

ITE Edge Hill University Partnership

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Inspection Dates 12–15 May 2014

This inspection was carried out by six of Her Majesty's Inspectors and 12 additional inspectors 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 from each phase and separate programme 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

	Primary QTS	Secondary QTS	ITE for FE
Overall effectiveness How well does the partnership secure consistently high quality outcomes for trainees?	2	2	1
The outcomes for trainees	2	2	1
The quality of training across the partnership	2	2	1
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	2	2	1

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Overview of the ITE partnership

The overall effectiveness of the ITE partnership is good in primary, good in secondary and outstanding in further education.

This is because of the exceptionally high-quality training in further education that develops deeply reflective trainees, guided by expert mentors who help them to attain outstanding outcomes.

Key findings

- Trainees' behaviour management is a strength. They feel well equipped by both the university- and school-, college- or other setting-based training to promote a positive classroom ethos through the good relationships they foster with their pupils and learners.
- The very high-quality training in trainees' subject specialisms equips them with skills that enable them to provide relevant and exciting learning for their pupils and learners.
- Trainees and mentors receive excellent support, particularly from their course and link tutors. They are inspiring role models and subject experts who spare no effort in meeting trainees' personal and professional needs very well.
- The partnership's strongly shared vision for excellence in teaching and learning is based on high-quality research and well-modelled practice, producing teachers who meet the needs of local and regional schools, colleges and or other settings extremely well.

To improve the ITE partnership should:

- In primary and secondary:
 - improve completion and employment rates
 - in assessing trainees' progress against the Teachers' Standards, focus more clearly and accurately on trainees' planning, teaching and their pupils' learning
 - strengthen the quality assurance role of link tutors, to ensure that the judgements of all school-based trainers and mentors are accurate and more consistently focused on the impact of trainees' teaching on their pupils' learning.
- In Further Education (FE) and skills, build on existing measures, to develop trainees' understanding of the breadth and range of the sector so that experiences derived from visits to other settings are more widely and formally shared across the partnership.

Information about this ITE partnership

- Edge Hill University, with its predecessor institutions, is a long-established provider of teacher training. Opened in Liverpool in 1885, it is now situated in extensive grounds near to the town of Ormskirk in West Lancashire. It is a large provider and as such, has a network of study centres across England, including one in Shrewsbury. Its partnership of schools and colleges is extensive and stretches as far afield as the West Midlands, Yorkshire and London. Training is provided for those wishing to teach in the early years, primary, secondary or the post-compulsory education and training sector through a range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Some of these courses are flexible in nature and may be taken, for example, over six terms rather than three.
- The primary and early years programmes comprise an early years undergraduate programme and an early years PGCE programme, a full-time and a part-time primary undergraduate programme, and a full-time and part-time primary postgraduate programme, all leading to qualified teacher status (QTS). The part-time programmes are known within the provider as 'flexible' routes.
- The secondary programmes comprise a BA/BSc (Hons) Secondary Education with QTS offered via a three year full-time route, together with a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) route; one following the standard length of one year, the other a flexible route taking up to three years. The provider also offers the School Direct route in both primary and secondary phases.
- For those training to work in the post-compulsory sector, full-time and part-time undergraduate certificates in higher education at levels 4 and 5 are offered. In addition, full-time and part-time courses are offered through the professional graduate certificate in education (at level 6) and the PGCE (at levels 6 and 7). Part-time courses are available for in-service and pre-service trainees, whereas full-time courses are predominantly for pre-service trainees.

The primary phase

Information about the primary partnership

- Edge Hill is a large partnership of over 800 schools.
- The partnership offers five routes to QTS. At the time of inspection there were 1035 trainees enrolled on a three-year undergraduate primary programme and 174 on an early years and Key Stage 1 undergraduate programme. There were 290 primary post graduate trainees, 42 school direct primary postgraduate trainees, and 79 early years and Key Stage 1 postgraduate trainees.

Information about the primary ITE inspection

- Twelve schools were visited as part of the inspection. Inspectors observed 11 lessons taught by trainees and three by NQTs. All the lessons taught by trainees were jointly observed with the mentor or class teacher and inspectors were able to observe the feedback given to the trainee following the lesson. Discussions took place with the trainees in schools and their mentors and/or class teachers. Inspectors also scrutinised trainees' files of work.
- Discussions were held with two groups of undergraduate trainees in the university and staff involved in the partnership were interviewed. Three undergraduate university-based training sessions were observed, one each in English, mathematics and science. Documentation was scrutinised and the results of the on-line trainee survey conducted by Ofsted were analysed.

