

Middlesex University ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 13 June 2016

Stage 2: 7 November 2016

This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors and Ofsted 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 September 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.

	Early years ITT (EYTS)	Primary QTS	Secondary QTS
Overall effectiveness How well does the partnership secure consistently high-quality outcomes for trainees?	2	2	2
The outcomes for trainees	2	2	2
The quality of training across the partnership	2	2	2
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	2	2	2

Overview of the ITE partnership

The overall effectiveness of the ITE partnership is good in early years ITT, good in primary ITT and good in secondary ITT.

This is because the individualised care, guidance and support for trainees across all phases helps trainees to attain consistently well in their teaching. The partnership has ensured that provision has continued to develop and take account of national priorities and regional priorities. The new early years provision has been developed well, taking the effective and well-established systems and processes from the primary and secondary phases and adapting them to the needs of the early years trainees. Consequently, the partnership is graded good in all aspects of their work.

Key findings

- Rates of employment are high across the partnership. The partnership has a high proportion of trainees who stay within providers in the partnership. These are very often settings with high proportions of disadvantaged children. Trainees are diverse in their range of backgrounds and nearly always complete their training as good or outstanding practitioners. Consequently, the partnership is making a significant contribution to the education workforce for London.
- Regular communication is maintained between the partnership, training schools, employers, trainees, and those who have completed training. Stakeholders feel the university is responsive to their feedback and that they respond quickly to suggestions.
- Tutor support for current and former trainees is strong. Tutors typically build a strong rapport with trainees. Tutors skilfully tailor their work to the individual needs of trainees, providing challenge and support as required. Trainees are encouraged to develop their own support networks with peers, sharing resources and ideas. As a result, trainees are confident and able to seek advice and help after they have completed training. The university continues to support trainees after their training is complete.
- Across the early years ITT, primary and secondary phases, trainees demonstrate high standards of personal and professional conduct.

To improve the ITE partnership should:

- reduce the number of trainees who do not complete their training within the usual one-year timescale.

Information about this ITE partnership

- Middlesex University ITE partnership works with a range of education settings across London and local education authorities beyond the capital, such as Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Essex.
- The partnership supports approximately 400 trainees on a range of routes to qualified teacher status (QTS) and early years teacher status (EYTS). These comprise undergraduate, postgraduate, School Direct and Assessment Only routes.
- The partnership comprises schools and early years settings which serve ethnically and linguistically diverse communities. A large majority of these settings provide trainees with practical experience of working in challenging socio-economic contexts.

The early years ITT phase

Information about the early years ITT partnership

- This is the second year that the early years ITT partnership has delivered training for graduates leading to early years teacher status (EYTS). EYTS is awarded to graduates who have been judged to have met all of the teachers' standards (early years). Some former trainees are already successfully leading care and education in schools or settings.
- In 2015/16, 25 trainees followed the graduate employment based route, 10 followed the graduate route and there were three School Direct (early years) trainees. Trainees on these routes to EYTS are also awarded the academic award of the Post Graduate Certificate (PGCert).
- The partnership works with around 100 early years settings or schools across many London authorities and authorities in surrounding counties.

Information about the early years ITT inspection

- One of Her Majesty's Inspectors conducted the stage 1 inspection. Another of Her Majesty's Inspectors conducted the stage 2 inspection.
- The inspector visited three schools or settings at stage 1 of the inspection. She observed four trainees, three jointly with their mentors, and observed mentors giving feedback. She observed one trainee jointly with her link tutor and observed the tutor giving feedback. She held discussions with trainees, mentors, link tutors and setting managers. She also reviewed the trainees' evidence files.
- The inspector at stage 1 of the inspection met with leaders, tutors, mentors and partnership colleagues, including members of the advisory board.
- The inspector at stage 2 of the inspection visited four settings or schools. She observed four former trainees, two jointly with their former mentors. She met with mentors and managers and reviewed evidence in trainees' files. She also held telephone discussions with two new mentors and three former trainees. She met with programme leaders and tutors.
- At both stages of the inspection, the inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including recruitment and selection procedures, course information, assessment information, mentor and link tutor handbooks, partnership agreements, self-evaluation documents and improvement plans and the partnership's analysis of trainees' outcomes. Inspectors

reviewed documentation relating to compliance with statutory safeguarding and early years ITT requirements.

