

Leeds Trinity University College

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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Lead inspector

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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.

The provider

3. The provider was awarded taught-degree awarding powers in July 2009.
4. The University works in partnership with schools locally and regionally with local authorities and Catholic dioceses to provide initial teacher education (ITE) leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) in both the primary and secondary phases.
5. The courses offered include Bachelor of Arts (BA) honours degrees in Early Years and Junior Years with qualified teacher status (QTS) for primary trainees and a one year postgraduate certificate in education is offered to secondary trainees.

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.

A commentary on the provision

6. The following are particular features of the provider and its initial teacher training programmes:

- rigorous evaluation and a strong record of improvement
- the flexibility to personalise programmes according to trainees' needs
- outstanding partnerships with schools which ensure consistency of training
- the highly professional attitudes demonstrated by trainees.

7. The following recommendation should be considered to improve further the quality of the outcomes for trainees:

- give a higher priority to providing trainees with experience of the key stages before and after their own key stage expertise.

The primary phase

Context

8. Leeds Trinity University College works in partnership with a large number of infant, junior and primary schools to offer initial teacher education (ITE) leading to the award of qualified teacher status (QTS). All successful trainees gain a BA honours degree. The current fourth year trainees are undertaking subject studies within their courses and are working towards the 2002 Standards for QTS. The current first, second and third year trainees are working towards the new Standards and are undertaking either Early Years (aged 3 to 7) or Junior Years (aged 7 to 11) courses. At the time of the inspection there were over 400 trainees on all courses.

Key strengths

9. The key strengths are:

- the outstanding capacity displayed by leaders and the partnership which has led to improved outcomes for trainees
- the high quality school-based trainers who enable training in school to be personalised to meet trainees' individual needs and who provide very good pedagogical feedback
- the commitment and enthusiasm of course leaders and centre-based staff who model effective primary practice very well, securing trainees' good levels of subject knowledge and development of highly professional attitudes
- the consistency, accuracy and rigour of assessment arrangements
- the good quality training which leads to trainees displaying good features of teaching with a strong focus on pupils' learning throughout the course.

Recommendations

10. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:

- provide opportunities to strengthen further the high quality school-based training provided by link tutors, by carrying out joint observations with school-based tutors for each school experience
- refine further the timing of the good quality course elements to allow trainees to transfer knowledge into practice.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

11. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good.

12. The attainment of trainees is good. The provider's assessment of the quality of trainees is accurate. Previous issues within the Early Years course where overall attainment was satisfactory in 2008/9 have been rectified. Current trainees in both

the Early Years and Junior courses are making good progress towards the QTS Standards with, at the time of the inspection, 84% of trainees assessed accurately as being good or better.

13. Trainees throughout the course display highly professional attitudes. For example, they:

- are able to plan well-structured lessons which make it clear what pupils are to learn and provide for the needs of those with special educational needs and/or those who are more able
- reflect well on their own practice and on the progress of their pupils
- engage in self-study and make very good use of the virtual learning environment (VLE)
- use information communication technology (ICT) effectively to enhance lessons
- manage pupils' behaviour and learning well, with a good range of strategies such as 'voice change' and positive encouragement
- display good subject knowledge
- are highly committed to addressing their course targets
- participate in wider school activities such as leading assemblies, assisting with extra-curricular activities and contributing to staff meetings.

14. The provider's recruitment and selection arrangements are good. Procedures for selection enable prospective trainees to share relevant experiences and the provider to check for signs of motivation and professional attitudes. The presence of school-based tutors adds rigour and ensures that appropriate candidates are selected. Retention rates have improved greatly and, in 2009, almost all trainees gained employment. In addition, 93% of trainees who have left in the previous four years have remained in teaching with just over half securing promoted posts. The individual needs of trainees are identified by their tutor; effective support arrangements ensure that their progress on the course is not hindered. Excellent provision is made for trainees with particular needs, such as dyslexia.

15. The provider is inclusive in its outlook. It recruits trainees from a range of academic backgrounds. The proportion of men recruited is above average. The provider has taken steps to target minority ethnic groups who have not previously considered any form of higher education. This has been successful in improving recruitment to the Junior Years course.