Inspection team

John Williams, Primary Lead inspector
Mark Williams HMI, Primary Assistant Lead inspector
John Nixon HMI, Team inspector
Terry Holland, Team inspector
Juliet Ward, Team inspector
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The key strengths of the primary partnership are:

- Trainees' excellent knowledge and understanding of the 2014 National Curriculum which allow them to plan meaningful links between subjects.
- Trainees' excellent knowledge and understanding of the implications of Ofsted's report, '*Unseen Children*', the links to the wider issue of inclusion, and the understanding that identification of need is more important than giving the child a label.
- The good quality training in the subject or aspect specialism that trainees have chosen to study which equips them with skills that enable them to make pupils' learning exciting and relevant in the subject/aspect. This also impacts well on trainees' employability.
- The partnership's vision for the future, which emphasises enhanced ways of working in ITE including its impact on school improvement.
- The high quality of training in how to manage behaviour which enables trainees to promote good behaviour for learning; this impacts well on trainees' teaching.

What does the primary partnership need to do to improve further?

The partnership should:

- Improve completion and employment rates.
- Improve mentors' written feedback to trainees on the lessons they have taught and at the end of each school placement, and thus sharpen the quality of targets trainees are set for their professional development.
- Sharpen the visiting tutors' practice by quality assuring both written and verbal feedback to trainees; provide schools with feedback on their performance in mentoring and thus improve school-based training.
- Bring about more clarity and accuracy to the assessment of trainees by reporting on trainees' planning and teaching and not just groups of the Teachers' Standards.

Inspection Judgements

The outcomes for trainees are good.

1. All trainees in 2012/13 attained more than the minimum requirements as set out in the Teaching Standards and there is a rising profile of outstanding trainees over the previous three years. Completion rates are mostly in line with the sector; a significant number did not gain QTS because they failed the national QTS skills tests. However, all who deferred in 2012/13 returned to complete their training and eventually attained more than the minimum standards. Employment rates are also mostly in line but are gradually improving. Apart from some small differences, for example in that a few more postgraduates are employed than undergraduates, there is no difference in the attainment of different groups of trainees. Current trainees are assessed at the end of each placement. Inspectors found that these assessments were generally accurate.
2. Trainees' teaching has particular strengths in managing behaviour; trainees promote good behaviour for learning. Their subject knowledge is strong and supported well by the training they receive in their specialist subjects and aspects. When teaching mathematics, trainees plan well to overcome pupils' common errors or misconceptions and they deal with these well if they occur in lessons. Their marking for next steps in mathematics is not always as good, however, as for English. Trainees make good use of resources such as electronic whiteboards.
3. Trainees understand the 2014 National Curriculum well and thus are able to make good, meaningful links between subjects. Their equally strong understanding of the implications of Ofsted's report, '*Unseen Children*' and its links to the wider issue of inclusion, enables them to see the importance of not labelling children but identifying individual need as a way to promote good progress.
4. Some trainees lack precision in their own use of Standard English. As a result some trainees have difficulty with their questioning skills which results in a lack of challenge for some of the more able pupils they teach. While all trainees had taken the opportunity to work with and manage other adults in the classroom, an area for development recommended in the inspection of three years ago, some struggle with engaging teaching assistants in their role, particularly in the whole-class plenary parts of lessons. While trainees are generally reflective of their teaching they do not always focus on the impact that their teaching has on pupils' learning.

The quality of training across the partnership is good.

5. The overall quality of trainees' teaching is judged to be good because the impact on outcomes for trainees is good. There is some variation in the quality of training; responses to the Ofsted questionnaire showed trainees, especially postgraduates, to be critical of a number of features. Their biggest bone of contention is timeliness of school placements. Inspectors found that a number of trainees had received their allocation to schools late, sometimes days or even weeks after the proposed starting date. Nevertheless, alternative productive arrangements for training were organised within the University for trainees that were affected and inspectors found no major impact of this on trainees' attainment.
6. The central undergraduate training in English, mathematics and science that was observed confirmed the trainees' view that mathematics training has some very good features. The trainer modelled good teaching well, for example, using a 'visualiser' to share a trainees' work with the rest of the class and referring to the '*Unseen Children*' issue. In English, the trainees were asked to perform a drama and poetry task that identified well, among other things, how pupils might respond in different ways. In all sessions trainees were asked to reflect on what they had seen in their placement schools and they did so, showing good engagement with the learning.
7. Trainees are good at managing and promoting behaviour for learning because they receive thorough training in how to do it. Phonics training has improved over time and evidence shows that its impact on teaching is now much better. Some trainees' views of phonics training have been affected by their limited experience, to date, of teaching phonics, because their placements have been in Key Stage 2. In these cases the trainee had made alternative arrangements with the schools to do some of this teaching in Key Stage 1. Some trainees were aware that their own pronunciation or use of non-Standard English was hampering their ability to teach phonics well; all who were in this position had sought and received support from the university.
8. Discussions with trainees indicate there is good coherence between the central- and school-based elements of the training; trainees 'see the big picture' and know how the different elements fit together and lead to QTS. At its best, school-based training is excellent. In these cases it is expertly designed to meet the individual needs of each trainee and provides every opportunity for a trainee to demonstrate that they can meet the Teachers' Standards well. Placements provide trainees with a good complementary experience and a breadth of experience across the key stages.