Inspection team

Jane Burchall, HMI
Wendy Ratcliff, HMI

Early years lead inspector, stage 1 only
Early years lead inspector, stage 2 only

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the early years ITT partnership are:

- Leaders regularly evaluate the programme and take prompt action to make changes where needed. They have an accurate view of what the partnership does well and where it needs to improve. They continually develop systems and processes to improve the effectiveness of the programme. For example, leaders have strengthened the recruitment process of trainees to the employment route this year so employers are clear on the commitments they need to make to release trainees for contrasting placements.
- The training programme helps trainees to gain a secure knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and develop. The programme timetable is flexible and the programme team adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of the trainees and to respond to changes in the sector. Centre-based training includes a good mix of theory, research and developments affecting the early years sector. This helps trainees to influence current practice in schools or settings.
- Early years trainees are prepared well for their roles to teach across the birth to five age range. They demonstrate a secure understanding of how to meet children's emotional needs. Early years trainees build good relationships with children and provide them with inviting and enjoyable learning experiences.
- The training programme is effective in helping trainees to have a good understanding of how to identify and address the learning needs of different groups of children. These groups include: boys, funded two-year-olds, children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The programme team has developed effective partnership working with the early years sector. Local providers influence the development of the programme through their role on the advisory board. They offer good-quality placements for trainees and some share their expertise further by delivering seminars. For example, the partnership is working jointly

with Barnet Early Years Alliance (BEYA) to provide continued professional development for early years teachers in their first year of teaching.

What does the early years ITT partnership need to do to improve further?

The partnership should:

- improve the quality and consistency of mentoring so that all trainees have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their teaching and the impact on children's learning
- continue to build on partnership working so current good practice in mentoring is used more widely to help mentors, link tutors and trainees to improve the impact of their work
- fully implement revised systems for monitoring the progress of trainees so that those who need additional support to reach a higher level are identified more swiftly and more trainees on the graduate employment-based route complete the programme in a timely way.

Inspection judgements

1. The overall effectiveness of the partnership is good. All trainees exceed the minimum requirements as set out in the teachers' standards (early years) by the end of their training. The number of trainees reaching a higher level is improving. In 2015/16, 16 trainees (55%) attained a grade 1 at the end of their programme. Increasing the number of trainees who attain a grade 1 is accurately identified as a priority in the programme's improvement plan.
2. The training programme produces early years teachers who are enthusiastic and passionate about their work with children. Former trainees ensure that children are safe and get off to a good start in their learning. They demonstrate high levels of personal and professional conduct. The partnership is compliant with the early years initial teacher training requirements and meets all other requirements for promoting equality and diversity and eliminating discrimination.
3. Arrangements for the recruitment and selection of trainees are thorough and ensure that safeguarding requirements are met. Recruitment and selection features as a target in the provision's improvement plan, with a clear focus on ensuring robust selection of trainees with potential to be at least good teachers, rather than merely increasing the number of trainees.
4. In 2015/16, nine (23%) trainees did not complete the course by end of the academic year. However, three have since gone on to complete the course, one deferred and five withdrew. In all cases the 'cause for concern' process was followed and reasons for withdrawal, extension, or delay were understandable. However, the university recognises that the progress of individual trainees

needs to be checked more frequently. It is in an early stage of implementing revised systems to monitor progress to ensure that those who need extra support to reach a higher level are identified more swiftly and more trainees complete at the end of the graduate employment-based programme.

5. Self-evaluation is robust and accurate. Programme leaders seek the views of trainees and partners to review the success of the programme and take prompt action to address areas for development. They are enthusiastic and have a strong ambition to continually improve the quality of the training programme. They use a range of information to help inform improvement planning. For example, they analyse the data for attainment in individual teachers' standards (early years) to see which areas of trainees' knowledge need to improve. This year has seen an increase in the number of trainees reaching higher grades in standards three and seven as a result of adaptations to centre-based training.
6. The quality of training has a positive impact on the leadership in schools and early years settings. Former trainees in their first year of teaching gain enhanced roles and take on additional responsibilities, such as becoming room leaders or special educational needs coordinators. At the start of the 2015/16 programme, nine former trainees (31%) were in either teacher or leadership roles. This increased to 19 (67%) at the end of the programme. Almost all former trainees are employed as a result of gaining early years teacher status.
7. All trainees have opportunities to work across the birth to five age range in a variety of settings during their training. They value the experience this provides and feel it prepares them well for their future roles. They particularly value the support they get from both the tutors and their mentors and feel that they belong to an 'early years community'. Former trainees explain how placements in schools, combined with centre-based training, have helped them gain a greater understanding of how to teach phonics well.
8. The programme uses a range of good or better schools and early years settings, which provide care and education for different groups of children. This, coupled with focused training, means that former early years trainees know and have a secure understanding of how to identify and address the specific learning needs of different groups of children. Former trainees explain the importance of adapting the learning environment to meet the needs and differing learning styles of different groups of children. They use information about what children can do already and what interests them to plan a range of purposeful activities. This means that children get the most out of learning experiences. For example, in one setting, boys became enthralled in making birthday cakes from play dough and talked about their forthcoming birthday celebrations. The former trainee explained how the programme has given her a greater understanding of how to effectively plan, support and engage boys in their learning.
9. The training programme prepares former trainees well to develop the reading and writing skills of young children. On one visit, very young children enjoyed

