

# Brunel University London Initial Teacher Education Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 27–29 April 2015

Stage 2: 28–30 September 2015

This inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty’s Inspectors and two additional inspectors in accordance with the ‘Initial teacher education inspection handbook’. This handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from April 2015.

The inspection draws on evidence from each phase and separate route 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
<b>Overall effectiveness</b> How well does the partnership secure consistently high quality outcomes for trainees?	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
The outcomes for trainees	1	1
The quality of training across the partnership	1	1
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	1	1

## Overview of the ITE partnership

The overall effectiveness of the ITE partnership is outstanding in both the primary and secondary ITE partnerships.

This is because the partnership closely monitors the quality of training, forensically evaluates the impact of that training on trainee outcomes and quickly adjusts the work of the partnership to drive up the attainment of trainees. The partnership between the university and schools is exceptionally strong because all involved are working collaboratively to improve pupil outcomes. The educational and curriculum expertise available across the partnership leads the professional development of school staff at all levels, from newly qualified teachers through to developing the work of school senior leaders. School partners are proud to be involved with Brunel. The partnership has a strong capacity to further improve, marked out by flexibility as it adapts to the rapidly changing scene of ITE provision.

Two key features stand out as characteristics of Brunel-trained teachers; their ability to evaluate the impact of their teaching on the progress of pupils and their breadth of experience in a range of teaching strategies and classroom contexts. The diverse range of schools, including those in challenging settings, with high proportions of disadvantaged learners, ensures that trainees have the necessary breadth and depth of teaching practice that qualifies them to substantially exceed the minimum level of practice expected in the teachers' standards.

### Key findings

- The partnerships' commitment to raising aspirations and achievement at all levels in the region – from children through to mature adult learners.
- The strong focus on equality and inclusion for under-represented groups, reflected in the wide cultural, ethnic, gender and age diversity of the trainees and in the wide range of contexts of the partnership schools.
- The high employment rates for trainees, meeting local recruitment needs exceptionally well including for schools in challenging circumstances.
- Course leaders', mentors' and tutors' detailed understanding of trainees' personal and professional needs which is used to provide personalised activities that ensures most trainees progress rapidly.

### **To improve the ITE partnership should:**

- Raise the attainment of secondary trainees to match those in the primary phase.

### **Information about this ITE partnership**

- The partnership provides initial teacher education in both primary and secondary phases in the west of greater London. There are nearly 300 schools involved in the partnership, with all types of schools representing the full range of school contexts, including those in challenging circumstances.
- Currently, all trainees are following a one-year course leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) and achievement of a post graduate certificate in education (PGCE). Most trainees are centrally managed by Brunel University and there are a small number of School Direct (SD) trainees where Brunel is the appointed higher education partner.

## **The primary phase**

### **Information about the primary partnership**

- The primary partnership of Brunel University comprises of approximately 200 schools across a number of local authorities in West London. Partnership schools are a mix of local authority maintained, academy, trust and special schools.
- The university also provides an undergraduate BA course in contemporary education. This route does not offer qualified teacher status (QTS). Trainees wishing to gain qualified teacher status undertake a one year, full-time Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). At the time of stage 2 of the inspection there were 125 trainees enrolled for this qualification.
- The university also offers a small number of School Direct placements. This is a school-led route leading to QTS and a PGCE. At stage 1 of the inspection, eight trainees were following either a non-salaried or salaried route.

### **Information about the primary ITE inspection**

- The primary inspection was conducted by the same three inspectors for both stages of the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the teaching of 16 trainees, in eight schools, during stage 1 of the inspection and the teaching of 18 newly qualified teachers (NQTs), in nine schools, during stage 2. Inspectors also visited three secondary or special schools as part of the alternative training experience for trainees. At stage 1, inspectors met with a further seven trainees in schools and with 16 trainees at the university. At stage 2, inspectors met with a further six NQTs in schools and with 17 trainees at the university. Discussions were held with recently qualified teachers who had completed their training at Brunel University during the last two or three years. Inspectors also met with school-based mentors, headteachers, class teachers, professional tutors and leaders and managers from the university.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of evidence, including work in pupils' books, trainees' files, course handbooks, development plans, data on trainees' progress and attainment, completion and employment rates, and evidence of the partnership's self-evaluation, including that for 2015/16. Inspectors checked that the necessary statutory requirements for safeguarding and initial teacher training (ITT) were met.