16. Training and assessment are good. Employers report that trainees are prepared well to teach in schools. Good use is made of regular, individualised targets both in centre-based and school-based training. Targets set in schools are quickly addressed. This allows trainees to put quickly into practice the skills and strategies they need to develop into good teachers. The recent focus on early reading has seen school-based tutors offer clear feedback to trainees on how to improve their own subject knowledge and pupils' learning. The quality of subject-specific feedback from course tutors at the centre is also very good, for example in ensuring that while trainees make good quality cross-curricular links, the lesson's main focus – such as geography – is never lost. Subject-specific feedback by school-based tutors is more variable. Nevertheless, the more generic feedback is highly pedagogical in nature

and, overall, demonstrates training which is personalised and well matched to each trainee's needs.

17. Overall assessment systems are effective. Nonetheless, current fourth year trainees have not always benefited from having a link tutor observe them teach until their final school experience.

18. All elements of the course combine well and enable the trainees to reflect on their practice. A very few commented that the timing of certain elements of their course, for example assessment and feedback on assignments, does not always allow knowledge and improvement points to be tested out. It is not clear how all trainees will have the opportunity to extend their knowledge of multi-cultural issues and the Key Stage 3 curriculum. This should be clearer in the 2010/11 programme which will contain a compulsory multi-cultural module. Overall, trainees are well prepared to teach in their chosen age ranges. As a result of the high quality school-based tutors, trainees have opportunities to visit other classes in their schools and meet with resident experts such as the special educational needs coordinator, literacy leader and sometimes Advanced Skills Teachers. This widening of expertise beyond their own classrooms extends their foundation subject knowledge and experience of the primary and Early Years curriculum.

19. The use of resources is good. Centre-based staff are well qualified with relevant experience. They, along with school-based tutors, are fully committed, enthusiastic and model good Early Years and primary practice well. The training of school-based tutors has ensured they are of high quality. Link tutors perform a crucial role in assuring the quality of school-based training. However, unless requested, they do not carry out joint observations routinely until a trainee's final placement. Trainees are very positive about resources, for example the availability of ICT and using the VLE with the opportunity, if required, to borrow equipment. The library is well stocked with relevant materials. The accommodation provides trainees with good models of primary practice.

20. The key strength of the provider lies in the high quality of the partnership. It is outstanding. Trainees have access to good quality, individualised training in schools with very high levels of consistency. The commitment of partnership schools, including that of school-based tutors, is very strong. Communication is excellent. Partners report that their feedback is valued and also helps to improve outcomes for trainees, for example by changing the timing of the third year placement to allow greater school input. Succinct, but comprehensive documentation ensures all parties are very clear about what is being assessed and what needs to be done. Link tutors carry out their roles consistently. The quality of training and briefings for school-based tutors and link tutors is very good. It is adapted to respond to the needs of new and experienced colleagues accordingly. The effectiveness and overall quality of partnership schools is well known to the provider. Schools new to the partnership are scrutinised for suitability before being admitted. Partnership schools are assured and self-confident, for example in varying their requirements of trainees in the light of their ways of working, and to give them scope for personal, professional development. Schools value being a part of the partnership and are committed to remain in it.

21. The provider promotes equality of opportunity, values diversity and eliminates harassment and unlawful discrimination well. Trainees make good progress with no group attaining significantly less well than others. Excellent support is available for those in need. Provider policies are clear; they are shared with, and understood by, schools. Trainees enjoy experience of schools in different contexts. Observations of second year trainees highlight their understanding of the range of needs found in a typical primary classroom, for example, pupils with special educational needs, and how to deal with them.

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

22. The provider's capacity to secure further improvements and/or to sustain high quality outcomes is outstanding.

23. The effectiveness of management at all levels is outstanding both in evaluating performance in order to improve and to sustain high quality. Rigorous analysis has taken place and outcomes for trainees have improved markedly. The provider evaluates the quality of its own provision in depth and takes very good account of partner views, for example through longitudinal studies. Self-evaluation is focused very well on outcomes for trainees. Data collection is more sophisticated than at the time of the previous inspection and is based on a range of national and local benchmarks, including external examiner reports. The most significant examples of impact as a result of the provider's self-evaluations include:

- changes to the Early Years course which have improved the quality of training with almost three quarters of fourth year trainees, at the time of the inspection, assessed correctly as good or better
- focused training meetings for school-based tutors have prioritised and strengthened consistency across the partnership
- the division of the leadership of the Junior and Early Years courses between three senior colleagues who work exceptionally well as a team. This model of leadership has been very beneficial in widening perspectives and has strengthened the ethos and expectation and ensured strong and committed relationships in the partnership.

