most trainees are well-suited to managing the demands of an employment-based route into teaching and the good quality of training across the partnership enables them to achieve well. Progression into employment is high, reflecting the effectiveness with which the provider meets local recruitment needs and the good quality of trainees at the end of the programme.
7. Since the last inspection, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of trainees graded good or better overall, and in the proportion of secondary trainees graded outstanding in art, design technology, dance and music. The assessment of trainees is accurate and consistent across the partnership. The good and outstanding trainees are highly motivated, resilient and very competent at managing their personal professional development. These qualities, along with their skills as reflective practitioners and their willingness to listen and respond to feedback, help to promote their good progress. Most trainees plan learning activities which interest pupils, are well matched to pupils' abilities and enable pupils to make good progress. However, the subject knowledge of a small minority of trainees, including their knowledge and understanding of assessment strategies, is not as well developed.
8. Recruitment procedures are applied rigorously and consistently across the partnership. There has been a marked improvement in the proportion of men recruited onto the primary programme as a result of a strong focus on attracting applications from under-represented groups. Information gathered at interview is used effectively to inform individual training plans and to determine whether secondary trainees would benefit from a subject knowledge enhancement course. Science trainees are rightly positive about the impact of these courses on boosting their confidence to teach beyond their specialism.
9. The training is personalised well to meet trainees' needs with regular on-going review and adjustment as trainees make progress throughout the course. The development of trainees' professional skills, knowledge and understanding is supported very effectively in training sessions and by a wide range of challenging independent learning tasks. Consequently, trainees are very positive about the quality of centre-based classroom practice sessions and about the impact of training overall. They particularly value the subject knowledge development sessions because they are well planned to meet their individual needs, they provide opportunities for working alongside their subject peers and tutors show them how to use a wide range of resources to support their teaching. For a small minority of trainees in both phases, their weaker elements of subject knowledge are not always addressed systematically.
10. The quality of target-setting is variable. Occasionally, trainees are set targets that are too focused on administrative tasks and gathering evidence rather than on promoting their progress further, particularly towards the latter part of the course. Systems to monitor trainees' progress, however, are robust. Trainees'

progress is tracked regularly by tutors and school-based staff. Any underperformance is identified early and triggers the use of additional resources to help individuals to get back on track. However, these systems are not always used as effectively to pinpoint what is needed to enable a trainee to improve, for example, from good to outstanding.

11. Training in the national priorities is good. This is reflected in the findings of the inspection and in the responses to the annual Training and Development Agency's newly qualified teachers' survey. For example, primary trainees are confident with the theory of teaching systematic phonics and early reading, and they apply this knowledge well in their teaching. In both phases and on both school placements, trainees develop a good understanding of how to teach disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
12. The geographical 'spread' of the partnership calls for effective and efficient e-communication. As a resource, the virtual learning platform is seen by school-based trainers and trainees as a really useful vehicle for sharing information, key documents and high quality resources. The new version of the e-portfolio is a helpful tool for promoting distance learning and for monitoring trainees' tasks, assignments and their progress towards meeting the Standards, but it has not proved as time-efficient or user-friendly as the previous version. At times, this has diverted trainees' efforts and trainers' quality assurance away from a focus on securing progress and higher levels of attainment.
13. All new partnership schools receive an extended initial quality assurance visit to ensure the rationale for the programme is well understood. Leaders target additional resources where inconsistencies are identified but they are not sufficiently proactive in identifying and supporting schools that need earlier or more intensive intervention during the first few weeks of the course. As a result, a small number of new placement schools and school-based trainers are a little slow to understand fully the expectations of their role and to become familiar with partnership systems. Overall, the extent to which resources are used efficiently and effectively is, therefore, satisfactory.
14. New partnership tutors are inducted well into their roles to ensure robust quality assurance of, and effective support for, schools across the partnership. Initial minor inconsistencies and uncertainty in a small number of new placement schools have been addressed so that all trainees have access to appropriate placements and support. School-based trainers show a high level of commitment to trainees and their training. However, although mentors are personally supportive, their effectiveness in promoting trainees' progress is variable for a very small minority of trainees. A few trainees are not placed in a sufficiently contrasting school for their second placement to enable them to broaden and enrich their overall experience.
15. Trainees confirm that their well-being is supported effectively by school-based colleagues and provider tutors. They are confident that any concerns will be addressed. The provider is good at adopting a flexible and personalised approach to ensure that trainees at risk of withdrawing overcome their difficulties and continue to complete the course successfully. While the number

of trainees declaring a disability is low, sensitive adjustments and adaptations to the training programme are made to enable them to make similar progress to their peers. There are good opportunities in centre-based training sessions and in most schools to enable trainees to develop the skills required to teach in a diverse society. However, a small minority of trainees have limited opportunities to gain first-hand experience of working with pupils from a minority ethnic heritage and with pupils who speak English as an additional language. Consequently, these trainees feel less well-prepared for teaching these particular groups of pupils. An equality policy is in place and is applied well across all aspects of the provider's work.