- Inspectors took account of 67 responses to NQT surveys from 2012–14 and 93 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire. Inspectors also reviewed the partnerships’ own trainee evaluations of the programme and information on the university’s website.

### **Inspection team**

Richard Light HMI, lead inspector  
Judith Rundle OI, assistant lead inspector  
David Carter HMI, team inspector

### **Overall effectiveness**

**Grade: 1**

### **The key strengths of the primary partnership are:**

- The high proportion of trainees who reach an outstanding level of practice in their teaching.
- The highly reflective, confident trainees and NQTs who know exactly what to do to improve the quality of their teaching.
- The high employment rates and contribution of the partnership in meeting local recruitment needs exceptionally well.
- The high quality selection and recruitment process for all groups, especially those from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- The carefully designed training provided by the university and the partnership which prepares trainees exceptionally well for the demands of teaching.
- The personal and professional conduct of trainees and NQTs that ensures that they contribute successfully to working in primary school settings and is rated very highly by the employing school leaders.
- The extensive choice, contrast and range of placements offered, including schools in challenging contexts and settings, which prepares trainees very well for the rigours of day-to-day teaching.
- The effective focus of curriculum enhancement training on school-based priorities enables trainees to contribute successfully to their placement schools’ improvement and strengthens partnership working considerably.
- The detailed knowledge of trainees’ personal and professional needs held by leaders and managers which helps them to plan activities that ensure trainees progress rapidly and achieve their potential.

- The close attention to detail by leaders and managers that ensures very accurate self-evaluation, combined with the careful use of data and feedback from all involved in the partnership, and the effective way this is used to bring about rapid changes to the quality of training, leadership and management and improve the proportion of trainees attaining the highest levels.

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

### **The partnership should:**

- make effective use of the new systems put in place to signpost best practice across the partnership and to bring about even higher outcomes for all working in partnership schools.

## **Inspection judgements**

1. All trainees who successfully complete the courses exceed the minimum level of performance as outlined in the teachers' standards. Over the last three years nearly three quarters of trainees met the highest grades awarded by the university. All trainees and NQTs seen on inspection demonstrate teaching that is consistently good, with some that is outstanding. All trainees demonstrate effective management of pupil behaviour which is strengthened by their consistent delivery of interesting lessons that engage and motivate pupils. There is no difference between the attainment of trainees of different groups or on different programmes.
2. Trainees are chosen very carefully. Despite a reduction in the numbers recruited nationally for teacher training courses, the university has successfully recruited a high number of applicants for 2015/16. The rigorous and thorough recruitment process is tailored exceptionally well to meet local needs. Strong pastoral and academic support by university staff supplements this process well. Effective support is given to trainees who, for whatever reason, have trouble completing the course. Additional time along with extra support through buddy systems, online learning or placements near to their homes is provided. The vast majority of these trainees successfully complete their training, exceed the minimum standards and secure employment. This is one reason why completion and employment rates for all groups are well above the national average.
3. Trainees and NQTs display exceptionally strong personal and professional qualities. They are highly reflective, thoughtful and able to identify very specific steps they need to take to improve their teaching. They are supported in this process by the very careful monitoring of their progress

throughout all aspects of their training by partnership leaders. Trainees and NQTs illustrate an excellent ability to review their teaching both between and, increasingly, within lessons to ensure they have the greatest impact on pupils' learning.