the physical and sensory experience of making marks in cornflour dough. The former trainee explained how the training has helped her to plan activities that support children's development in moving and handling and prepare them for their later skills in writing.

10. The study of safeguarding is given high priority and is woven throughout the training programme. There are clear examples where former trainees have positively influenced safeguarding practice in schools and settings. This includes sharing learning from serious case reviews and challenging potentially discriminatory views. This improves staff awareness of British values, the 'Prevent' duty and how to keep children safe from radicalisation and extremism.
11. There remains some variability in the quality of mentoring. Programme leaders recognise the importance of getting the quality of mentoring right and are looking at different strategies to eliminate inconsistencies. A link tutor role has been developed to support gaps in the knowledge of some mentors. This role is still developing and, as a result, there is some variability in the quality of feedback and guidance provided by mentors to trainees. Where mentoring is more effective, mentors are clear in identifying and conveying how early years trainees can improve the quality of their teaching so it is of a consistently high standard.
12. At stage 1 of the inspection, not all mentors and link tutors had a clear understanding of how to apply the partnership's assessment guidance for teachers' standards (early years). The guidance has been revised and is being used with the new cohort of trainees. The small numbers of new mentors who have attended mentor training report a clearer understanding of how to apply the criteria. Though numbers attending mentor training are small, leaders are continually reviewing how support is provided, and good practice is disseminated, in order to eliminate inconsistent practice.
13. Programme leaders are at an early stage of implementing revised systems to establish the starting points of trainees and monitor their progress more frequently. Additional review points are scheduled for this year's programme to identify more quickly any need for additional support for individuals or groups of trainees, so that even more reach a higher level and complete their programme in a timely way. Leaders use moderation meetings for link tutors to help establish a common understanding of the assessment guidance and ensure it is applied consistently.
14. Good partnerships have been established with early years settings and schools to support the effective induction of trainees and former trainees. The 'transition to early years teacher status assessments' are used effectively to target the continued professional development needs of newly qualified teachers. Former trainees use these effectively with their managers in schools and settings to build on their current practice and to identify what they need to do to continue to improve.

15. Programme leaders are working closely with the early years sector to build capacity. For example, they have established relationships with London Early Years Foundation and Barnet Early Years Alliance to provide good-quality placements for trainees. The programme is drawing upon the expertise of the sector, including those who sit on the advisory group, to develop the provision further.

Annex: Partnership settings

The following settings were visited to observe trainees' and former trainees' teaching:

Alpha Bears Nursery
Alyson Shannon Childcare
Brookhill Nursery School
St Margaret's Nursery School
White Rose Childcare
Willow Children's Centre

The primary phase

Information about the primary partnership

- Middlesex University works with approximately 200 primary schools across many London boroughs and extends into local education authorities in counties beyond London. Partnership schools are a mix of local authority maintained, academy, trust, and special schools.
- The university also works in partnership with a significant number of School Direct alliances. At stage 1 of the inspection, 41 primary School Direct trainees were following this route to qualified teacher status (QTS) and the academic award of the PGCert.
- Trainees wishing to gain qualified teacher status in primary undertake a three-year, full-time BA degree. Graduates undertake a one-year, full-time postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) or the School Direct salaried or tuition fee routes. At stage 1 of the inspection there were 125 undergraduate and 55 postgraduate trainees enrolled for this qualification, in addition to the 41 School Direct trainees.
- Trainees can specialise in primary mathematics or science. Many trainees opt to carry out an additional placement in a special school.