9. Oral feedback given by mentors, following observation of trainees' teaching, is accurate and identifies strengths and weaknesses clearly, although sometimes the spoken words do not match the overall grade allocated. The provision of written feedback is not always so well done. It is generally clear to see how judgements have been made and how targets have been brought forward from an earlier observation, but too often mentors write about what the trainee did in a lesson rather than about the impact of the teaching on learning. As a consequence, trainees' own reflections are not sharply focused on the impact on learning.
10. As with oral feedback, sometimes written comments do not match the grade. Targets set as a result of a lesson observation or at the end of a placement are sometimes focused on what the trainee should experience and not how the trainee can improve. However, inspectors agreed with the mentors' assessment of the trainees' strengths and weaknesses in teaching in lessons and over time.
11. Training in the new National Curriculum and Ofsted's '*Unseen Children*' report has been very effective and is a strength of the provision. The training in the subject specialism that trainees choose to follow is effective in promoting trainees' good subject knowledge. Special features such as 'exemplar days' impact well on the training programme.

The quality of leadership and management across the partnership is good.

12. Self-evaluation is accurate and takes account of trainees' views and competencies. The improvement plan that follows it is linked to this evaluation. The focus is placed well on improving outcomes for trainees. The provider has focused on two items identified as a recommendation from the inspection of three years ago and these have been addressed in terms of modified training, but for some trainees the impact of these measures is not yet evident and so they remain areas for improvement.
13. The partnership has an expertly crafted vision for excellence which places partnership at the heart of training in ITE. Schools' views are represented at all levels of management. Edge Hill provides a large number of NQTs for the region and beyond; it has training centres in other parts of the country such as Shropshire. The leadership realises that it has a major role to play in training new teachers and in school improvement, and gathers information on the impact of its provision on NQTs and school improvement.
14. Central to the information gathering are the visiting tutors, many of whom have built up close working relationships with their schools. The information gathered during their visits is discussed at meetings held

after each school placement and can lead to the identification of issues concerning both schools and individual trainees.

15. At present there is variation in the way that the visiting tutors carry out their roles. They do not routinely observe the feedback provided by a mentor to a trainee; there are weaknesses in some of the records of lesson observations which have not been identified. They therefore have not improved over time. Targets set at the end of placements are sometimes not precise enough. Much good, informal discussion takes place between the visiting tutor and the schools but the formal system of feedback to mentors and headteachers to help them improve their practice is not sufficiently consistent or sharp.
16. In general, the partnership can show measures that have been put in place to improve provision but has less evidence to demonstrate the impact of its actions. The course structure is based on evidence to show that courses work equally well for both undergraduates and postgraduates. This puts pressure on the partnership's capacity to provide placements when all but the first year undergraduates have to be in schools at the same time. There are some excellent features in the training programme such as the focus on the new National Curriculum, Ofsted's '*Unseen Children*' report and the specialist subject development. There is also good distance learning training available for mentors.
17. Schools are well-engaged in the partnership at different levels and this works well. Recruitment and selection procedures also work well and the partnership is successful in recruiting trainees who are likely to succeed. The partnership collects data from trainees and schools in order to improve the quality of training. Individual responses to concerns are mostly swift and intervention appropriate.
18. The partnership is fully compliant with Initial Teacher Training (ITT) requirements and criteria. It continues to be up to date in its understanding of the changing national picture for ITE. Given, over time, its securing of at least good outcomes for trainees, inspectors are of the opinion that it is well placed to improve.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe teaching:

Christ Church C of E Primary
Marshside Primary
St Patrick's Primary
Rivington Foundation
Churchtown Primary
Abbey Village Primary

Eatock Primary
Birkdale Primary
St Philip Westbrook C of E Primary
Nutgrove Methodist Primary
Weston Point Primary
St Johns C of E Primary