4. Trainees and NQTs display a very secure knowledge and understanding about childhood development, how children learn and how to plan for their next steps in learning. Trainees are particularly confident teaching phonics and early reading to those pupils from ethnic minority groups or who speak English as an additional language. Careful attention is given to all pupils during these sessions to ensure their language develops at a rapid rate. Interesting and imaginative lessons capture pupils' interest and motivate them to try out new sounds or attempt unfamiliar words confidently. Up-to-date information is provided to ensure trainees and NQTs are very aware of the revised assessment guidelines in the National Curriculum. By the end of the course, trainees and NQTs are well versed in articulating clearly what gains in knowledge, skills or understanding pupils have made in their learning.
5. The quality of training is meeting the needs of trainees and local schools exceptionally well. The wide range of school settings, including those areas of socio-economic disadvantage, allows trainees to develop their teaching practice to meet the needs of pupils from all backgrounds.
6. Early identification of trainees' skills and information gleaned during the induction process is used very carefully to provide bespoke training for individuals. Clear, precise and detailed documentation for mentors sets out trainee's existing strengths, and areas that need further development. Mentors therefore are very aware of what they need to do to promote high outcomes for trainees and the children they teach. Specific targets for development are systematically built upon to plan activities to support trainees' professional development. This level of detail is carried over to employing schools. Accurate and detailed information is provided in a transition plan, to support the induction and continuing professional development of training as trainees become NQTs. School leaders report they are already using this information to identify future leadership opportunities in their schools.
7. Trainees and NQTs display a good level of knowledge of safeguarding, child protection and equal opportunities. They articulate a strong understanding of how schools can tackle issues such as homophobic bullying or those related to e-safety and the use of mobile technologies. Recent training by the Metropolitan Police on the Prevent strategy has been well received by trainees and staff in partnership schools. Consequently, those spoken to during the inspection illustrated a heightened understanding of the process of radicalisation and what to do if a pupil showed signs of extremist views.

8. School-based mentors observe trainees regularly and meet with them weekly to review their progress against targets set. Analyses of a range of indicators such as lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work are evaluative and link directly to the teachers' standards. Assessment of trainees' performance over time is accurate. Mentors focus closely on pupils' prior attainment, the planned activities to build on their achievements and the progress pupils' make over time. The partnership's quality assurance procedures have ensured that mentors are increasingly accurate in their judgements. Subtle and minor variations in the quality of feedback seen at stage 1 of the inspection have been quickly addressed through additional guidance, training and quality assurance activities.
9. Trainees with particular skills are identified quickly. Training is made available for them through curriculum enhancement programmes which extend and sharpen their skills further. Many trainees and former trainees cited the curriculum enhancement training as a prime motive for selecting the course. School leaders are equally positive in their praise for this practical aspect of the training. Planned activities focus solely on school priorities as identified in their school action plans. Action Research is used to inform and influence school-based practice. Such activities enhance trainees' contribution to school improvements and, in turn, strengthen the quality and impact of the work between the university and partner schools. In addition, the curriculum enhancement activities develop trainees' skills and confidence at two extremes; they extend and challenge those who are already confident with strong subject knowledge and help those who are less confident to rapidly build their skills.
10. Core training elements of the course are built on well through specialist enhanced routes. Training based on core movement skills in physical education (PE) leads to confident delivery of lessons and wider aspects of teamwork. Professional learning activities are used to refine trainees' knowledge in specific subject areas and enhanced well through specific alternative training activities such as catering for disabled pupils or those with special educational needs. The training for mathematics is designed well. The programme draws on recent research in mathematics and practical resource materials that trainees can use to develop their teaching skills while on placement.
11. Serving school practitioners routinely deliver taught aspects of the course. Trainees report that this makes training 'real and relevant'. Specialist staff also deliver key learning aspects such as those associated with special educational needs. This approach, combined with the opportunity for additional experiences in special schools, enables trainees to become knowledgeable in how to ensure that these pupils learn and make good progress in their class.
12. Action planning is rooted in detailed, analytical and accurate self-evaluation. A very strong sense of collaboration exists across all aspects of



the partnership, at all levels. University leaders use a wide range of strategies to gather information and feedback from partnership management group members, staff, school-based mentors and leaders, trainees and NQTs. Feedback is shared in a transparent manner and collective actions planned. As a result of this open and honest approach, combined with the willingness to make rapid changes based on feedback, leaders respond very successfully to changes. All representative groups feel fully valued and involved in developments.

13. University leaders responded decisively to feedback from stage 1 of the inspection. Revised mentoring guidelines, training and documentation have been introduced. Further support for NQTs has been enhanced with training available for accreditation at masters level. Information gathered on expertise across the partnership has been drawn together and is now ready to be shared to signpost the best practice for school staff and trainees. All these actions illustrate a determined capacity to secure further improvements.