Information about the primary ITE inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 schools during this inspection. Three schools were visited in both stage 1 and stage 2. Inspectors observed 19 trainees during stage 1 of the inspection. They observed 14 newly qualified teachers (NQTs) at stage 2, three of whom also attended meetings during stage 2.
- Inspectors held meetings with university leaders, trainees, NQTs, school leaders, and school staff with responsibility for mentoring trainees and mentoring NQTs.
- Inspectors scrutinised and evaluated a wide range of documentation including: the primary self-evaluation document; the primary improvement plan; examples of the transition to teaching documents; results of surveys completed by trainees; and case studies of leaders' actions taken to address key priority areas. In 2015/16, five primary trainees completed the assessment-only route to gain QTS.
- Inspectors checked that the partnership was compliant with the statutory requirements for initial teacher training (ITT).

Inspection team

Jeremy Loukes, HMI
Amanda Carter-Fraser, HMI
Michael Brockett, OI
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Primary phase lead, stage 1 only
Primary phase lead, stage 2 only
Assistant phase lead
Team inspector
Team inspector

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the primary partnership are:

- The large majority of trainees attain an outstanding level of practice by the end of the course. They are well prepared to take on their roles as NQTs.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement across the partnership. They act swiftly and revise strategies to ensure that improvements are made.
- There are strong and positive communications across the partnership. Leaders know trainees well. They respond quickly and effectively when trainees need additional support.
- Leaders' careful selection of placements ensures that trainees gain experience working with pupils from a diversity of backgrounds in a variety of settings.
- Leaders provide accurate and helpful information to schools to support NQTs' successful induction.
- NQTs demonstrate a high level of commitment and uphold high levels of professional standards. NQTs draw productively on their training to rapidly create a positive and engaging learning environment in which their pupils behave well and make good progress. Trainees and NQTs acquire good subject knowledge.
- Mathematics is a strength across the primary provision. Trainees and NQTs develop a secure understanding of complex aspects of the mathematics curriculum. They apply this well to their teaching so that their pupils are challenged appropriately and make good progress.

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

The partnership should:

- ensure that additional initiatives and strategies to reduce rates of deferral are embedded effectively
- ensure that trainees are consistently clear on how they should apply their centre-based training to their practice in schools; for example, safeguarding training and routine planning for groups of pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils.

Inspection judgements

16. The partnership demonstrates a firm commitment to enabling trainees to develop well. Leaders nurture positive relationships between trainees, tutors and schools, maintaining regular and frequent communications. Leaders place a high priority on getting to know individual trainees very well. As a result, they are able to ensure that, where needed, well-considered support for trainees is given. Consequently, 69% of trainees attained grade 1 at the end of their course in 2015/16. Leaders' self-evaluation accurately identifies key areas of strength and those needing improvement. They use feedback and surveys well to adapt existing practice and develop new strategies and inform their action planning.
17. Leaders reflected these high standards in their prompt response to feedback from employers that induction documentation was found generally to be 'useful' rather than 'very useful'. Leaders adapted the partnership's career entry profile accordingly to create a new document, the 'Transition to Teaching Profile'. This is proving to be popular with, and accessible, to schools. It accurately captures the areas in which NQTs need support and their strengths, informing professional development opportunities to support their career aspirations. Trainees appreciate the collaborative approach in putting this document together with their placement school and the university. They also value the opportunity this offers for them to demonstrate evidence against the teachers' standards; as one NQT put it, 'to prove herself'.
18. The partnership's final grading of trainees' achievements and the key areas for improvement are accurate. Leaders track trainees' outcomes carefully so that they identify swiftly those individual standards in which trainees perform less well. Leaders' appropriate actions in adapting centre-based training and raising expectations of school-based training have led to improvements. For example, a sharpened focus on teaching standards relating to: pupils' progress and outcomes; teaching in response to the strengths and needs of pupils; and assessment, has led to increased proportions of trainees attaining grade 1 in these standards in 2015/16.