The secondary phase

Information about the secondary partnership

- Secondary programmes comprise undergraduate and postgraduate routes to QTS in a range of subject areas. The BA or BSc Honours Secondary Education with QTS is offered through a three-year, full-time route. Subject specialisms available include computer science and information technology, design and technology, English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and science (biology, chemistry and physics.)
- There are two PGCE routes. One follows the standard length of one year and the other is a flexible route taking up to three years. Subject specialisms available in addition to those above are: applied art and design, business education, geography, history, modern foreign languages (French, German, Spanish and Urdu) music, physical education (PE), and physics with mathematics and religious education. A Key Stage 2/3 programme was available at the time of the inspection but this option is to be discontinued from September 2014. A School Direct non-salaried route is also offered.
- The University works with over 200 secondary schools, predominantly in the north-west, but also in additional training centres in the West Midlands, Yorkshire and London. At the time of the inspection 342 trainees were studying on undergraduate secondary courses; 488 trainees on the PGCE routes; 68 trainees on the Key Stage 2/3 programme and 44 trainees on the School Direct non-salaried route.

Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- Inspectors observed the teaching of 20 trainees. Joint observations were carried out with subject mentors or school-based trainers and inspectors subsequently observed feedback from mentors to trainees. Discussions were also held with a further 40 trainees and 14 NQTs.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide variety of evidence, including trainees' teaching files and work set for pupils observed and marked by trainees. Inspectors also considered records related to trainees' progress.
- Meetings were held with senior university staff, course leaders and tutors and inspectors considered documentation related to the provider's

self-evaluation, improvement planning and other information about the various programmes that make up the secondary provision.

- Inspectors met with representatives of the Partnership Steering Committee, school-based trainers and subject mentors to seek their views on their involvement with the partnership. Inspectors also held brief conversations with headteachers in the schools they visited.
- Inspectors took account of 475 responses to recent NQT surveys and 193 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire completed by secondary trainees.
- Inspectors also reviewed the partnership website.

Inspection Team

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Zena Thewlis, Team inspector

Overall Effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the secondary partnership are:

- The excellent support provided by course leaders and link tutors, especially for the development of trainees' subject knowledge. This leads trainees to apply theory to practice with a demonstrably positive impact on their pupils' learning and on their own outcomes.
- High-quality training in behaviour management enables trainees to foster very good relationships with their pupils and to create a classroom atmosphere in which pupils are keen to learn.
- The partnership's strongly collaborative ethos and shared vision for excellence in teaching and learning is producing a highly effective teaching force for local schools and for the north-west region.
- The partnership is a rich and highly valued source of expertise and continuing professional development for teachers and trainees within and beyond the partnership. Its innovative programmes, often using new technology to support newly and recently qualified teachers and sustain and improve the quality of mentoring, are strengths of the provision.

What does the secondary partnership need to do to improve further?

The partnership should:

- Increase the proportion of trainees attaining at an outstanding level by the end of their training.
- Improve completion and employment rates for all trainees.
- Increase opportunities for all trainees to have sustained practical experience of teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) and who have a disability and/or special educational needs.
- Ensure that all trainees are well prepared to teach personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) by the time they leave their course.
- Strengthen the quality assurance role of the link tutor, to ensure that assessment of trainees' progress against the Teachers' Standards by all school-based trainers and mentors is consistently accurate and sharply focused on the impact of trainees' teaching on pupils' learning.

Inspection Judgements

The outcomes for trainees are good.

19. Around two-thirds of the partnership's trainees leave their training as outstanding teachers. The partnership has made a significant investment over the last three years in the steady reduction of the number of trainees who do not attain at a good or outstanding level by the time they leave their courses. Actual results from undergraduates' final assessments at the time of the inspection show a significant upturn in Grade 1 outcomes in 2013/14. The provider's robust tracking systems indicate that this improvement is set to be replicated for other secondary routes and that Grade 3 outcomes are poised to be eradicated this year.
20. Gaps in the attainment of different groups of trainees have narrowed or closed over the last three years across all courses, including for the School Direct non-salaried route, where trainees attain well at the highest level.
21. The partnership has been successful in reducing the proportion of trainees who defer completion of their training. The few who have interrupted their studies over the last three years have done so for unavoidable personal reasons and have all returned to complete their training as good or outstanding teachers. This is because of the very strong pastoral and academic support that tutors provide. However, withdrawal rates remain relatively high and an area for improvement for

the partnership, despite the overall rigour of recruitment and selection systems.

