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Mr Peter Raymond
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Dear Mr Raymond

Evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of behaviour training in the York St John primary ITE partnership

Thank you for the help which you and your colleagues, trainees, newly qualified teachers and schools gave when Katrina Gueli, Her Majesty's Inspector, John Menendez and Eithne Proffitt, Additional Inspectors, and I conducted a monitoring inspection of your primary ITE partnership on 12 February 2015. The focus of the inspection was to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of behaviour training.

Having considered all of the evidence I am of the opinion that, at this time, the quality and effectiveness of behaviour training are good.

Context

York St John University works in partnership with around 450 schools to provide initial teacher education (ITE) in the 3–7 and 5–11 age ranges for the Bachelor of Arts (BA) course, and in the 3–11 age range for postgraduate trainees. At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 464 trainees following the three-year BA course (across all three years) and 216 on the postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) course, which comprises 152 full-time and 64 part-time trainees. Forty six full-time PGCE trainees are following the School Direct route; the partnership is working in collaboration with nine school alliance partners.

Inspectors visited four partnership schools. They observed parts of lessons taught by six trainees and five newly qualified teachers (NQTs). Inspectors also held discussions with 13 trainees from across the three years of the BA course. Meetings were held with the trainees, NQTs, school-based mentors and headteachers in the four partnership schools and, at the university, with senior leaders and those responsible for delivering training in behaviour. Inspectors reviewed a range of



documents including improvement plans, impact studies and trainees' files. No centre-based training related to the management of behaviour took place during the monitoring visit, but one inspector considered a range of lecture notes, slide presentations and task-based assignments from across the different programmes relating to training in behaviour management.

Outcomes for trainees

Trainees and NQTs demonstrate both competence and confidence in managing behaviour in their classrooms. They employ a diverse range of skills and strategies, dependent on the needs of the individuals in their class, to ensure a productive and harmonious working atmosphere. For example, trainees and NQTs were observed using countdown strategies to minimise the duration of transition times; deploying additional adults to keep selected pupils on-task; as well as using pair talk to ensure every pupil was engaged in discussion.

Importantly, trainees and NQTs recognise that maintaining good behaviour is inextricably linked to the quality of teaching. Lesson planning regularly takes account of the potential for chosen activities to cause disruption with annotations showing the steps planned to minimise these. Implicit within the approaches used by all those observed was the consistent reinforcement of high expectations and the establishment of appropriate rules and routines. Some trainees and NQTs also showed particular skill in modulating their voice or using non-verbal gestures, such as signalling with a hand or moving to stand closer to a particular pupil, to address emerging concerns without stopping the flow of the lesson. For example, one trainee spoke at almost a whisper at the beginning of the lesson to draw pupils into the learning but was equally able to lower their tone and speak more forcefully to reiterate their expectations when one pupil was not following the agreed rules.

Knowledge and awareness of more challenging behaviours, including those linked to special educational needs, bullying and different forms of prejudice, are strong. Although trainees and NQTs feel that they are not as well-prepared to deal with these more extreme behaviours at the beginning of their course, their confidence is rising quickly due to specialist training such as that provided by Stonewall.

The quality of training across the partnership

Trainees and NQTs are very positive about their training experiences in promoting and managing behaviour and this is reflected in the university's own surveys over time. Analysis reveals that of the 191 trainees and NQTs responding to the partnership's own survey, 92% believe their training in managing behaviour was 'very good' or 'good'. Employing headteachers are equally positive with the very large majority believing the NQTs in their school can already manage behaviour well after one term in the classroom. These figures are in stark contrast to the most recent NQT survey data published by the National College for Teaching and

Leadership (NCTL) in November 2014 where only 27 responses were returned, the results of which indicated a dip below the sector norm for this aspect of training.

Centre- and school-based training is well-aligned so that trainees receive a coherent and well-rounded programme of teaching experiences. Behaviour management sessions are presented as both discrete lectures and seminars, such as around behaviour theorists, safeguarding or child protection, as well as being a 'golden thread' that is woven throughout all other modules, demonstrating the importance of high-quality teaching when maintaining discipline and promoting effective learning behaviours. Trainees commented that they found the modelling of behaviour management strategies by some of their tutors during their own lectures particularly beneficial in showing how different approaches are needed at different times.

School-based tasks are used frequently to ensure that the theory from lectures is quickly put into practice within the classroom. All trainees, across the different routes, commented that this was a strength of their training. An impressive feature of school-based training is the range of non-school settings that trainees have the option to experience. Some trainees have undertaken short placements in the education department of museums, while others have gained further insight into behaviour through being placed in pupil referral units, British Forces schools or special schools where they can work with, for example, children with autism. This has allowed them to hone their behaviour management strategies in a diverse range of situations. Trainees commented that they would appreciate similar diversity in the age-range of pupils they can work with across their programmes, to build confidence in dealing with poor behaviour, whether this is in the early years or upper Key Stage 2.

The quality of leadership and management of the ITE partnership

Programme leaders have responded quickly to the negative feedback revealed through the 2014 NQT survey about the quality of behaviour training. A number of enhancements have already been made to the training programme as well as to some of the wider systems and processes used by the partnership to track and support the development of trainees. For instance, the university now monitors trainee outcomes during each placement across all of the *Teachers' Standards* rather than just recording the overall outcome. This has allowed a more forensic analysis of each cohort so that where weaknesses in behaviour management are revealed additional training and support can be provided to enable rapid improvement. The partnership is already able to show that as a result of their swifter, more focussed interventions, fewer trainees are receiving a target about developing their behaviour management skills as their placements progress. As such, actions brought about by the decline in NQT perceptions are already having a positive impact on the current cohort of trainees.

Leaders have sharpened the guidance given to school-based mentors about judging the effectiveness of trainees' behaviour management. Examples of meaningful targets to support trainees' development in this area are particularly appreciated. They have allowed trainees to get to the heart of their difficulties quickly and provided useful suggestions to use with the pupils in their class. Progress against trainees' targets is systematically reviewed because the pro forma used by the partnership ensure that behaviour management is discussed and evaluated after each observation of teaching. Leaders have ensured that the quality of trainees' behaviour management is a constant priority.

Action planning is thorough and highlights improvements to behaviour training as a focus. Leaders are already adding their impact data, based on the frequent gathering of trainees' perceptions, to these plans to show the level of their success as each term passes. However, leaders are aware that further work is needed in setting ambitious targets at the beginning of the improvement cycle so that they can determine whether actions are making as big a difference to trainee outcomes and perceptions as they would like.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your ITE partnership. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Lee Owston
Her Majesty's Inspector