19. Leaders are approachable and generous with their time in supporting and advising trainees. Trainees value the fact that leaders are widely available to contact when needed. Information, guidance and further training from the university extends into the induction year, described by one NQT as 'an open door'. Some NQTs note how helpful they find the range of resources and training opportunities, such as additional online modules on the portal and a Wiki site, as well as being able to get in touch readily with tutors. A recent conference for NQTs helpfully enabled them to develop their skills and knowledge at this stage in their induction. This boosted their confidence further in aspects of mastery in mathematics, in the use of technology in teaching, cross-curricular links in art and literacy, and managing teacher workload. Trainees and NQTs mutually benefit from NQTs being increasingly involved in university events, such as recruitment days and returning to talk to trainees about their experiences. Leaders would like more NQTs to take up these opportunities. Leaders have identified ways to facilitate NQTs' participation, such as changing the timing and frequency of events this academic year.
20. Leaders ensure that trainees are prepared to teach well. NQTs are ready to embark on their role successfully, and their schools agree. Their practice reflects high levels of achievement in those teachers' standards relating to the wider responsibilities of their profession and their personal and professional conduct. NQTs are well organised, committed, forge positive working relationships with their colleagues, and uphold high professional standards.
21. NQTs draw productively on a wide repertoire of teaching strategies acquired through their training, demonstrating high expectations of pupils' attentiveness and behaviour for learning. They recognise the importance of prompt familiarity with, and consistent use of, their school's behaviour policy, and demonstrate persistence and resilience in promoting positive learning environments.
22. Training enables trainees and NQTs to develop subject knowledge well and draw on a range of teaching strategies appropriately to deliver engaging and purposeful lessons. Inspectors recognised mathematics as a strength at the end of stage 1 of this inspection. In stage 2 of the inspection, it was evident that NQTs felt confident teaching more complex aspects of the mathematics curriculum because of the training and support they have received. This means they are well placed to provide pupils with the right level of challenge so that they make good progress.
23. Leaders select partnership schools so that trainees work in settings strongly committed to the partnership. Placements enable trainees to gain experience working with pupils from a diversity of backgrounds and in a variety of settings. This means they are well placed to pursue positions in a wide range of schools and make successful applications. Many NQTs are employed in the local area and overall employment rates are high compared with national averages.
24. Leaders are rightly mindful of the London regional priority to improve the achievement of key groups of pupils. Leaders ensure that an increased focus in

training has enabled trainees to have an improved awareness of the diversity of backgrounds represented by their pupils. Leaders have also responded to the areas for improvement arising from stage 1 of this inspection. Trainees have better knowledge of the use of pupil premium funding because they have explored the impact of the allocation of the pupil premium in their school. They have shared good practice and ideas of specific ways in which they can support disadvantaged pupils to make better progress. Trainees attend helpful training on challenge for the most-able and support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including time spent on placement in a special school. Leaders have raised expectations that trainees routinely plan for the needs of disadvantaged pupils. This is reflected in leaders' stipulation that the progress of disadvantaged pupils in trainees' classes is a standing item in target-setting meetings with their mentors.

25. There are clear examples of NQTs having the confidence to adapt their planning when they recognise that pupils are ready to move on more quickly. They use questioning skilfully to deepen pupils' thinking. They encourage pupils to persevere with tasks they find difficult, using a wide range of resources and collaborating with each other if they get stuck. However, there is some variation in the effectiveness of NQTs' planning to meet the needs of groups of pupils including disadvantaged pupils.
26. Most trainees report that their knowledge and understanding of teaching phonics has developed well through their experience in schools. There are a few cases when trainees and NQTs have felt less well prepared to teach phonics.
27. The partnership has responded promptly to an area for improvement in stage 1 of the inspection. Trainees benefit from a wide range of training opportunities in both university sessions and school training. Leaders have up-to-date information about safeguarding training undertaken both centrally and in school. Leaders ensure that records of safeguarding training are organised well. The introduction of online materials means that no one misses out if they are absent from a training session. As a result, NQTs are alert to child protection issues and are confident about what they need to do if they have any concerns. However, some NQTS are less sure about how they would apply some aspects of safeguarding training, such as the 'Prevent' duty, to their work in school.
28. There is some variation in achievement between different groups of trainees and training routes. For example, the proportion of minority ethnic trainees and those with specific learning difficulties achieving grade 1 is less than the cohort as a whole. More male than female trainees are achieving grade 1. The proportion of trainees achieving grade 1 through the BA route has declined.
29. There is some variation in levels of recruitment of trainees of key groups. The partnership has successfully increased the proportion of trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds so that it is above national levels. However, the recruitment rate for male trainees has dropped.

