

**Primary Initial Teacher Training
Partnership based on**

**University of Winchester
West Hill
Winchester
SO22 4NR**

**A short inspection report
2005/06**

**Managing Inspector:
Iain Rodger Additional Inspector**

© Crown copyright 2006. This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date are stated.

Inspection reports are available on the Ofsted web site (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

Introduction

The University of Winchester works in partnership with 250 schools each year to provide primary initial teacher training (ITT) courses. It offers a four-year BA Primary Education degree with an Early Years option and a three-year accelerated route. It also offers a one-year postgraduate course with a two-year flexible option. At the time of the inspection there were 878 trainees following these programmes.

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 1

The overall quality of training is at least good.

The provider will receive a short inspection in three years.

Key strengths

- the well designed training in the core subjects
- the expertise and experience of the well qualified staff
- the excellent use of the expertise in the partnership schools
- the provision for trainees with disabilities
- the rigorous quality assurance procedures.

Points for consideration

- improving the tracking arrangements to make sure all primary trainees gain sufficient awareness of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 3
- encouraging trainees to make the most of the opportunities available to gain experience of inner city schools.

The quality of training

1. All courses are effective in ensuring that trainees meet the Standards. They have common strengths, not least the deliberate focus on ensuring that trainees are well informed about current national issues and recent initiatives. The balance is maintained between university-based and school-based training with links between the two made explicit. The courses are well designed, with particular strengths in the core subjects. They ensure that educational theory informs classroom practice and promote trainees' development as reflective practitioners.

2. The courses are based on the concept of a spiral curriculum thereby ensuring that concepts introduced earlier in a course are re-visited later. The content of all the courses is carefully audited against the Standards and supported by clear documentation. From the outset, there is a challenging but realistic expectation that trainees will monitor and evaluate their own progress and set their own targets to meet the Standards. As a result, there is a sharp focus on critical review and professional development in both university-based and school-based elements of training. Trainees take this responsibility seriously, and conscientiously build up a comprehensive personal development portfolio of evidence to show how they have met the Standards.

3. An exemplary feature is the sustained attention given to ensuring that all trainees have secure subject knowledge in English, mathematics and science, and that they develop confidence to teach the core subjects effectively. In English, the process starts at the initial interview when weaknesses in the trainees' writing skills are identified. Tutors discuss the outcomes of subsequent audits with trainees and draw up action plans and targets to provide help for those trainees identified as needing help from the university's support service. In mathematics in the second and third years, there is time in each session for peer tutoring to develop individuals' mathematical knowledge. In science there are additional workshops and individual support sessions which the trainees find very helpful. The recent decision to make attendance at these compulsory for some trainees reflects the university's commitment to pursue high standards in relation to the trainees' subject knowledge.

4. External and internal evaluations confirm that university-based and school-based training is effective and that trainees' academic work and teaching are of high quality. The university is committed to appointing well qualified and highly experienced staff who bring a range of expertise to the training. The arrangement whereby tutors not only teach on professional and curriculum studies courses but also assume link and personal tutor responsibilities brings added benefits. It facilitates their getting to know trainees very well; enables their guidance and support to be adapted to trainees' individual needs; and ensures that the links between courses are reinforced and made explicit. Subject teams work well together in planning, delivering and reviewing sessions. They make very effective use of visiting speakers; for example, the expertise and knowledge of staff from the

local advisory service have been used well to inform trainees of school workforce reform and of teaching pupils with learning and behaviour difficulties.

5. In all courses, there is comprehensive coverage of the National Curriculum, the Primary National Strategy and *Every Child Matters*. There is evidence, too, of innovation. A module for fourth year undergraduates links professional and curriculum studies together through a focus on thinking skills, creativity and new technologies. Overall, trainees are well prepared to incorporate these aspects into their final school experience. Although the curriculum for Key Stage 3 and Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage are not ignored, the current tracking arrangements do not demonstrate the degree to which trainees, training to teach pupils in the age range 5-11, are sufficiently aware of the expectations, typical curricula and teaching arrangements before and after Key Stages 1 and 2.

6. In English, training places a strong and appropriate emphasis on the teaching of speaking and listening skills, often through drama, as well as teaching reading and writing. Tutors ensure that trainees know about different approaches to the teaching of reading, including synthetic phonics, and the introduction of a reading circle is a creative way to ensure undergraduate trainees become familiar with 50 children's books. In mathematics appropriate emphasis is given to developing the concept of number, calculation and problem solving, and to recognising and dealing with pupils' misconceptions and errors. This is a strong feature of the course which prepares the trainees well for what they will meet in school. Trainees are expected to teach science in each of their placements and the course prepares them well, covering all four attainment targets. It gives considerable attention to developing trainees' understanding of and skill in planning investigations.