22. Employment rates within six months of trainees' completion of their training are broadly in line with the sector norm and improving. Long-term employment, as measured by those who stay in teaching for three years or more, is good compared to regional benchmarks.
23. Trainees quickly become highly reflective practitioners who take their personal and professional development very seriously. Trainees set high expectations for their pupils and have at their disposal an already wide range of strategies to manage pupils' behaviour positively, developing strong relationships that foster good attitudes to learning.
24. Trainees have particularly strong subject and curricular knowledge and some can apply their knowledge of the current National Curriculum to assess their pupils' work accurately. Many trainees are already able to use the new National Curriculum for September 2014 to prepare their own schemes of work. Most trainees are well acquainted with Ofsted's report '*Unseen Children*.' Some are beginning to understand the wider issues of disadvantage and the implications for their own teaching. Some trainees are not sufficiently well prepared for teaching PSHE when they leave their training.
25. Pre-course and on-going subject enhancement courses are much valued by trainees and have a very positive impact on their teaching. Trainees make confident use of new technology to produce high-quality, engaging materials and activities that encourage pupils' independent research and problem-solving skills. However, while trainees' planning is thorough and detailed, a few trainees focus on planning activities rather than securing their impact on pupils' learning. These trainees do not always check pupils' understanding frequently enough in lessons or challenge pupils' thinking through deep questioning, especially in the case of the most able pupils.
26. Headteachers are enthusiastic about the quality of teaching provided by trainees and NQTs appointed to their schools. They especially appreciate trainees' and NQTs' well-developed skills in behaviour management. Growing proportions of teachers in local schools have been trained in the partnership and quickly reach positions of responsibility in its schools.
27. The partnership draws extensively on specialist expertise across its schools. Trainees greatly appreciate subject-focused visits during their induction to their courses, for example two-week placements in science and design and technology that introduce trainees to good practice in their subjects. The skills of expert practitioners are well used in regular and well-attended conferences, other training sessions and visits

connected to national priorities. All trainees are able to teach across the 11–16 age and ability range and all have good access to post-16 teaching, either through observation, team teaching or actual planning, teaching and assessment.

28. Most trainees show good awareness of their responsibilities for the development of pupils' literacy, through a strong focus on their accurate use of subject terminology. However, some trainees, and sometimes their mentors, do not always present in their teaching and marking an accurate enough model of Standard oral and written English to meet their pupils' needs. Chances for pupils to practise their mathematical skills are less evident than for literacy skills in the teaching and planning observed during the inspection and seen in teaching files.

The quality of training across the partnership is good.

29. Trainees and NQTs who spoke with inspectors were overwhelmingly positive about the quality of their training and the strong support they receive from their tutors. Some trainees and NQTs were less positive about the quality of their training in recent national surveys. Their concerns mainly centred on the timeliness of information they received about placements and the extent to which trainees' views are taken into account by leaders and managers. Secondary inspectors found no evidence during the inspection to support these concerns. Most trainees and NQTs told inspectors that communication, especially with their course leaders and link tutors, is excellent and they saw course leaders as experts in their subjects at the cutting edge of research.
30. Inspection evidence shows that each placement is very carefully considered in order to complement previous training and closely match trainees' individual needs and circumstances. Trainees appreciate the strong coherence between the university-based training in national priorities, such as behaviour management, and well-structured follow-up sessions at subject level both in the university and in school. More conferences and training sessions have been introduced since the last inspection, together with optional enhancement courses where trainees can deepen their learning, for example, about the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) or who have special educational needs. There is more work to be done to provide sustained practical experience for all trainees to teach these groups.
31. School-based trainers and subject mentors greatly value the approachability and ready support of university-based staff on the rare occasions when they have a problem. Mentors have very positive relationships with their trainees. The most experienced mentors have very high expectations of trainees and are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic practitioners. They quickly identify any gaps in trainees'

subject knowledge and suggest a whole variety of practical strategies for improvement throughout the course. At their best, mentors design a coherent programme of on-going subject-specific professional development for their trainees, as well as giving them feedback on individual lesson observations.

32. Mentor training is good. Mentors are generous with their time and in sharing high-quality resources with trainees. Feedback to trainees after lesson observations is detailed, helpful and underpinned by the Teachers' Standards. The provider's practice of grouping individual standards into clusters when assessing trainees' progress does not always provide a clear, accurate and objective judgement of their planning and teaching across each of the standards.
33. Training of mentors includes innovative use of technology to provide individual initial training, followed by regular 'face-to-face' training sessions, and well-attended conferences are open to mentors, tutors, teachers and trainees from within and beyond the partnership. Much-valued subject networks also contribute to the partnership's vision for its local and regional presence as a provider of high-quality 'lifelong' professional development. The impact of this work can be seen in the increasing take-up, by mentors and teachers, of opportunities to engage in further degree-level study and classroom research that enhances their practice.
34. Some less experienced mentors do not always achieve the same judicious balance of support and challenge as more experienced mentors in their relationships with trainees, especially when giving hard messages about trainees' performance. In these cases, judgements are sometimes overgenerous and therefore unhelpful in challenging the most able trainees to reach the highest outcomes. The roles of the link tutor and school-based trainer are crucial in assuring the accuracy of judgements concerning trainees' progress and require strengthening in order to secure consistency across all schools where trainees are placed for their training.

