

# George Spencer Training School EBR Partnership

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

24–27 June 2013

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This inspection was carried out by four of Her Majesty’s Inspectors (HMI) in accordance with the *ITE Inspection Handbook*. This handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from January 2013.

The inspection draws upon evidence within the ITE partnership to make judgements against all parts of the evaluation schedule. Inspectors focused on the overall effectiveness of the ITE partnership in securing high-quality outcomes for trainees.

## Inspection judgements

*Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is requires improvement; grade 4 is inadequate*

	Employment-based routes
<b>Overall effectiveness</b> How well does the partnership secure consistently high quality outcomes for trainees?	2
The outcomes for trainees	2
The quality of training across the partnership	2
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	2

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## **The employment-based routes**

### **Information about the employment-based partnership**

- The George Spencer Training School leads the partnership.
- The partnership offers routes to qualified teacher status (QTS) for primary and secondary trainees through employment-based initial teacher training. It is a network of four primary and 11 secondary schools in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire, including schools and academies serving inner city and rural areas, many with a specialist status.
- At the time of the inspection there were two primary trainees and 11 secondary trainees on the programme. The secondary specialist subjects are science, modern foreign language, art, music and history. All places are funded by the Teaching Agency.

### **Information about the employment-based ITE inspection**

- Inspectors observed seven lessons taught by trainees and three lessons taught by newly qualified teachers (NQTs).
- Inspectors held discussions with individual trainees, NQTs and former trainees working in partnership schools; trainers, leaders and managers; head teachers and members of the partnership board.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentary evidence, including information related to recruitment and selection, statutory safeguarding and compliance with the initial teacher training criteria, tracking and assessment, trainees' teaching evidence and assignments, analysis of outcomes for trainees, evaluations and improvement plans and external moderator reports.
- Inspectors reviewed the partnership's website.

### **Inspection Team**

Philip Mann HMI: Lead inspector

Anne Taylor HMI: Assistant Lead inspector

Brian Cartwright HMI: Team inspector - science

Susan Wareing HMI: Team inspector - modern foreign languages

## Overall Effectiveness

**Grade: 2**

### **The key strengths of the employment-based partnership are:**

- The highly effective personalisation of the course and continuous development of subject knowledge to meet the needs of individual trainees who go on to achieve good outcomes.
- The rigorous recruitment and selection of trainees who demonstrate the commitment to become good or better teachers by the end of the course, and high completion and employment rates.
- The effective use of comprehensive quality assurance procedures to ensure consistently high quality training across the partnership.
- The clear lines of communication and full engagement of all those involved in the partnership.
- The commitment of senior leaders to expand provision to support a local and regional need and their capacity for further improvement.

### **What does the employment-based partnership need to do to improve further?**

#### **The partnership should:**

- Further improve outcomes for trainees by:
  - ensuring lesson planning fully meets the needs of all individual pupils
  - ensuring observations of trainees' teaching and feedback to them focuses fully on trainees' impact on the learning of all pupils
  - linking improvement and subject plans directly to the impact of training on the outcomes of trainees.

## Inspection Judgements

### **The outcomes for trainees are good**

1. The attainment of trainees is good. They achieve well because high quality training effectively meets their individual needs from the start of the course. They demonstrate a good level of performance in all of the Teachers' Standards and a desire to become good and outstanding teachers. Completion rates are above the sector norms and employment rates are high. There are no significant differences in the performance of different groups of trainees in either the primary or secondary programmes.