## **Annex: Partnership schools**

The following schools were visited to observe trainees' and newly qualified teachers' teaching:

Cedars Manor School, Harrow, Middlesex  
Chesham Bois Church of England Combined School, Amersham, Buckinghamshire  
Cranford Park Academy, Hayes Middlesex  
Glebe Primary School, Harrow, Middlesex  
Harefield Junior School, Uxbridge, Middlesex  
Hewens School, Hayes End, Middlesex  
Hillingdon Primary School, Hillingdon, Middlesex  
Horsenden Primary School, Greenford, Middlesex  
Lady Margaret Primary School, Southall, Middlesex  
Langley Hall Primary Academy, Slough, Berkshire  
Montem Academy, Slough, Berkshire  
Rabbsfarm Primary School, Hillingdon, Middlesex  
Selborne Primary School, Greenford, Middlesex  
St Matthews CofE Primary School, West Drayton, Middlesex  
Vaughan First and Middle School, Harrow, Middlesex  
Wood End Park Academy, Hayes, Middlesex  
Yeading Junior School, Hayes, Middlesex

## The secondary phase

### Information about the secondary partnership

- The secondary partnership of Brunel University comprises of approximately 80 schools across 24 local authorities in London and the Home Counties. Partnership schools are a mix of local authority maintained, academy, trust and special schools.
- Trainees wishing to gain qualified teacher status undertake a one year, full-time Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). At the time of stage 1 of the inspection there were 48 trainees enrolled for this qualification. A further five trainees were following either a non-salaried or salaried School Direct route.
- There are courses in business studies, computer science and information and communications technology, English, physical education, physics with mathematics, mathematics, science with biology, science with chemistry and science with physics.

### Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- The secondary inspection was conducted by the same lead inspector, with a different assistant lead inspector during stage 1 and stage 2 of the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the teaching of 10 trainees, in six schools, during stage 1 of the inspection and the teaching of nine newly qualified teachers (NQTs), in three schools, during stage 2. At stage 1, inspectors met with a further four trainees in schools. Inspectors also met with recently qualified teachers who had completed their training at Brunel University during the last two or three years. Inspectors interviewed school-based mentors, headteachers, class teachers, professional tutors and leaders and managers from the university. Inspectors observed mentors delivering training feedback following jointly observed lessons of trainees.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books, trainees' files, course handbooks, developments plans, data on trainees' progress and attainment, completion and employment rates. Inspectors also took account of evidence of the partnership's self-evaluation, including that for 2015/16. Inspectors checked that the necessary statutory requirements for safeguarding and initial teacher training (ITT) were met.
- Inspectors took account of 16 responses to NQT surveys from 2012–13 and 41 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors also reviewed the partnership's own trainee evaluations of the programme and information on the university's website.

## **Inspection team**

Brian Cartwright HMI, overall lead inspector and secondary lead

Michael Maddison OI, assistant lead, (stage 1)

Terry Russell OI, assistant lead, (stage 2)

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Grade: 1**

### **The key strengths of the secondary partnership are:**

- The effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in evaluating and then acting swiftly to improve training provision in the context of rapid change in the range of subject courses offered and numbers of allocated places.
- The strong impact on school improvement in partnership schools through collaborative high quality professional development of their teachers led by the university.
- The relentless focus on equality of opportunity for trainees and their pupils, supported by the partnership's diverse range of schools coupled with high quality, equitable recruitment of trainees from different heritages, genders and age groups.
- The consistently very high quality of mentor training, training resources and support for school-based mentors and tutors which centres on maximising the impact of trainees' teaching on pupil progress.
- The efficient personalisation of training programmes to meet trainees' individual learning needs, including complementary placements, subject knowledge enhancement programmes and regular high-quality developmental feedback to trainees both orally and in writing.
- The strong rise in the proportion of trainees gaining employment as teachers over time, which reached full employment of all newly qualified secondary teachers from the 2014/15 course.
- The outward-looking professional attitudes of newly qualified teachers that allows them to rapidly become fully engaged in all of the work of their employing school, including tutoring and extra-curricular programmes.
- The significant improvement in trainee outcomes since the previous inspection, resulting in all trainees substantially exceeding the minimum

level of practice expected in the Teachers' Standards, and with many excelling.