24. The provider anticipates and responds to change outstandingly well. Leadership, including that in partnership schools, secures and sustains improvement very well. The result is that the overwhelming majority of trainees receive good quality training. The significant improvement in the quality of Early Years training, coupled with the improved outcomes for trainees, is key in judging this aspect to be outstanding, rather than good as the provider originally thought. The provider has introduced an international dimension by, for example, extending the partnership overseas with placements in France and links for ICT with Sweden. This has led to improved staff development but it is also preparing trainees well for the national modern foreign language requirements to be in place in all primary schools in September 2010. Further examples of the provider's outstanding anticipation and

response is demonstrated by the use of funding from the Training and Development Agency (TDA) to provide enhanced early reading materials in partnership schools; also participation in the TDA special educational needs project which has enhanced training materials in schools and led to increased numbers of trainees taking up placements in special schools. Leaders make well-considered judgements whether or not to join initiatives, for example, immediately taking up a position with leading literacy schools but 'waiting to see' regarding primary curriculum developments.

25. In its original self-evaluation the provider judged its effectiveness of planning and taking of action for improvement as good. Inspectors judge it to be outstanding. Improvement plans focus on outcomes for trainees. All partners, including trainees, are informed about the key priorities for improvement and their role in securing these. All are clear, as indicated by consistency of responses, what priorities are and how they contribute towards them. The professionalism of the primary team is trusted by trainees and partnership alike. The impact of improved planning has resulted in the provider making good improvements since its previous inspection. For example the content of training sessions and assessments are now explicitly linked to the Standards; the balance between examinations and practical experience in assessment arrangements has been successfully addressed. The use of evaluative data is far more rigorous and has informed course improvements and the more accurate assessment of trainees. Further improvements over time have included the re-validation of the programme, the creation of distinctive Early Years and Junior Years programmes and the opportunity to study for 30 credits at Masters level. Future improvements, for which training is already planned, include the commitment to training more school-based tutors so that each school has two, one in each age-specific range.

The secondary provision

Context

26. Leeds Trinity University College works in partnership with a large number of secondary schools to offer initial teacher education (ITE) leading to the award of qualified teacher status (QTS). All successful trainees gain a PGCE qualification at professional level; trainees who complete additional Masters level assignments gain the award at post-graduate level. The provider offers training in the 11 to 16 or 11 to 18 age ranges in English, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages (French, Spanish or German) and religious education. It offers 14 to 19 age range courses in business studies. During 2008/9 Urdu was offered in the 14 to 19 age range; it is now offered at 11 to 16 or 14 to 19. One hundred and fifty-three trainees were recruited in September 2008.

Key strengths

27. The key strengths are:

- the good documentation, communication and mentor training that secures a consistently high quality of training across the partnership
- the strong management structures, accurate and thorough analysis of data, and well-focused improvement planning that demonstrate outstanding capacity to improve
- the trainees' ability to reflect on their own performance and identify their own training needs
- the rigorous assessment of trainees against the Standards and how this is moderated across the partnership.

Recommendations

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

- on courses for age ranges 11 to 16 and 11 to 18 years, give more priority to trainees' experience of Key Stage 2.

29. In order to promote more effectively equality of opportunity for trainees, the partnership should:

- clarify trainees' entitlement to post-16 training and differentiated outcomes.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

30. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good.

31. Inspectors agree with the provider's judgement that trainees' attainment is good. Rigorous assessments help all within the partnership to assess trainees accurately against the QTS standards. Trainees develop strengths as reflective practitioners who are able to evaluate their own performance and identify their own strengths and weaknesses. They take responsibility for their own professional development; they are self-motivated, have a strong work ethic and are well regarded in local schools for their professional approach. Employers say that trainees are well prepared at the start of teaching. During the course, trainees gain familiarity with the QTS standards that help them to understand the demands of the induction year. As a result of effective training in college and in schools, trainees show a good understanding of issues relating to the safeguarding of children. Training in how to plan lessons is comprehensive and detailed and, consequently, trainees show very effective planning skills from early in the course.