30. Leaders reflect sensitively on how to ensure successful placements, forging positive working relationships between trainees and their schools. The introduction of 'culturally responsive teacher' lectures has successfully boosted trainees' knowledge, understanding and confidence working in different settings with colleagues representing backgrounds other than their own. This has contributed to an improvement in the attainment of minority ethnic trainees. The difference in the proportion achieving grade 1 compared with the whole cohort in 2014/15 narrowed in 2015/16.
31. The quality of mentoring for trainees is good. Leaders have very clear expectations with regard to the quality and consistency of mentoring. The partnership's initiatives to reduce variation in mentoring are beginning to have an impact. Tutors carefully evaluate the targets set for trainees at weekly meetings, and provide helpful feedback to mentors so that the quality of written targets improves. The use of the mentors' self-audit and recognition of the partnership's key priorities in target setting are becoming established.
32. The partnership provides trainees with well-tailored additional support when needed that helps most trainees overcome any difficulties. Close communications between university tutors and schools mean that concerns are picked up quickly. Link tutors carry out a valuable role in improving the quality of mentoring. The selection process is thorough to ensure that recruitment is appropriate. However, the rate of deferrals has increased in recent years so the proportion of trainees who complete their course in the time intended has reduced. Leaders have amended their approach to recruitment and selection to facilitate earlier identification of those who might be at risk of deferral. They recognise in their improvement plan that reducing the rate of deferrals continues to be a priority. They have increased the time trainees spend in school during the autumn term and introduced further initiatives to boost trainees' resilience. However, these actions are in too early a stage to demonstrate impact in reducing rates of deferrals.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe trainees' and former trainees' teaching:

Ashmount Primary School, Islington
Aylward Primary School, Harrow
Barham Primary School, Brent
Bowes Primary School and Nursery, Enfield
Broadfields Primary School, Barnet
Brook House Primary School, Haringey
Carterhatch Junior School, Enfield
Chesterfield Primary and Nursery School, Enfield
Cromer Road Primary School, Barnet
Fairway Primary School, Barnet

Fleecefield Primary and Nursery School, Enfield
Frith Manor Primary and Nursery School, Barnet
Grange Park Primary, Enfield
Livingstone Primary School, Barnet
Newport School, Waltham Forest
Oakington Manor, Brent
Raynham Primary School, Enfield
Risley Avenue Primary School, Haringey
St Andrew's (Barnsbury) Church of England Primary School, Islington
The Devonshire Hill Nursery and Primary School, Haringey

The secondary phase

Information about the secondary partnership

- Middlesex University works with approximately 200 secondary schools and sixth form colleges across London and extends into local education authorities beyond the capital. Partnership schools are a mix of local authority maintained, academy, trust, and special schools.
- The partnership works with a significant number of School Direct alliances. At stage 1 of the inspection, 24 secondary School Direct trainees were following this route to qualified teacher status (QTS) and the academic award of the PGCert.
- Trainees wishing to gain QTS in secondary can also undertake a one-year, full-time postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE). At the time of stage 1 of the inspection there were 94 trainees enrolled on this qualification.
- Across the PGCE and School Direct routes, trainees can specialise in business studies, computer science, citizenship, drama with English, English, mathematics, music, science with biology, chemistry, and physics.

Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- Inspectors visited 13 schools, one of which was visited at both stages of the inspection. They observed 12 trainees during stage 1 of the inspection and eight newly qualified teachers (NQTs) at stage 2. Two trainees were observed during both stages of the inspection.
- Inspectors met with trainees, NQTs, school staff with responsibility for mentoring trainees and the induction of NQTs, headteachers, a sixth form college principal and the leadership team of the university's secondary phase. They scrutinised the responses to the secondary trainee online survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised trainees' evidence of teaching and their progress against the teachers' standards. They evaluated the targets set for NQTs at the end of their training. Inspectors reviewed the partnership's self-evaluation and improvement planning. They evaluated the action plan written following stage 1 of the inspection and the progress made in delivering planned improvements.
- In 2015/16, one secondary trainee completed the assessment only route to gain QTS.
- Inspectors checked that the partnership was compliant with the statutory requirements for initial teacher training (ITT).