- The high levels of subject knowledge deployed by trainees to captivate and sustain pupil interest, with the consequent high standards of behaviour-management by trainees and NQTs in a wide range of settings.
- The highly proficient skills of lesson evaluation by trainees that consistently assesses the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning, especially upon disadvantaged groups of pupils and the most able.

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

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

- further improve the proportion of trainees demonstrating excellent practice in the majority of the standards for teaching
- refine the support strategies for trainees already taking place to further reduce the proportion of trainees who withdraw from the course before completing their studies.

### **Inspection judgements**

1. Leadership and management are outstanding. Leaders and managers at all levels, with excellent support and challenge of the partnership management group, conduct highly skilled ongoing evaluation of all aspects of the training programme. The information they gather drives swift and effective action for improving the outcomes for trainees. A key strength is the high quality of professional development for mentors and tutors, which ensures consistently outstanding training in school and at the university. As a result, trainee attainment has risen substantially since the previous inspection; all trainees gain employment at the end of their courses and previous differences in attainment between older and younger trainees have been eliminated. There are now no significant differences in outcomes between different subject strands. All trainees teach well, many exceptionally so. The partnership has demonstrated an outstanding capacity for improving trainee outcomes over time such that now outcomes are outstanding.
2. There is a close alignment between the university and school partners' vision for initial teacher training, notably in the priority they give to using pupil progress as the key determinant of trainee teaching quality. Mentors are skilled at identifying how well trainees teach because they

focus relentlessly on the impact of that teaching on the learning of pupils in the class. This key concept is deeply embedded in the training programme and in the consistently high quality of professional development for school mentors and tutors. The progress made by different groups of pupils is recorded by trainees after every lesson, as part of the lesson-planning paperwork. Tutors observing the lesson also note the progress of pupils, and what is helping or hindering that progress. The information informs the activities that the trainees use in the next lesson to build on the progress their pupils have made. At the weekly mentor-led tutorials, the progress of pupils is at the heart of discussion about the effectiveness of the trainees' teaching, and this leads to targets for the trainees which focus on activities to accelerate individual pupil progress or strategies to address particular groups of pupils. This excellent focus on pupil progress brings about effective improvement in trainees' achievement and is the key factor in ensuring outstanding outcomes for trainees.

3. As the trainees become more experienced, their analysis of pupil learning becomes more instinctive and timely, allowing them to adjust their teaching during the lesson itself. They tell pupils how well they are learning, and what they should do next to extend their learning. Part of that includes marking and feedback to pupils, which trainees do well. As a result, their pupils make good or better progress over time. Trainees therefore become expert at analysing their own teaching, through their ongoing assessment of how their pupils are learning. This high-quality effective self-evaluation of teaching marks out Brunel-qualified teachers and is one of the major reasons why employing schools seek to recruit these staff.
4. The partnership incorporates a wide range of different kinds of schools, including academies, special schools, selective schools and faith schools. Trainees will teach pupils from every background, faith, and circumstance. The partnership schools value the diversity of experience of their new recruits very highly because, as one head teacher put it, 'these new teachers are outward looking'. Trainees are already used to full participation in the life of the school. This is a second exceptionally valuable professional attribute and much sought-after by employing schools.
5. The university's mission is to improve life chances for the people in its regional community; school partners embrace this vision and see themselves as agents for maximising opportunities for their pupils irrespective of the very varied backgrounds and communities from where pupils come. As a result, there is genuine and enthusiastic collaboration across the partnership which is helping in wider school improvement activities. Partner schools are accessing the expertise of the university for training all of their staff, not just mentors, through ongoing professional development and training. All parties benefit from

this vibrant synthesis of academic educational expertise with pragmatic teaching practice from a wide range of settings. Newly qualified teachers retain very strong links with university tutors, including continuing access to centre-based resources, which allows effective further gains in subject and pedagogical understanding.