32. The best trainees use good questioning skills which help them to assess pupils' understanding and to plan future activities. They are able to explain the rationale for their lessons in terms of promoting learning. They cater well for all abilities within the teaching group, including those with special educational needs. Less strong trainees do not always challenge the most able pupils and sometimes find it difficult to adapt the lesson when something unexpected occurs.

33. As a result of their own positive attitudes and consistently good training, trainees progress well in relation to their varied starting points. Trainees and school mentors appreciate the benefits of how the course is structured; they feel that the 12 week block of centre-based training at the beginning of the course helps trainees to begin their first school placement with confidence and a better-than-expected level of expertise. Trainees benefit from opportunities to observe high quality teaching in school and trainers in college generally model good practice. The different elements of the course complement each other well.

34. Procedures for developing trainees' subject knowledge make an effective contribution to promoting progress. Trainees begin the course with widely different strengths and weaknesses in subject expertise. However, from these very varied starting points, an early audit of subject knowledge, followed by self-study and mutual support, helps trainees to build their confidence and their understanding of progression within the subject. Trainees' subject knowledge development is also supported by effective training in subject-specific pedagogy which helps trainees to plan lessons and classroom activities that focus on learning and anticipate likely pupil misconceptions. Trainees benefit from good feedback for their subject-based assignments, but the follow up to professional studies assessments is not sufficiently supportive of further development.

35. Training is tailored well to suit each trainee's individual needs. In school-based training, mentors' strong use of targets for development makes an important contribution to each trainee's progress; inspectors found clear links between the weekly mentor meetings and the trainee's achievement. Targets are regularly

reviewed and progressively more demanding. Trainees benefit from regular lesson observations and good quality feedback, which help them to focus on developing particular teaching skills. Assessment against the QTS standards is rigorous. Trainees benefit from good guidance about what evidence they need to present to show competence against each of the standards. As a result, they are able to focus their professional development in appropriate areas and demonstrate a broad range of professional skills. Trainees on 11 to 16 and 11 to 18 courses show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Key Stage 2 curriculum. However, not all trainees have first hand experience of seeing their subject being taught in a primary school. Consequently, trainees teaching Year 7 classes have a less secure knowledge of pupils' prior learning than might be the case.

36. Provision across the partnership is of a consistently high quality. Trainees benefit from placements in schools that offer diverse experiences but consistently strong training. The provider knows the schools well and selects placements carefully. Communication with schools is excellent. Almost all schools use the provider's guidelines as a structure to create their own training programme, and this helps to ensure that trainees receive a core entitlement of training. The role of link tutors is key to securing this consistency: link tutors are effective in moderating school-based assessments, giving feedback to the school and providing informal support and training for school-based trainers. More formal mentor training takes place regularly; the information offered and the opportunities for mentors to share good practice also contribute to high levels of consistency. School-based trainers express unfailingly positive views about the partnership.

37. The provider has clear policies on equality, published each year in communication with schools. Good support structures enable staff to offer trainees strong personalised support. Trainees feel secure about the range of help offered; they feel staff are always there to support them, both professionally and personally. There is no significant difference between the performance of different groups and inspectors found no evidence of trainees experiencing discrimination or harassment. Trainees are well prepared for teaching in a diverse society and show sensitivity to individual needs in their lesson planning. In subjects where trainees have outcomes that are for pupils aged 11 to 16 or aged 11 to 18, not all have the opportunity of post-16 experience in schools. Consequently, not all trainees who want and would benefit from post-16 experience are able to access it and, well into the course, some trainees are unclear what outcome they will get when they finish.

38. The selection system is well designed, thorough, and effective in recruiting suitable trainees. Selection criteria are appropriate and the set tasks apply to all and ensure fairness. The interview process includes an assessment of candidate's reading and writing abilities. As well as being thorough, and in some subjects very selective, there is flexibility and several good trainees have been recruited from non-traditional backgrounds. The provider is sensitive to local needs, for example in offering an Urdu option and recruiting religious education trainees from a range of backgrounds. Recruitment of minority ethnic trainees has grown steadily and has generally been close to target and above sector averages. The gender balance and the proportion of mature students are both in line with the sector average. A subject knowledge enhancement course, run jointly with two other local providers, helps to

boost recruitment to training in mathematics. Employment rates are above sector averages except modern foreign languages where rates have been below average for two of the last three years.

