

Kingsbridge Education Improvement Partnership

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. Kingsbridge Education Improvement Partnership (Kingsbridge, or the partnership), established under the Excellence in Cities Programme in 2002, is based in the Excellence Centre in Wigan, attached to Rose Bridge High School. In 2003 the partnership developed an employment-based route into teaching with the aim of training outstanding teachers for Wigan schools. All follow the graduate teacher programme (GTP) to gain qualified teacher status (QTS). Trainees are assessed against the Standards as set out by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (the Standards).
4. At the time of the inspection there were four secondary schools in the partnership and nine primary schools. In addition, associate schools are brought into the partnership as hosts for trainees on their second placement and as the main placement for self-funded trainees.

5. Trainees specialise and train to teach in either the 5–7, 7–11 or in the 11–16 age ranges. At the start of 2011/12, there were 11 primary specialists, one of whom was a self-funded trainee. There were 12 secondary specialists, five of whom were self-funded.

Employment-based routes to qualified teacher status

Key strengths

6. The key strengths are:
- the high proportion of trainees who attain the Standards at the highest level, who complete the course, become teachers and stay in employment after a number of years
 - the innovative 'Kingsbridge Framework' that is used effectively across the partnership to provide high-quality feedback to school staff, enabling school-based training and mentoring to be outstanding
 - the highly individualised and flexible training and excellent quality and cohesion between centre- and school-based training that enable trainees to make good and outstanding progress
 - the very strong partnership in which everyone knows their roles and responsibilities and has high expectations, passion and determination to train outstanding teachers for Wigan schools
 - the high quality of trainees' reflection and evaluation of pupils' learning, leading to the outstanding quality of their teaching
 - the robust and extensive quality assurance systems that ensure outstanding provision and training
 - the rapid and highly effective response by leaders and managers at all levels to internal and external evaluation.

Recommendations

7. In order to improve outcomes for the recruitment and selection of trainees, the partnership should:
- increase the proportion of trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds recruited onto the programme.
8. In order to increase trainees' attainment further, the partnership should:
- extend trainees' knowledge of recent and relevant research and reports, particularly in mathematics.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

9. Overall effectiveness of the programme is now outstanding, reflecting the relentless focus and determination by all members of the partnership to produce outstanding teachers for Wigan schools. Headteachers formed the partnership and the GTP course to recruit and train teachers they need for their schools. As a result, they have a significant and inherent interest in producing

the best teachers they possibly can to meet the needs of their schools. Trainees hold the quality of support and centre- and school-based training in very high regard.

10. Trainees' attainment is high and the quality of their teaching is outstanding. One of the reasons for this, as cited by a headteacher, is because trainees are "immersed in high-quality teaching on a daily basis". The schools in the partnership have been judged as either good or outstanding by Ofsted. The departments and class teachers selected by the partnership to have a trainee are chosen because they are excellent teachers and they are able to show and train a candidate how to become an outstanding teacher.
11. In their lessons trainees demonstrate a number of outstanding features. They have an excellent rapport and relationship with pupils in their classes. They teach exciting lessons, of high quality, in which pupils are active and challenged and in which expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are very high. In a lesson, for example, in a reception class, the trainee planned and taught a lesson based on reading and writing lists, linked to the theme of holidays. All children were focused on lists throughout the exciting and stimulating lesson and continuous provision was based on reading and writing lists. They all made rapid progress. In a Key Stage 2 class, the trainee frequently monitored and assessed pupils' work and learning and moved each group on to more challenging mathematical tasks as the lesson progressed so that each child was challenged. The questioning and dialogue in lessons was high quality. Trainees' high expectations ensured that all groups of pupils made at least good progress and their vocabulary, knowledge and understanding were extended. Trainees make a significant contribution to the life of the school and trainees have made a positive impact on the teaching and learning of other colleagues and of subject departments. Key to the success of trainees is their high level of passion, enthusiasm and determination to make a difference to pupils' learning.
12. Robust, detailed and thorough multi-layered interviews and selection procedures ensure that the trainees selected for the course have the capability and potential to be outstanding teachers. Trainees frequently perform better during open interview and recruitment processes than many from a national field. The withdrawal rate from the course is lower than the national average and the proportion of trainees employed in teaching is well above the national average. Kingsbridge has met and surpassed its targets for recruiting trainees in subjects in which nationally there is a shortage of teachers. Similarly there is a local shortage of secondary English teachers so the provider has ensured some are recruited onto the course to serve the needs of partnership headteachers. There is a higher proportion of males specialising in primary education than the national average. The proportion of trainees of minority ethnic heritage on the course is low; however the number of applicants is growing as is the number of offers of places.
13. High-quality initial needs analysis takes account of trainees' previous experience and knowledge. Trainees, alongside their mentors and professional tutors, gauge their skills against the Ofsted characteristics for trainees using