6. The partnership's recruitment and selection process is effective in matching trainees to suitable programmes. The involvement of school staff in recruitment is working well and is refining the ability of selecting trainees that will be successful in schools. Partner schools see this as excellent training for their senior leaders and mentors as subject specialists. The provider exceeds sector averages for recruiting from minority ethnic backgrounds and matches the regional population profile. The proportion of mature trainees is about the same as younger trainees and now mirrors the national ratio. The proportion of male to female trainees is the same as the sector proportion.
7. The recruitment process fully meets safeguarding of children requirements. Brunel University's central recruitment department is expert at conducting checks on students. It is alert to contemporary concerns including working closely with the Metropolitan Police and the 'Prevent' team. This expertise is shared with partnership schools and valued highly by them. Trainees receive centrally based information on child protection and also local updates from their placement schools. This is effective; some trainees have reported concerns to their schools' designated child protection teacher because their training has made them aware of possible signs to look out for.
8. Successful candidates are assessed for any additional subject knowledge enhancement needs. These are systematically and successfully addressed through centre-based sessions, individual research and bespoke tuition from university tutors or subject mentors. As a result, trainees have excellent subject knowledge, which they use to good effect in securing an interesting classroom learning ethos. This is a significant factor in contributing to the overwhelmingly strong behaviour-management skills of trainees.
9. Trainees teach well, with all able to deliver good teaching over time by the end of training and many providing outstanding teaching over time. Trainees show high levels of commitment to improving their teaching skills and contribute as new professionals to making a positive difference to pupils. This is because mentors, course tutors and leaders, and the partnership schools model high expectations and high professional standards. The regular high-quality review and evaluation carried out by subject tutors, school-based professional tutors, senior leaders of schools in the partnership and centre-based programme managers

secures outstanding training across the partnership, that continues onto outstanding ongoing professional development of NQTs.

10. The subject expertise of mentors is also boosted by their involvement with university subject expertise, resulting in a powerful combination of practical experience with an ever deepening understanding of learning pedagogy by mentors. This allows mentors and tutors to clearly explain the connections between teaching and learning. Trainees are therefore not blindly following a recipe, but become familiar with a range of teaching techniques that they can choose to use in various circumstances to maximise pupil progress. School leaders are very aware and appreciative of the benefit the mentor training is having on improving their overall school teaching quality and this is a key reason for them to maintain a close partnership with Brunel.
11. Assignments are well matched to individual training needs, especially the assignments carried out in schools. Trainees work with their mentors to choose a theme that will benefit the school as much as the trainee, which means the content of the assignments is relevant and again linked directly to pupils' outcomes. This allows trainees to research pedagogy in a relevant practical context in their schools. These assignments are presented formally to partnership management group members, which in turn cements the benefits to all parties. This gives them a real research purpose and allows the partnership management group to help shape future general assignment themes. There is, for example, a growing recognition of the value of shared primary/secondary working such that the previous separate phase partnership management groups have merged and have representatives from both phases. All trainees carry out a professional learning activity on 'transition' from primary to secondary school, which contributes both to their own awareness of the primary curriculum and that of their placement schools. It helps trainees make better use of primary performance data in planning lessons that challenge and stretch pupils in Year 7. It also helps their preparation to be tutors, as they become aware of the variety of backgrounds, needs and circumstances of pupils before they begin secondary school. NQTs become effective tutors quickly, and employing schools trust them with these pastoral duties from the outset.
12. Centre-based sessions are important elements in ensuring trainees learn about the bigger picture of education; safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' agenda; British values; how to prepare for different abilities and backgrounds of pupils; special needs; tackling bullying; their own personal e-safety and preparation for interview. Trainees all said these are helping them to develop a confident understanding of the issues. Some trainees interviewed by inspectors at stage 1 suggested that more practical examples to illustrate the ideas would help, especially in the

early sessions where trainees have not had much experience of school life and contexts with which to link to the theory.