39. The use of resources makes a good contribution to trainees' development and to the efficient monitoring of their progress. Resources are allocated appropriately according to need. Trainees benefit from the provider's well-qualified staff and good teaching accommodation. The key link tutor role is well resourced. A wide range of appropriate books are accessible, including those on the reading list. Laptops are available for trainees to borrow, and most trainees say they can access ICT facilities when they need to.

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

40. The provider has outstanding capacity to sustain high quality outcomes for students, where these already exist, and to take the actions required to secure improvements where necessary.

41. The provider's record of taking action for improvement is excellent. Current provision enables trainees to make good progress in their teaching skills. The partnership handbook is clear about roles and responsibilities for all involved in the partnership, and this helps to promote a consistently high quality of training. Self-evaluation involves trainees and school partners and is based on a wide range of information about the provision. Partnership tutors and school-based mentors have a good understanding of trainees' strengths and weaknesses. The partnership enjoys a strong reputation locally; schools strongly support the partnership and feel fully involved.

42. Managers have an excellent understanding of the quality of provision across the partnership. They base this on a range of data that they collect about the provision and outcomes for trainees. Leaders and managers analyse information accurately and thoroughly, including close monitoring of trainees' outcomes over time and the performance of groups. The very effective use of comparisons with the national average helps managers at all levels to identify areas of relative weakness and to target subsequent action. External examiners and verifiers are effective in confirming standards; they are helpful in driving improvement, although recent reports focus more on provision than outcomes for trainees. Joint observations by subject mentors and link tutors are effective in moderating judgements on lessons, and school-based trainers appreciate the confirmation of their judgements that these provide. School-based trainers also appreciate the feedback that they receive from link tutors on other aspects of their work and believe that this feedback helps them to improve the training they give. They have a broad understanding of how good their provision is in comparison with others in the partnership.

43. Developments in training have taken good account of national developments and initiatives, and leaders and managers have introduced several measures recently

that have improved provision and outcomes for trainees. For example, following the introduction and development of the link tutor role and new assessment arrangements, managers identified training needs for both the college-based tutors and school-based trainers. They recognised the resource implications and allocated additional time to link tutors to fulfil their enhanced role. Partnership managers are forward-looking and take action in advance of need. For example, the partnership has bid for, and obtained, funding for 'with-experience' diploma training, to be delivered this year for the first time.

44. Several features demonstrate the partnership's outstanding capacity for further improvement. Increasing numbers of trainees are completing the course with higher grades. For example, the proportion of trainees graded outstanding has increased considerably in recent years, from 11% in 2007, to 31% in 2008 and 47% in 2009. Above average results and a trend of improvement is evident in a range of measures identified in external surveys and in other evaluations supplied by the provider. For example, in the most recent NQT survey, the proportion of trainees who rated as good or better the training in helping them to understand how to monitor, assess, record and report learners' progress rose from 77% in 2004/06 to 87% in 2007/09, compared with a sector average of 71%.

45. Improvement planning is excellent. It is well organised and identifies clear and measurable success criteria. Clear and easy-to-follow documentation helps mentors to be clear about their roles and responsibilities. Strong links with partnership schools mean that the training has evolved and been enhanced through consultation. Effective management systems ensure that planned actions are subject to review and that planning is carried through from one year to the next. Plans focus on appropriate issues and are based on strong analysis of data. There have been clear improvements in the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection, for example in development planning at departmental level and in sharpening assessment procedures. A recent big rise in the number of trainees recruited to the mathematics course demonstrates the partnership's success in promoting teaching as a profession and responding to national needs.

Summary of inspection grades¹

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is satisfactory; grade 4 is inadequate.

Overall effectiveness

		Primary	Secondary
How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?		2	2
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?	2	2
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	1	1
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	Secondary
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	1
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		1	1
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		1	2
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		1	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.

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