TAG (teaching and assessment grades) sheets. Before the start of the course a high-quality training plan is devised with school staff to ensure that the trainee is able to move towards a grade of 'good' against each of the characteristics by the end of the first placement. This process ensures that immediately there are high expectations, highly individualised and flexible training plans and that trainees make good progress from the outset. Since the previous inspection, the provider has worked highly effectively to ensure coherence between school- and centre-based training. The model of training is highly beneficial to trainees. Trainees observe and work on an aspect in their classes/schools; they then have a centre-based session about it and try it out in their schools. The following week the success is evaluated in the centre-based session. Trainees valued highly the training on voice control, behaviour management and bullying. The behaviour management training has been highly successful because, in all the lessons observed by inspectors, pupils' behaviour was excellent. Trainees used the excellent rapport with pupils to diffuse potential difficulties and the lessons were so interesting, active and engaging that pupils did not have the time or the inclination to misbehave.

14. A key factor in trainees' good and outstanding progress is the outstanding quality of the mentoring. Mentors and professional tutors have exceptionally high expectations of the trainees. There is a relentless focus on pupils' learning and the feedback to trainees is detailed, thorough and focused, from the start, on the progress pupils have made in their lessons. This focus is also seen in trainees' evaluations. They evaluate each training event by commenting on how it will affect their professional development, subject knowledge and the learning of their pupils. The reflections and evaluations have a real impact on accelerating their progress towards teaching better lessons.
15. Leaders and managers ensure that funding is linked directly to outcomes for trainees and on improving the quality of their teaching. The investment, for example, in two days' training in a phonics programme gave trainees an excellent understanding of how to teach phonics progressively and systematically. Extra support and time from consultants are provided for trainees who are not making the progress they need to make and for schools in which the mentoring is less effective. The trainees have extensive resources they can use in school and they make very good use of them. Information and communication technology and web-based technology are not always used well to ensure that trainees and schools are fully up-to-date with developments and research in education. However, resources are used highly efficiently and effectively to ensure high retention on the course and high levels of attainment.
16. Both the range and diversity of schools have increased as the partnership has expanded. A key feature of the partnership is the centrality of pupils and their learning. Training has become highly cohesive and coherent with the aim of making a difference to pupils' progress. Trainers are highly qualified, have up-to-date knowledge and a good understanding of what excellent teaching looks like. Leaders and managers have been successful in continually improving the training by incorporating more expertise from partnership and associate schools.

17. Trainees are fully prepared to teach in modern Britain. They have received quality training about, for example, gender identity and sexuality. As a result, trainees are knowledgeable about how to include these groups in their teaching and have a good knowledge of how to tackle homophobic and transphobic bullying. Trainees, through tasks and centre-based training, are very well prepared to teach pupils with different types of disability and special educational need. Trainees were highly complimentary about the time they spent in special schools and in designated units working with and observing pupils with different needs. Opportunities to work with and observe pupils from different minority ethnic groups have been extended through links with schools in Bolton and Oldham. A few trainees have a less strong understanding of how to teach pupils of different faiths.
18. Gaps between primary and secondary trainees have closed and now there is little, if any, difference between their attainment, progress, employment and completion rates. Similarly there are no differences between secondary trainees specialising in teaching different subjects or between the trainees who are funded or self-funded. Although there have been no incidents of harassment, bullying or intimidation among trainees or at the provider, systems, policies and procedures to record and report any issues could be strengthened and formalised.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality **Grade: 1**