13. In response to this feedback, the partnership has introduced centre-based sessions led by lead practitioners from a range of settings, who illustrate their jobs and main features of working in pupil referral units, the secure prison education system, special schools and university technology colleges. The taught programme started earlier in the term this year in order to increase the time for this extra training. The recent exit survey of trainees at the end of 2014/15 shows very high satisfaction, including preparedness to teach in different settings. Earlier NQT surveys, although positive overall, had highlighted this aspect as an area that could have been better.
14. Trainees take opportunities to develop their pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well. For example, a science NQT was asking pupils to summarise the main features from a range of infamous nuclear radiation incidents. The pupils extracted information from news reports about the events, then summarised their research. By using these interesting contexts and the original text, pupils developed their reading and understanding skills, and then their ability to summarise succinctly; all along their attention had been captured because of the interesting science context. In a physical education lesson, pupils measured and recorded their 'standing jump' distances so that they could show improving results as their technique developed. They also used tablets to video their attempts, leading to excellent peer-to-peer discussion and subsequent improvements in their technique using technical language and the keywords given to them by their teacher.
15. Trainees develop very good strategies for managing pupil behaviour, including their use of excellent subject knowledge in order to maintain pupils' interest in the lesson and therefore keep pupils concentrating on their learning. This quality is affirmed by their employing schools. Training on how to teach pupils with a wide range of special educational needs, and pupils whose first language that is not English is thorough. It includes expert centre-based learning from specialist providers, and in-placement experience because schools have large proportions of pupils in these groups and vast experience of supporting these pupils. Trainees therefore quickly develop their own skills and adapt their teaching to meet the needs of these pupils very well.
16. There is also specific centre-based training for teaching the most-able pupils. Trainees plan some activities to meet the needs of this group of learners, but occasionally these are not always actually very challenging. Trainees and NQTs sometimes are unsure how to respond to a really good 'incoming' question from a most-able pupil. These situations are more prone to occur in lessons that have been so tightly structured with



short timed tasks that there is no time for teachers to fully respond to the pupil's question in depth.

17. A priority for the secondary partnership is to further raise the proportion of trainees who attain the highest grades awarded by the partnership. Attainment has risen strongly since the previous inspection and now around two fifths of trainees achieve the highest grade. At the same time, there have been decreasing numbers of trainees who simply 'met' the required teachers' standards, so that in 2015 no trainee merely meets requirements; all exceed and many excel. The success in eliminating these minimum outcomes arose through early intervention by mentors as a result of more regular assessment of trainees' progress against the teaching standards. The success of this element of the high-quality training overall now needs to focus on improving the outcomes of those trainees who start well in terms of quickly exceeding minimum requirements in their first placement. The partnership is targeting even higher outcomes for these trainees in their later practice, and can already point to previous success in raising the attainment of most aspects of every trainees' performance, even if for some this did not result in shifting their final attainment to the highest level.
18. Since the previous inspection, the range of subjects offered has reduced. In particular, the number training to teach English or physical education has reduced. Now, the predominant subject areas are STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). Despite these substantial changes, the partnership has continued to improve overall outcomes for trainees to outstanding.
19. Completion rates, which are the ratio of trainees who qualify compared with the numbers who start the course, compare favourably with the overall national figures and with regional benchmarks, and in different subjects, especially for STEM subjects. Nevertheless, although improving over time, the overall completion rate is not quite as strong as in the primary phase. The partnership is acutely aware of this, and works expertly and sensitively with all of the individuals concerned to try and mitigate any situations that might lead to trainees withdrawing from the course. The recruitment process is always reviewed in the light of a withdrawal to see if anything in the initial selection and interview material gave an indication of a potential concern. In every case, the reasons for withdrawal have been personal to the trainee, and are not related to poor progress on the course itself. Placements can be changed part-way through a semester, or adapted by changing timetables, or individual coaching and the support provided. Trainees and their placement mentors and tutors speak consistently well of the quality of this support; it is another testament to the outstanding quality of leadership as it embeds this high level of care through the partnership. A recent successful approach has been to 'buddy' trainees,

whose circumstances such as child-care arrangements and travel time put additional pressures on their training, with NQTs from previous years who experienced similar challenges. This is already helping to increase the proportion of more mature trainees gaining the highest final grade and is expected to also improve completion rates in 2015/16.

## **Annex: Partnership schools**

The following schools were visited to observe trainees' and newly qualified teachers' teaching:

Ark Academy, Wembley  
Barnhill Community High School, Hillingdon  
Bishop Ramsey CofE School, Ruislip  
The Chalfonts Community College, Gerrards Cross  
The Chauncy School, Ware  
Douay Martyrs Catholic Academy, Ickenham  
Featherstone High School, Southall  
The Guru Nanak Sikh Academy, Hayes  
Herschel Grammar School, Slough  
Northwood High School, Northwood  
Queensmead High School, South Ruislip  
Wexham School, Slough

## **ITE partnership details**

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**Lead inspector: Brian Cartwright HMI**

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**Provider address:**

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