The quality of leadership and management across the partnership is good.

35. The partnership's procedures for self-evaluation are honest and transparent and improvement planning is well organised, identifying key issues, with a clear focus on improving outcomes. Plans are reviewed regularly and the provider reacts quickly to messages from internal and external data. For example, to identify underperforming groups of trainees and take appropriate action to adjust training and support for them. The impact of such work is seen in the rapid closing of the attainment gap for male trainees, especially those of minority ethnic heritage.

36. Partnership leaders, whether university- or school-based, demonstrate a clear sense that this is a partnership of equals, committed to the improvement of outcomes of pupils in the region and beyond. They understand their respective roles and responsibilities in the development of a strong and committed local and regional teaching force. All leaders know what key priorities have been set by the partnership to ensure its further improvement; school-based staff appreciate their considerable autonomy in leading innovative projects that are driving change.
37. Partnership schools and trainees find the quality of oral and written communication across the partnership excellent, particularly the rapid response of the university-based staff to their queries. The very clear partnership documentation, including planning documents and handbooks, is consistently used and acts as a common focus for managing the partnership. The partnership meets all statutory requirements in relation to time spent in schools, second placements and transition experiences.
38. School-based trainers and mentors greatly appreciate their increasing involvement in the partnership's robust recruitment and selection arrangements. These include a good range of appropriate tasks and activities that enable the partnership to select trainees who have the potential to become successful teachers and the great majority do so. The partnership's ethos is highly supportive and inclusive. Inspectors found no evidence of harassment or discrimination suffered by trainees during the recruitment and selection process or on their programmes.
39. All necessary safeguarding checks take place and appropriate conditions are set for acceptance on the course. Almost all trainees and NQTs interviewed during the inspection had been asked to complete tasks prior to their admission to their course to further develop their experience and subject expertise.
40. The partnership's success in achieving good and improving outcomes for trainees since the last inspection and its highly innovative response to the changing landscape of ITE attest to the provider's good capacity for further improvement.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe teaching:

All Hallows Catholic High School
Archbishop Beck Catholic Sports College
Birkdale High School
Burscough Priory College

Carr Hill High School
Cowley International College
Culcheth High School
Essa Academy
Formby High School
Greenbank High School
Harper Green School and Arts College
Maricourt Catholic High School
Meols Cop High School
Our Lady Queen of Peace Engineering College
Penwortham Priory Academy
Range High School
Southlands High School
St Ambrose Barlow School
St Bede's Catholic High School
St Peter's Catholic High School
St Peter & Paul Catholic College
West Derby School

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Information about the FE in ITE partnership

- The Edge Hill University Further Education and Training partnership offers full-time and part-time undergraduate certificates in higher education at levels 4 and 5 for those training to work in the post-compulsory sector. In addition, the partnership offers full-time and part-time courses through the professional graduate certificate in education (at level 6) and the PGCE (at levels 6 and 7). Part-time courses are available for in-service and pre-service trainees, whereas full-time courses are predominantly for pre-service trainees. Students can gain further qualifications through their work in educational settings or through further study that leads to a Masters degree.
- At the time of the inspection, there were 255 trainees on full-time and part-time programmes leading to a teaching qualification. Thirty-three of these trainees were studying on in-service programmes.
- The partnership represents FE and skills settings across the north-west of England, Shropshire, the Isle of Man and Northern Ireland. The majority of trainees gain placements in general further education and sixth form colleges. A small proportion work with work-based learning providers, such as the National Health Service.

Information about the FE in ITE inspection

- Six inspectors carried out 11 observations of trainees, at different stages of their studies in 11 colleges from the partnership. Most of these observations were undertaken jointly with Edge Hill tutors or placement mentors. Inspectors also observed sessions in which mentors or tutors gave feedback to trainees. In five cases inspectors observed interim and final review sessions, during which trainees, tutors and mentors discussed the progress that trainees made. Wherever possible, inspectors interviewed trainees, mentors and tutors, senior leaders and managers and former trainees. Inspectors also looked at the trainees' electronic portfolios and held discussions with trainees to evaluate the impact of their training on the quality of their teaching.
- Inspectors also observed training sessions and expert-led seminars. In these sessions, trainees increased their knowledge of teaching strategies, or learned, for example, about the requirement to teach English and mathematics as part of study programmes.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior staff, course leaders, tutors and trainers during the inspection.

- Inspectors took account of the provider's self-evaluation and development plans as well as other information about the full-time, part-time and flexible courses that trainees followed.

