

**Secondary Initial Teacher Training
Partnership based on**

South West Teacher Training

**West Exe Technology College
Hatherleigh Road
Exeter
EX2 9JU**

**A short inspection report
2005/06**

**Managing Inspector:
Stephen Minett HMI**

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Introduction

South West Teacher Training works in partnership with 15 schools to provide secondary initial teacher training (ITT). It offers courses in design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), modern foreign languages and science. The course is designed to prepare trainees to teach in the 11 to 16 age range, with post-16 enhancement. At the time of the inspection there were 38 trainees.

Context

The inspection was carried out by a team of inspectors in accordance with the *Ofsted Handbook for the Inspection of Initial Teacher Training (2005-2011)*.

This report draws on evidence from a short inspection of the provision and an inspection of the management and quality assurance arrangements.

Grades are awarded in accordance with the following scale

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Main inspection judgements

Management and quality assurance: Grade 2

The overall quality of training is at least good.
The provider will receive a short inspection in three years.

Key strengths

- the continuing good quality of the provision, while the partnership has increased in size
- effective management at all levels
- the practical character of the training, which is delivered by practising teachers and provides the trainees with early and extensive teaching experience
- good coherence between the central and school-based training and between professional and subject studies
- the selection procedures, which are planned and implemented well and result in the recruitment of good trainees
- the strength of the partnership with schools: school-based trainers are committed to developing trainees' competence as teachers
- the high value that trainers place on trainees' individual qualities, and their recognition of trainees' strengths and training needs.

Points for consideration

- developing the leadership potential of subject leaders and enabling them to take more responsibility for planning, co-ordinating and evaluating subject training across the full range of contexts
- improving the quality of the subject knowledge audit in modern foreign languages
- extending the use of individual training plans across all subjects
- improving mentors' feedback to trainees to focus more on pupils' learning
- helping mentors to set sharper targets for trainees.

The quality of training

1. Since the last inspection the partnership has increased in size while maintaining the good quality of its provision. It continues to make effective use of practising teachers to lead the training, which is of a good standard.
2. The structure and content of the training programme meet the Requirements in full. The course is planned well to meet individual trainees' needs. In design and technology, science and ICT the formalised and comprehensive subject knowledge and skills audits and diagnostic task undertaken by trainees at the start of the course are used effectively to identify their prior experience and individual needs, and determine the content of subject booster and other enhancement sessions. In science, this information has been used to develop helpful individual training plans, but this practice is not widespread. In ICT, good use is made of trainees' own expertise when introducing new applications to their colleagues. In modern foreign languages, these audits are neither as comprehensive nor as useful.
3. Evaluations by trainees and trainers are used well to bring about improvements to course structure and content. For example, topics dealing with behaviour management are now introduced earlier in the weekly general professional studies central training programme. Central and school-based training deal effectively and practically with teaching methodology. Since the previous inspection, there has been an improved focus on lesson planning, strategies to support differentiation, effective questioning, and the assessment of pupils' progress. The content of the subject training programme is comprehensive and has been updated in line with recent developments within subjects. For example, in modern foreign languages there is increased coverage of Key Stage 2/3 issues in response to the National Secondary Strategy.
4. The elements of the programme combine together well to support trainees' progress towards the Standards. A particular strength of the good general professional studies programme is the way that the theme introduced in the Friday sessions is picked up in the subject-specific training on the following Monday. The serial and block school placements and assignments are sequenced well to enable trainees to apply what they have learned in their central training programmes, develop their skills and so grow in confidence. Trainees have adequate opportunities for teaching at Key Stages 3 and 4 and, for those who want it, observing and teaching at the post-16 level.
5. The trainers' understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities has increased as these have been more clearly defined. The school-based subject mentors have a particularly important part to play in ensuring that there is coherence between the constituent parts of the trainee's programme, and they perform this role effectively. Through activities such as discussion, modelling and lesson observation, and through providing trainees with helpful practical advice, they

encourage the trainee to develop their skills. Subject mentors are supported well by the school-based professional tutors.

6. The central and school-based training remains of good quality. The trainees are enthusiastic about and appreciative of the management of the course. The relevance and flexibility of their training programme, the approachability of the programme manager and subject course tutors, and the individualised nature of the support that they receive in their placement schools are the main reasons why they are developing well as practitioners.

7. The trainees' experience in their school placements is effective in training them how to teach their subject and assess pupils' progress, but less so in prompting them to reflect on why certain approaches are more effective than others. Trainees' lesson planning is generally good and most produce well thought out evaluations of their own teaching. However, the training does not place sufficient emphasis on evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils' learning or on developing the skills of assessment for learning. The lesson planning templates make limited provision for these elements of good practice.

8. Trainees' progress is monitored effectively during the course through regular lesson observations with informative feedback by a range of trainers, and good communication between the assessors. However, this feedback tends to focus on class management and teaching method rather than on pupils' learning. The feedback generates targets for the trainees' future development. The best of these are precise and time-limited, but this is not always the case.