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

**Grade:2**

16. Following a period of leadership instability and rapid partnership growth, new leaders quickly identified and addressed urgent issues that had resulted in a short-term dip in the effectiveness and consistency of provision at the beginning of this academic year; for example, issues relating to the e-portfolio and to the delivery model of subject knowledge development training. They listened and responded well to the views of trainees and other stakeholders. Swift action was taken which has successfully stabilised provision and sustained good outcomes for current trainees.
17. Senior leaders have undertaken a comprehensive review of all aspects of secondary and primary provision, including the subject knowledge development programme, and have identified accurately the key strengths and areas for development. The use of trainee voice as a source of evidence to inform self-evaluation has been re-introduced recently and is influential in improving current provision and in shaping future programme developments. However, school-based colleagues, although providing valuable informal feedback, are not sufficiently involved in the formal evaluation of the training. Similarly, the provider does not seek routinely the views of employing institutions to gain a wider perspective on trainees' preparedness for teaching. The provider has detailed information gathered from its analysis of provision and of trainees' outcomes across each phase and its analysis of the newly qualified teacher surveys, completed by former trainees, but the findings are not routinely fed back to schools to help drive improvement in school-based training. Currently, the provider does not draw on the expertise of a representative steering group to ensure the strategic involvement of all stakeholders in shaping partnership developments. Overall, there are strengths in the accuracy and rigour of self-evaluation by senior leaders but there are also some areas for further development. The provider's effectiveness in assessing performance in order to improve is satisfactory.
18. Training has kept pace with national changes and developments well, such as those relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage. The provider focuses well on ensuring that trainees are prepared very effectively in relation to the national

priority areas. Trainees are very positive about the quality of centre-based training in phonics. Secondary trainees also understand well the priorities of the schools in which they are placed; for example where literacy is a barrier to learning. The consortium approach to recruitment and training, identified as a strength at the last inspection, has been extended and embedded more widely. Where a consortium training model is not in place, there has been a more strategic approach to the recruitment and clustering of trainees for 2012/13 so that peer subject support can be facilitated better. Other new partnerships, such as the link with a local university will enable future trainees to study for a post-graduate certificate in education while working towards gaining qualified teacher status. This demonstrates the provider's commitment to on-going course development and to ensuring that trainees have access to the best possible learning opportunities.

19. Leaders attend national conferences and local networks to keep abreast of current developments. The provider is involved in new training initiatives, such as the Troops to Teachers programme which recruits former armed forces personnel. Leaders are preparing well for the introduction of the new Teachers' Standards in September 2012 by building on current best practice, responding to trainees' views, taking into account implications for the professional development of trainers and identifying associated resource needs. This well-focused strategic approach to the management of change is helping to ensure that actions and responsibilities are well understood across the partnership. Leaders and managers are fully aware of the direction of travel in relation to the Government's initial teacher education implementation plan and they are well-placed to engage with new models of delivery.
20. Leaders have taken effective steps to address the required actions and recommendations identified at the last inspection. They have sustained good outcomes for trainees and secured an increasing trend, over time, in the proportion of trainees graded as outstanding. Strategic planning incorporates clear objectives and well-staged actions to tackle areas for development identified through self-evaluation, to improve outcomes for trainees and to manage change. However, an interim evaluation of the impact of the current action plan places too much emphasis on the implementation of actions instead of on the evaluation of the impact on trainees' outcomes. Leaders demonstrate a very strong commitment to continuous improvement and possess a clear vision for the future of the partnership.

## 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

		Employment-based routes
<b>How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?</b>		<b>2</b>
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	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
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	3
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	2
Promoting equalities and diversity	To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination?	2

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

	Employment-based routes
<b>To what extent do the leadership and management at all levels have the capacity to secure further improvements and/or to sustain high quality outcomes?</b>	<b>2</b>
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?	3
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?	2
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?	2

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

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