Inspection Team

Inspection Team

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Overall Effectiveness

Grade: 1

The key strengths of the FE partnership are:

- The training of well-regarded, high-quality FE and skills teachers who make a significant contribution to the colleges and settings in which they work.
- The depth of critical reflection that mentors and tutors enable and encourage so that trainees make rapid progress to become the very best teachers they can.
- The exceptional levels of mentor and tutor support so that trainees develop a deeper understanding of their professional role beyond the classroom.
- The relentless focus on preparing trainees for employment in a rapidly changing sector.
- The passion and commitment of all stakeholders that make highly effective use of the complementary knowledge and skills of all partners to secure very high-quality training and outcomes for all trainees.
- The highly regarded role of the link tutor that has further improved communications across the partnership ensuring trainees benefit from highly coherent and consistent training and support.
- The thoroughness of the systems to monitor trainees' progress from their recruitment and selection, their interviews before placement and through to employment, drawing on all aspects of their work and setting aspirational targets so that trainees meet their full potential.
- The vision for excellence that builds training on a foundation of high quality research, well-modelled practice and produces teachers that meet the needs of the local and regional sector extremely well.

What does the FE partnership need to do to improve further?

The partnership should:

- Build on existing measures to develop trainees' deeper reflection and understanding of the breadth and range of the sector so that experiences derived from visits to other settings are more widely and formally shared across the partnership.
- Complete the planned streamlining of the electronic portfolio so that trainees, tutors and mentors can more easily access full information about the progress that trainees make.

Inspection Judgements

The outcomes for trainees are outstanding.

41. On both full-time and part-time courses, almost all trainees make significant progress during their training; all meet the professional standards for FE and skills teachers and become thoughtful, effective teachers. At the end of their training, all trainees are good or better teachers. A high proportion of trainees are outstanding teachers. All trainees teach on a range of courses, at different levels, in their placement settings. This means that trainees can begin employment confident that they are developing as able practitioners in their chosen field. A large majority gain employment in the FE and skills sector, and are highly regarded. A minority of trainees either interrupt or defer part of their training; this reflects the nature of the sector. Most of these trainees benefit from high levels of support from university tutors and mentors and return to their studies later. Trainees are of varying ages and backgrounds. There are no evident discrepancies in their progress by group.
42. Trainees make rapid progress in developing their teaching experience. They understand and demonstrate what it is to be an excellent teacher. Trainees prepare well for teaching. They reflect very carefully on what they need to do to ensure that their teaching fulfils the varied and individual learning needs of their students. This means that their students make good or better progress. Trainees use extensive and often imaginative resources in their teaching. They make sure that their teaching helps students to improve their English and mathematics. All trainees demonstrate with enthusiasm their excellent and wide-ranging subject knowledge. Many of their placement mentors and colleagues comment on how the fresh ideas and teaching approaches that trainees bring invigorate their own practice.

43. All trainees reflect deeply on teaching strategies and consequently in most teaching sessions learners are interested and contribute well in learning activities. They manage their classrooms very well. Trainees are very aware of the need to ensure that their students have equality of opportunity and prepare their students well for living and working as effective citizens in a diverse society.

The quality of training across the partnership is outstanding.

44. The training programme for FE and skills teachers is clearly focused on the progress that individual trainees make, so much so that the majority make better than expected progress. Trainees benefit very well from the flexible, supportive and coherent training that university tutors and placement mentors provide. This is especially evident in the support that mentors and tutors give to the very small minority of trainees who require additional help to become good or better teachers. The training has a solid foundation of research and practice. This ensures that trainees are well-grounded teachers that are highly regarded by staff in their placements and future employers.
45. Interviews before placement ensure that the very careful matching of pre-service trainees to placement departments meets their individual development needs well. Careful monitoring by the partnership ensures effective mentoring so that trainees can make rapid progress and benefit from high-quality subject-sector specialist mentoring. Mentors and university tutors are passionate and committed role models as both teachers and professionals. The extensive feedback that mentors and tutors provide enables trainees to demonstrate a strong capacity for critically reflective teaching in FE settings; they have strong subject and curriculum knowledge and are able to use a range of teaching and learning strategies well.
46. The partnership ensures that trainees can teach a wide range of students so that they can teach their subject at both basic and higher levels. Training sessions at the university cover equality and diversity very well, and trainees consider carefully how they can adapt their teaching to meet the needs of students of differing abilities.
47. The programmes include allocated time in which trainees are required to extend and enhance their teaching experience. In larger placements trainees benefit from being able to observe and work with colleagues teaching in other subjects and to work, for example, with students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This is not as well developed for trainees in smaller placements or settings; trainees are taught well and are very confident in their knowledge and skills, but not all have or take opportunities to extend their repertoire.