7. The modules in curriculum studies complement well those in professional studies particularly in promoting trainees' progress in meeting the Standards for planning and for monitoring and assessment. In the last year, the increased focus given to assessment for learning is reflected in trainees' perceptive and detailed records of pupils' attainment and progress. School-based training records reveal that trainees often receive detailed, perceptive and practical advice in how to use assessment information to plan for individual pupils' needs. Teacher tutors and link tutors provide positive, critical but constructive feedback and guidance to trainees. Almost invariably, guidance focuses on the pedagogical aspects of teaching a core subject. Teacher tutors and link tutors are quick to support trainees who give cause for concern and to rearrange school placements where necessary.

8. The partnership team works hard to ensure that trainees' needs are met in a range of educational and social settings. Trainees following the 3 - 7 course spend time in a nursery setting as well as in a primary school. A valuable feature is the opportunity for trainees to teach in Newham to experience inner city education and to organise some placements themselves. Despite this initiative, relatively few trainees take advantage of this opportunity to spend time in a special school or working with pupils who have English as an additional language.

9. Trainees' progress is monitored closely by course tutors, teacher tutors, link tutors and personal tutors. Teacher tutors make good use of the exemplar statements in judging how well the trainees have met the Standards and link tutors engage in the process of moderation to ensure that such judgements are accurate and reliable. Trainees' written work is marked to agreed objective criteria and while the quality of the feedback to trainees is consistent, an opportunity is lost for the trainees themselves to evaluate how well an assignment contributes to evidence that specific Standards are being met and for tutors to judge the accuracy of a trainee's assertions.

Management and quality assurance

10. Selection procedures are very effective. The prospectus and web site give clear outlines of the undergraduate and postgraduate courses. The university's inclusive policy and practices are exemplary and ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants. The university, for example, recognised that a split-level campus posed particular difficulties in terms of access and prospective applicants with disabilities are encouraged to visit to see at first hand how support may be tailored to their needs. Not surprisingly, the university has a higher proportion of trainees with disabilities than many other training institutions. It is particularly effective in supporting trainees with dyslexia.

11. Recruitment procedures are robust, rigorous and well designed to ensure consistency and fairness. A range of activities, including interviews with headteachers, allows applicants to demonstrate whether they have the skills and qualities needed to work with children. The outcomes of the interview process are relayed promptly and unsuccessful applicants are given feedback on their performance. The courses recruit well qualified, committed trainees; very few fail to complete their chosen courses and nearly all obtain employment, often in partnership schools. The university has increased the proportions of male trainees on the undergraduate course, and also mature trainees, especially on the flexible postgraduate course, but recognises that it is not yet successful enough in recruiting trainees from minority ethnic groups.

12. The partnership works very efficiently. Communication within the partnership is excellent and schools report positively on the clarity of the course documentation. The university makes excellent use of the expertise of staff in partnership schools both in interviewing trainees and in course design and delivery. For example, a headteacher leads a session on workforce reform and a classroom assistant from the same school demonstrates display techniques to the trainees.

13. Senior managers have a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Subject and link tutors and school-based mentors also have a secure understanding of their teaching and tutorial roles. Newly recruited university tutors receive a thorough induction to equip them for their roles. The university has systems in place to ensure that all trainees receive the appropriate levels of support.

14. Quality assurance procedures are excellent. Self-evaluation is very rigorous and well founded on an accurate analysis of a wide range of valid evidence. There are regular and rigorous programme reviews which result in action plans which are both wide- ranging and sharply focused on key issues. These action plans are detailed and well constructed and helpfully evaluate the results of the previous year's plan. Subject teams engage in effective quality assurance procedures. Subject action plans focus on the quality of trainees' teaching and there is a clear commitment to establishing ways of assessing the impact of the university-based training on the trainees' work in schools.

15. Managers at all levels are fully committed to rigorous quality assurance as a means of ensuring the continued improvement in the structure, design, delivery and evaluation of the courses. Effective action has been taken to address the issues identified at the last inspection. Staff appraisal follows university guidelines. Stakeholder views are sought and good use is made of the results. Peer review has contributed significantly to the enhanced quality of course handbooks. Staff training and development programmes are strengths of the provision. All members of staff have access to a well planned programme which is tailored to the needs of the partnership and to their personal professional development needs identified during the appraisal process. The university has devised measures to achieve more consistency in the marking of assignments and staff are given useful guidelines. The training of teacher tutors is well planned and takes place before and during placements. It is usually well attended and any non-attendance is followed up and compensated for by link tutors.

16. The procedures for ensuring consistency, accuracy and rigour in the assessment of trainees across the range of performance are very well established. All courses adopt rigorous internal and external moderation procedures. Joint observations of trainees' teaching are a common feature and aid consistency of assessment. Teacher tutors are given helpful aides-memoir for evaluating the teaching of core subjects. The marking schemes for assignments are followed systematically. Second marking is used to aid internal moderation and to ensure accuracy of assessment. Generally, the grades given match the comments made and weaknesses in spelling and punctuation are noted. External examiners' reports are thorough and are increasingly focused on offering advice that helps to maintain and improve the quality of the provision. Overall, managers have been proactive in creating a climate for continuous improvement in which the results of self-evaluation are used very effectively to maintain and develop the quality of provision.