Inspection team

David Storrie, HMI	Lead inspector
Paul Metcalf, OI	Assistant phase lead, stage 1 only
Andrew Phillips, OI	Team inspector and assistant phase lead stage 2
Andrew Wright, HMI	Team inspector, stage 2 only

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the secondary partnership are:

- Trainees are very committed to their development; they are proactive and seek advice when necessary. Trainees show a high level of reflection and have a determination to make a difference to pupils' learning, which ensures that virtually all become good or better teachers by the end of their training. Over time, a rising proportion of trainees have attained an outstanding level of practice by the end of the course. This reached 70% of trainees in 2015/16.
- Trainees' success in securing employment, resulting in consistently high employment rates.
- The partnership with a local special school and additional placement opportunities provides strong development of trainees' understanding of special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enables trainees to adapt their teaching effectively to meet the needs of pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities.
- Trainees' strong understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities ensures that they are well prepared to deal with child protection and equalities issues that they may encounter in their teaching.
- The engagement of schools, trainees and employers within the partnership, ensuring that their views help improve the quality of provision. Leaders use this information to adapt provision to the needs of each cohort of trainees. In recent years, this has led to an increase in the proportion of trainees being graded outstanding by the end of their training.
- The highly successful recruitment of trainees from a range of backgrounds, such as those who are mature or with multi-ethnic heritage. This ensures that the partnership is effectively helping London schools recruit good and outstanding teachers who reflect the diversity of the capital.

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

The partnership should:

- reduce variations in the attainment of different groups of trainees, particularly for mathematics and science specialists
- eliminate the very small number of trainees who are assessed as meeting the minimum in the teachers' standards
- reduce deferral rates
- refine action plans to more sharply measure success during the academic year
- embed the consistency of recent improvements to mentoring so that it is strong across and within all partnership schools.

Inspection judgements

33. Outcomes for trainees are good. They have been improving since the previous inspection and virtually all trainees are good or outstanding when they become NQTs. A small proportion of trainees demonstrate the minimum standard of practice expected of teachers. However, inspectors judged that the proportion of outstanding trainees in mathematics dropped significantly in 2016. In 2015, there was a similar dip in music and science. Trainees show a strong commitment to becoming the very best teacher they can be, through their reflections and their desire to seek developmental feedback.
34. The number of trainees who complete the course is above the national average. Leaders have successfully reduced the number of trainees who do not complete the training. However, over time the number of trainees who defer the completion of the course has increased.
35. Employment rates have been rising since the previous inspection and are consistently high. In 2016, 98% of trainees had successfully gained employment by the time of this inspection. This is in part due to the tailored support that trainees receive when seeking employment. As one trainee who had not secured employment by the summer holidays explained, 'My tutor kept in regular contact, ensuring I was aware of jobs coming up in the areas I was seeking employment. The partnership is really proactive in helping us find a teaching post.'
36. Trainees have particular strengths in developing positive working relationships with pupils and in managing pupils' behaviour. The university carefully screens the subject knowledge of prospective trainees during recruitment and selection. This enables leaders, where necessary, to identify the most suitable subject knowledge enhancement course for an individual trainee's needs.
37. Trainees are well prepared to fulfil their wider professional responsibilities and to uphold the highest standards of personal and professional conduct. They

have a strong understanding of the responsibilities in safeguarding pupils, including the 'Prevent' duty and keeping pupils safe when using social media and the internet. Employers value their newly appointed NQTs because they seek to improve their teaching and form positive relationships within their departments and schools. At the time of the inspection, many NQTs were already taking on wider responsibility within their schools, for example working with form groups, taking on break duties and contributing to the extra-curricular life of the school.

38. Trainees have a clear understanding of the 2014 national curriculum and recent changes to the examination requirements for their subjects. Their planning and subject knowledge generally enable them to plan to meet the needs of the pupils they teach. Explicit training in teaching pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities enhances the quality of trainees' planning and teaching. Consequently, trainees have a strong understanding of how to cater for a range of special educational needs and disabilities. This shows through in the explicit way they adapt their teaching for individual pupils' needs. At stage 1 of the inspection, trainees had a secure understanding of the pupil premium strategy and the need to diminish differences between key groups so that all pupils achieve well. However, inspectors found that trainees rarely planned explicitly to meet the needs of this group. Leaders have responded quickly to ensure that trainees consider the needs of these pupils when planning. This will be quality assured during tutor visits to individual trainees and their placement schools.
39. The partnership is committed to ensuring that trainees receive contrasting and complementary placements during their training year. Consequently, trainees learn their craft in a range of contexts. For example, due to the size and breadth of the partnership, it includes schools from a range of denominations, single sex and coeducational, local authority maintained, academies, foundation schools, those with and without sixth forms and schools of various sizes in terms of pupils on roll. Staff also ensure that trainees have the opportunity to teach in a range of socio-economic contexts. This is successful in preparing trainees to teach in areas of high social deprivation. In the last three years, schools with above-average levels of free school meals have employed over nine in every 10 trainees.
40. The quality of training across the secondary partnership is good. A large majority of trainees who responded to Ofsted's online survey were positive about the overall quality of their training. Trainees reported a clear link between face-to-face training and their development in placement schools. Regular and clear communication from the university helps to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the content of training at the university. During placements, weekly sessions at the university help trainees to share resources and best practice, and to problem-solve shared challenges with their peers.
41. The university consistently ensures that trainees link their understanding of their subject to the primary and 16–19 curriculums. Visits to primary schools