2. Trainees steadily build on their previous experience and skills developed in other careers before training to become teachers. All have worked in some capacity with young learners and several have been a classroom teaching assistant. They are self-motivated and demonstrate the qualifications, skills and competencies to become good or better teachers. They are reflective and evaluate their lessons well to improve their own practice.
3. All trainees demonstrate very secure subject knowledge related to the age ranges and specialist subjects they teach. Evidence files are comprehensive working documents that contain a wealth of background research undertaken throughout the course. Primary trainees demonstrate good subject knowledge in the teaching of phonics and mathematics. All trainees demonstrate secure knowledge and understanding about how they would support disabled pupils or those with a special educational need. They display an ability to support pupils who speak English as an additional language in their learning. Those training to teach a modern foreign language (MFL) possess good linguistic skills and an appropriate range of strategies for teaching their subject. Trainees teaching science are able to make effective use of practical techniques learnt in central training sessions.
4. Trainees quickly establish positive relationships with the pupils they teach. They successfully use a range of strategies learnt in training to manage pupil behaviour. In the best lessons, questions are used well to check pupils' understanding and, in the case of MFL trainees, to deepen students' thinking. However, these trainees do not always give pupils' enough practice and thinking time before they are asked to respond.
5. Trainees demonstrate increasing levels of skill in using assessment information to monitor the progress of the pupils they teach. In the best lessons, such as seen in a mathematics lesson for primary pupils, the trainee planned a range of learning tasks to provide good levels of challenge for pupils of all ability in the class. More able pupils were given tasks to develop their thinking and ability to work independently, extra support and good practical activity supported the learning of those less able whilst the teacher guided the work of pupils of average ability. All of these pupils made outstanding progress by the end of the lesson. However, not enough use is made of assessment information by some trainees to make sure work is planned to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. In these lessons, insufficient attention is paid by trainees on the impact of these tasks on the quality of the pupils' learning.
6. Observations of NQTs and discussions with them during the inspection confirm that most of their teaching is at least good and sometimes outstanding. Discussions with senior staff in partnership schools confirm

that these NQTs are making a positive contribution to the schools in which they work. Several have taken up posts of responsibility in local schools.

### **The quality of training across the partnership is good**

7. Training of high quality ensures that most trainees go on to be good or outstanding teachers. Schools within the partnership provide effective, contrasting settings to develop the trainees' knowledge, understanding and skills within a well-designed work based programme. This is a view shared by trainees who say that they feel very well prepared to teach in a wide range of schools.
8. A comprehensive analysis of each trainee's competencies to teach is used to identify the training needs for each trainee starting with a wide range of relevant pre-course tasks. Individual training plans, weekly training sessions after school and specific tasks ensure trainees make good progress in their professional studies and subject knowledge development. Trainees appropriately take responsibility for checking their own subject knowledge and mapping out clearly what needs to be done to address any gaps. They tackle these carefully and undertake much further reading and other activities needed to deepen understanding.
9. This depth of training in subject knowledge development is especially evident in the science programme. For example, the very good written assignments of trainees in science demonstrate a secure understanding of the science curriculum and teaching methodology. Enquiry based learning in science is backed up by an excellent programme of systematic audit and enhancement of the practical science teaching skills of trainees. Trainees have access to nationally recognised courses and other subject enhancement work such as in physics to develop their subject knowledge to a higher level. A second, equally outstanding feature of science training is the depth and rigour by which trainees subject knowledge is checked, developed and monitored by subject moderators.
10. Although subject mentors know the importance of using scientific phenomena to engage and interest pupils, they sometimes miss the opportunity to discuss and develop that approach with trainees. This is in part because the frequent monitoring of trainees is limited by an over-detailed attempt to grade every aspect of the trainees' teaching against each of the Teachers' Standards. In doing so, the impact of teaching on pupils' learning receives less emphasis.