48. Trainees value the training sessions at university centres very highly. They understand how they can apply what they learn into their own classrooms. In many cases trainees and NQTs commented on how much the training had improved and continued to improve their teaching. Indeed, one recently qualified teacher commented that in challenging classes he often stood back and thought about the 'really good sessions on behaviour management' and what his tutor would have done in that case.
49. The quality of support, advice, guidance and training provided by tutors is high. Training frequently models best practice. Tutors and mentors expect trainees to draw together the different aspects of training to support their own progress. This is exemplified most clearly in the rationales that trainees prepare for formally observed teaching and the highly significant contribution they make to the quality of training. Many of the critical reflections that trainees make in their rationales for teaching are of exceptional quality.
50. Mentors and university tutors prepare trainees well so that they are able to use assessment effectively to measure the progress that their students make. Effective questioning and the use of more formal assessments show that trainees can change and develop their teaching strategies so that individual learners meet the high expectations for their achievement.
51. Trainees are well prepared to meet the changes to the FE curriculum, including study programmes and the raising of the participation age. They benefit from coherent instruction and practical support in planning and teaching English, mathematics and functional skills. They manage classrooms well; as a consequence of outstanding training in behaviour management most trainees teach lessons in which learners are able to make better than expected progress.
52. Trainees benefit from a wide range of individualised enhancements that extend their knowledge and skills and prepare them well for teaching in FE and skills. The university offers frequent and regular updates and weekend and evening expert-practitioner seminars. This enables future and current trainees, teachers and mentors to learn, for example, how to support the development of learners' reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills through their teaching and wider curriculum planning. Mentors and advanced practitioners from placement colleges and settings often lead these sessions. Staff and trainees across the partnership benefit greatly from being able to access videos and presentations of the series from the university's virtual learning environment (VLE).
53. Trainees regularly and frequently receive extensive and well-focused feedback on all aspects of their work. This is based on planned high-

quality formal observations and feedback on their teaching, progress reviews and feedback on academic work. Trainees also benefit from extensive informal on-going feedback that though not always recorded, is highly valued by trainees. Mentors and tutors ensure that trainees get challenging, aspirational targets that help them to improve their practice as they strive to become outstanding teachers.

54. Trainees, tutors and mentors use the electronic portfolio well to capture the exceptional progress made by the very large majority of trainees. However, the overall progress that trainees make cannot always be seen quickly or easily. Trainees, tutors and mentors often have to access more than one system to get a complete picture of the progress that trainees are making.
55. The assessments of trainees, including their teaching are accurate. Through the formative process trainees have a clear and accurate view of their potential as teachers and have clear priorities for their further professional development at the end of their initial training. University tutors and mentors provide trainees with very well-resourced preparation for employment that includes advice on curriculum vitae (CVs), letters of application and interview technique.

The quality of leadership and management across the partnership is outstanding.

56. The partnership has continued to provide outstanding training and sustain high-quality outcomes for trainees during a period of significant change in the FE and skills sector. The outstanding leadership and management of the Further Education and Training unit has extended the scope of provision and developed a coherent and challenging new programme designed to enhance the high quality of FE and skills teachers in the north-west. The capacity to improve provision further is strong. The provision is fully compliant with all the regulations affecting teacher education and training in the FE and skills sector.
57. The partnership has focused on the development of high-quality and highly skilled teachers that are well regarded in the sector. The partnership is exceptionally strong; stakeholders at all levels are enthusiastic champions of Edge Hill trained teachers for the FE sector. Throughout the partnership, there is a genuine recognition of the knowledge, skills and experience that each partner contributes to the training. The university offers relevant professional development so that mentors and tutors are extremely well prepared to meet the demands of their role. Leaders and managers recognise mentors as outstanding practitioners who play an increasingly important role in improving teaching and learning practice in the colleges and settings in which they work.

58. Trainees make very good progress because the systems for monitoring their achievement, and for giving additional support when required, are both rigorous and extensive. It is evident that the partnership uses data very well to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the training. This contributes, through extensive self-evaluation, to a constant focus on improvement and development.

Annex: Partnership colleges

The partnership includes the following colleges:

Bury College
Hopwood Hall College
King George V College
Knowsley Community College
Preston's College
Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology
Sir John Deane's College
Southport College
Warrington Collegiate
West Lancashire College
Wirral Metropolitan College

ITE partnership details

Unique reference number	70129
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Lead inspector	Susan Wareing HMI
Type of ITE partnership	HEI
Phases provided	Primary, Secondary, FE and skills
Date of previous inspection	28 March-1 April 2011
Previous inspection report	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/70129
Provider address	St. Helens Road Ormskirk Lancashire L39 4QP