and sixth forms supplement the theoretical understanding built during face-to-face training. Trainees have a secure understanding of how the primary and the 16–19 curriculum link to their training in the secondary phase. Trainees have a basic understanding of phonics, which supports their work with key stage 3 pupils.

42. Mentors receive regular training to develop their skills and aptitudes in this role. Trainees benefit from a stable partnership, with many schools having worked with Middlesex University for a number of years. While many mentors are expert in their work with trainees, this is not consistently the case. At stage 1 of the inspection, inspectors observed some mentors who did not robustly challenge trainees in their emerging areas of development. Inspectors also found some inconsistencies in the quality of written feedback for a minority of trainees. There was not a clear link between the written commentary and the grade awarded in these cases.
43. However, leaders have taken robust action through improved mentoring training and enhanced quality assurance processes. Leaders have responded directly by ensuring that all mentors in the partnership have had training in challenging conversations. They have revised their quality assurance procedures to document and address any mentoring that is not of the very highest standard. There is now a stronger emphasis on feeding back identified issues to mentors in writing, and re-checking their work for improvements. Inspectors found early evidence that these procedures are improving quality, as mentors are using this to improve their work with trainees. However, it is too soon to see the impact of this work, particularly for all postgraduate trainees.
44. Where inspectors visited trainees and NQTs they agreed with the partnership's grading of trainees. Target setting at the end of the course is accurate and helps trainees begin their NQT year with a clear focus for self-improvement. Trainees are consistently determined to develop their teaching and make clear strides in their ability during placements. This in part explains the clear progress NQTs continue to make upon taking up their first employment.
45. Leaders and managers have high expectations for the work of the partnership. They are ambitious and determined to improve the work of staff, mentors and trainees.
46. Self-evaluation sets out some of the key patterns within outcomes and evidence from a range of sources, such as exit and Ofsted surveys, external examiners, and stakeholder feedback. The partnership rightly recognises their key strengths and areas for development. However, it should drill down more rigorously into key issues and data. For example, responses to surveys combine responses that agree and strongly agree. A sharper analysis of the relative differences between these categories would further strengthen self-evaluation and improvement planning.
47. Emerging issues from the previous 12 months and analysis of data and stakeholder feedback enable leaders to develop a useful improvement plan. The

annual plan shows a clear understanding of what success will look like, for example in their work to improve the number of trainees completing within 12 months. However, the improvement plan does not consistently show what the milestones towards success will be throughout the academic year.

48. Recruitment and selection is comprehensive. Trainees give a presentation and have a formal interview in their subject. School Direct trainees are also interviewed in their employing school. This multi-layered approach enables tutors to consider an applicant's aptitudes and ability to become a teacher. Tutors have clear and consistent criteria and at this early stage begin to identify initial development points for trainees on entry to the programme.
49. When trainees complete the course, they work with their tutor to provide an overview of their strengths, journey through their training and initial development goals. Employers, almost unanimously, found this information highly useful and accurate.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe trainees' and former trainees' teaching:

Alperton Community School, Brent
Bishop Douglas School, Barnet
Christ's College, Barnet
Enfield County School, Enfield
Hertswood School, Borehamwood
Islington Arts and Media School, Islington
Mill Hill County High School, Barnet
Newman Catholic College, Brent
Rooks Heath College, Harrow
St Dominic's Sixth Form College, Harrow
Wembley High Technology College, Brent
Whitefield School, Barnet
Winchmore School, Enfield

ITE partnership details

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Stage 2	7 November 2016
Lead inspector	David Storrie HMI
Type of ITE partnership	HEI
Phases provided	Early years, Primary, Secondary
Date of previous inspection	18 April 2012
Previous inspection report	https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/70048
Provider address	Middlesex University The Burroughs Hendon London NW4 4BT



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