19. There are excellent and robust systems in place to assure and self-evaluate the quality of the course. They involve all members of the partnership and are thorough and detailed. Pupils are at the heart of the provider's evaluation. Leaders and managers ask trainees to evaluate the quality of each centre- and school-based training session, including observations of other teachers, against the impact on pupils' learning in their classes, their professional development and their subject knowledge. Trainees are highly reflective and, because there is a very strong focus on pupils' learning, they constantly evaluate training and what they do against how pupils are helped to make progress.
20. A key strength in the quality assurance is the role played by professional tutors. They self-evaluate and receive feedback from the provider about the quality of their training and mentoring using the excellent document "Kingsbridge Framework". This enables both new and experienced mentors to evaluate precisely whether they are satisfactory, good and outstanding against clear criteria. As a result, mentors are constantly aiming to become outstanding in their training and know exactly what to do to become outstanding. In a significant improvement since the previous inspection, all members of the partnership are clear about their roles and responsibilities in the training and assessment of trainees. In addition, they are highly committed to training outstanding teachers for Wigan schools and have exceptionally high expectations of trainees.

21. The quality of mentoring is checked rigorously by the quality assurance and management group. Members conduct unannounced visits to schools and mentors to check the quality of provision and feed this back to the partnership group and to training managers. There are high expectations and these are enforced through quality assurance procedures. For example, one school was finding it harder to raise mentors' standards to outstanding on one aspect of the framework. Kingsbridge provided support and advice to raise the quality of the school's provision. Even in successful and experienced schools, leaders and managers have taken decisions to de-select a department or mentor if they feel the training is not at least good.
22. The partnership takes action to amend the course during the year if, through its evaluation, it has noticed an aspect of the trainees' teaching or their knowledge to be less strong. It was noted, for example, that in one cohort trainees were not as knowledgeable as they should be about how to use national and local data to influence their teaching of different groups of pupils. Consequently the partnership introduced a school-based task in which trainees had to compare their class data with national benchmarks for different groups of pupils such as White British boys, those eligible for free school meals and girls or boys.
23. Leaders and managers have been particularly responsive to local and national priorities and developments. Members of the partnership are on key local and national working parties and they bring that knowledge and understanding back into the provider. As a result of the training in bullying and behaviour management, trainees have a good understanding of how to tackle prejudice-based bullying such as racism, homophobia, and bullying related to gender identity and disability. Trainees have a very good understanding about the strengths, merits and disadvantages of different phonic programmes because leaders changed the course to ensure that all trainees had a good understanding of different systems for teaching phonics progressively and systematically. Secondary trainees take opportunities to extend pupils' literacy skills, vocabulary and their knowledge of English. A trainee in a Key Stage 3 science lesson exploited opportunities about igneous rocks to extend pupils' knowledge of the prefix 'ig' and how it related in other words to fire. Links with special schools in the area and new school-based tasks have helped deepen and extend trainees' understanding of pupils with different special educational needs and disabilities. The provider has already started to consider the new Standards which come into effect in September and the changes to funding arrangements for initial teacher education.
24. Since the previous inspection, the provider's improvement action has been considerable. Trainees' attainment has risen significantly, particularly for primary trainees. Employability rates have remained high and retention rates have improved, particularly for primary trainees. Excellent leadership is provided by the primary and secondary training managers. They have ensured that all of the points for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been tackled and have now become key strengths. The provider is open and

highly responsive to internal and external scrutiny and evaluation, and is more rigorous in using data and checking its own systems.

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

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

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

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

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.