11. The quality of MFL training is also good because the programme of sessions held at the teaching school is comprehensive. It gives trainees a good grounding in the fundamentals of teaching MFL while supporting the development of their subject knowledge. Sessions on a range of whole-school issues are followed up well in schools by mentors who set clear targets in an MFL context. However, the setting, by subject mentors, of subject-specific MFL targets such as the development of trainees' and pupils' use of the target language or strategies for teaching particular grammatical structures, is less consistent.
12. The coherence between the generic programmes, training plan and role of subject mentor and school based tutors is good. Training in the national priorities is good. Comprehensive training in the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics and mathematics is provided for primary trainees. A three - day intensive training experience at an inner city school with a high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language prepares all trainees well for teaching in a diverse society.
13. Trainees benefit from good support and challenge from their school-based mentors and subject tutors. School mentors are enthusiastic about their work and are committed to improving trainees' practice. Mentoring is of a good standard across the partnership because of effective and thorough moderation reports completed by the outreach and inreach tutors. Weekly lesson observations of trainees' teaching are detailed, linked to the Teachers' Standards and focused sharply on agreed targets. Mentors set high expectations and encourage trainees to be reflective and identify areas for improvement themselves. However, feedback from mentors has a tendency to focus on teaching methodology rather than the impact of trainees' actions on the pupils' learning.
14. Mentors and tutors provide trainees with excellent levels of personal and professional support. The very close monitoring of trainee progress and support for those underachieving are strengths of the provision. The assessment of trainees' progress is very accurate, based on the Teachers' Standards. Regular targets set for improvement, including those for subject knowledge, ensure that trainees understand clearly what they need to do in order to improve. Assignments are challenging, linked closely to classroom practice and deepen trainees' knowledge and understanding about important aspects of educational theory. These assignments are marked effectively to identify key strengths and where trainees may go to find further research and information.

## **The quality of leadership and management across the partnership is good**

15. Programme leaders provide effective leadership and the determination to improve provision further within the national context of change in initial teacher education. Teamwork is a real strength and issues from the previous inspection have been tackled well. Those with a subject responsibility display the necessary vision and expertise to improve provision further as trainee numbers expand. Good outcomes for trainees have been sustained over time and the provider demonstrates good capacity for further improvement.
16. Comprehensive procedures are used to both recruit and select trainees to be good or better teachers working in local schools and within the region. The partnership is particularly successful at recruiting trainees from minority ethnic groups and men into primary schools. The partnership ensures that headteachers and other school leaders are fully involved in the interview process; for example, in the observation of prospective trainees teaching groups of pupils and assessing the capability of each candidate to teach. Trainees say they value the challenge and rigour of this process. Robust safeguarding and qualification checks are in place. Headteachers within the partnership and teaching school alliance are keen to employ trainees from this provider because many go on to quickly take up posts of responsibility.
17. The promotion of equality of opportunity is taken very seriously by the partnership. This is reflected in the absence of any discrimination amongst trainees. Trainee progress is monitored closely and effective action is taken for those who need extra support. Any incidence of racism or discrimination by students against trainees in placement schools is dealt with quickly by school based mentors and tutors.
18. The very clear lines of communication established across the partnership are a significant strength. Both trainees and mentors say that leaders and tutors respond very quickly to any concerns that they may have. Experienced mentors and staff from partnership schools make a good contribution to the programme design and training activities. Attendance at mentor training events is high and this contributes effectively to the consistency of training across the partnership. Several mentors said that they feel valued by the partnership. They appreciate the feedback they receive through moderation reports and dialogue with the outreach and inreach tutors. Such activity contributes to further improvements in mentors' skills.
19. Comprehensive quality assurance procedures ensure consistency in the use of documentation, training procedures and mentoring in all partnership schools. Effective use is made of data related to trainees'



views and their achievement to inform self-evaluation and support further improvements in provision. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.

20. The quality of improvement planning is good overall. Priorities for action following the last inspection and the further development of employment based provision under the qualified teacher programme have been tackled well. The national training priorities have been developed effectively through the programmes for both primary and secondary trainees. Programme leaders have been strategically proactive with key partners in the local area to develop the employment based provision further as part of the School Direct initiative. An appropriate strategic vision statement identifies further developments in provision for 2013/14. Subject tutors have been fully involved in developing the structure of the new course programme and subject specific training. However, there are no formal action plans to develop subject specific training to consolidate the role of subject tutors and improve trainees outcomes further. The provider recognises this as an area for development.

## **Annex: Partnership schools**

The following schools were visited to observe teaching:

George Spencer Academy  
Ashfield School  
Bluecoat Academy  
Fairfield Primary School  
West Bridgford School  
Chellaston Academy  
John Clifford Primary

## **ITE partnership details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	70201
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<b>Lead inspector</b>	Philip Mann HMI
<b>Type of ITE partnership</b>	EBR
<b>Phases provided</b>	EBR
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 June–3 July 2009
<b>Previous inspection report</b>	<a href="http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/70201">http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/70201</a>
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