9. The partnership's procedures for assessing trainees' progress are rigorous and are implemented effectively. A good range of evidence is used in compiling the termly profiles which give a clear indication of the trainees' progress. This evidence is documented comprehensively in numerous proformas, which have been developed over time. Trainees make effective use of the provider's standards development profile. The electronic record devised by some ICT trainees is a helpful way of marshalling evidence of their progress towards meeting the Standards.

10. The provider has further enhanced its assessment procedures by adopting a progressive approach to monitoring trainees' development. Trainees are not expected to meet the Standards in full until the summer term and their work is graded within this context. Trainees respond well to this and trainers are able increasingly to focus on supporting borderline cases. Most subject mentors understand this approach well, although other teachers are, at present, less familiar with it.

Management and quality assurance

11. Selection procedures are designed well and implemented effectively, meeting the Requirements of *Qualifying to Teach*. Selection remains a strong feature of the provision; the interview process has been further improved by the introduction of a valuable diagnostic written task. While the number of trainees recruited has increased from 30 to 38 since the last inspection, the calibre of the cohort has been maintained, and all have the potential to meet the Standards.

12. Prospective trainees are given clear and accurate information about the training programmes at each stage of the application and selection process. Many trainees make good use of the informative web site when they are making initial enquiries about the provider; all trainees appreciate the comprehensive handbooks and other documentation that are supplied. Trainees cite the school-centred nature of the programme, and the opportunity for post-16 teaching as key factors in their decision to apply to South West Teacher Training. The partnership advertises in a number of well-chosen local publications in order to reach a wide range of prospective applicants from the local community. This year the number of trainees recruited from minority ethnic groups exceeds the target set by the Training and Development Agency (TDA).

13. The partnership's equal opportunities and race equality policies are explained clearly in the handbook, understood well by trainees and trainers, and implemented effectively during selection and training. When interviewed, all trainees are made to feel valued as individuals; their strengths are recognised and their training needs identified. The selection procedures make good use of relevant activities, and are particularly effective in assessing an applicant's ability to interact well with pupils in the classroom. Following the interview, trainees are given well chosen development activities to carry out in preparation for the training. Because there is always a subject specialist trainer on the panel subject knowledge development tasks are matched well to each individual's training needs.

14. The partnership is managed well at all levels, and assures good quality training and outcomes. The management group is active and effective, keeping a close eye on developments and taking responsibility for the health of the partnership. The programme manager is well informed and dynamic, provides active and effective leadership at programme level, and organises and oversees the running of the provision effectively, supported capably by the programme administrator. Professional tutors and mentors contribute valuably to the routine management of the provision: they are conscientious and effective in ensuring, for example, that trainees receive their entitlement and in monitoring trainees' progress. Day-to-day communication across the partnership is good. Since the partnership has increased in size some members do not yet feel that they are sufficiently involved in the strategic management of the partnership.

15. Although subject provision is well managed, the subject leaders are not given sufficient opportunities or support to enable them to establish ownership of their aspects of the training, or to share expertise within and across subjects.

16. Trainers' roles and responsibilities are defined clearly and appropriately in the documentation and are carried out well. They are included in the new partnership agreement, which also explains how trainers will be supported, and how resources will be allocated. Trainees receive good support from managers and trainers across the partnership, both centrally and in their placement schools. The role of professional tutor is now defined clearly, and includes assuring the quality of school-based training and moderation of assessment of the trainees against the Standards. While the training for mentors ensures that they understand the systems for training and assessment, there are limited opportunities for them to discuss their ideas for training in the subject.

17. Resources are deployed well, based on a clear rationale. For example, careful consideration is given to payments made to managers and trainers to ensure that the posts attract capable applicants while returning good value for money. Central resources are at least satisfactory across all subjects, with early access to laptops and useful software, and to digital projectors for teaching. The provision of better library facilities and improved access to resources about teaching is part of the current building programme at the lead school.

18. The programme manager monitors the training thoroughly to ensure that all trainees receive their entitlement, and gives careful consideration to potential or current problems. On the rare occasions when it is needed, the programme manager takes prompt and effective action to ensure that all trainees receive good quality training and support. Professional tutors contribute helpfully to the monitoring of training in their schools, as do central trainers through their visits to placement schools, and external examiners through their reports. Internal and external moderation procedures are designed to ensure that the final assessment of trainees against the Standards is rigorous, consistent and accurate.

19. At programme level the manager evaluates the quality of the provision perceptively, making good use of inspection reports and reports from external consultants and examiners. The key areas for development are identified and addressed in the annual report and action plan. In addition the programme manager benchmarks aspects of the provision such as completion rates and final grades over time, and works with a similar provider to compare provision and to inform future development. At subject level, however, the external examiners make a limited contribution to development. Not all subject leaders have opportunities to engage in dialogue with subject specialists who challenge them to evaluate their subject training, or stimulate them to establish priorities for improvement. There is limited formal evaluation of subject provision, and improvement planning is underdeveloped at subject level.