

Secondary Initial Teacher
Training Partnership based on

The Learning Institute

Callington Community College
Launceston Road
Callington
Cornwall
PL17 7DR

A full inspection report
2005/06

Managing Inspector:
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Introduction

The Learning Institute works in partnership with five schools to provide secondary initial teacher training courses in science, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT), modern foreign languages, religious education, media studies, applied business studies and health and social care. At the time of the inspection there were 17 trainees. Seven were engaged on vocational courses. Of the other ten, six were training to teach science, three media studies and one in mathematics.

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 full 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

Standards achieved by the trainees: Grade 2

Quality of training: Grade 2

Management and quality assurance: Grade 2

The provider will receive a short inspection in three years.

Key strengths

- the very good use made of evaluation to inform the partnership's improvement planning
- the personalised training programme which is explicitly linked to the Standards
- the trainees' effective class management to aid pupils' learning
- the quality of the general professional studies programme and the opportunity it affords for trainees to discuss whole school issues
- the trainees' commitment to the programme and determination to drive their own learning.

Points for action

- strengthening the leadership role of subject lead tutors to ensure greater consistency across the partnership
- strengthening the coherence between the general professional studies programme and the continuing subject studies programme.

Points for consideration

- achieving greater consistency in trainees' day-to-day marking, assessment and recording of pupils' progress
- identifying more specific learning outcomes to assist trainees' evaluation of the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning
- ensuring greater clarity and consistency in providing feedback for trainees and setting targets.

Standards achieved by trainees

1. Trainees demonstrate a good professional manner and are committed to raising their pupils' achievement. They are enthusiastic and drive their own training, using their initiative where necessary, for example to interview key members of staff about their work. Most have high expectations of pupils, particularly with regard to their behaviour and attitudes, and treat them consistently and with respect. This is reflected in the positive relationships that trainees and pupils enjoy both inside the classroom and around the school. The trainees get involved in and make a significant contribution to the corporate life of the school, for example by helping with tutor groups, lunchtime clubs and school trips. When given the opportunity, they communicate sensitively and effectively with parents using their good knowledge of individual pupils to provide detailed and informative reports. They are developing into reflective practitioners and respond well to the feedback that they receive, for example following a lesson observation. Trainees are particularly conscientious in their approach to self-evaluation, although there is a tendency to focus more on their own teaching rather than assessing its impact on pupils' learning.

2. Trainees are highly committed to extending their knowledge and understanding. They are secure and up-to-date in their subject knowledge and are prepared to undertake their own research to make good any identified gaps. The trainees make good use of ICT in their planning and in their assessment of pupils, but are less confident using it in their teaching. All trainees have a good understanding of how to teach particular aspects of their subject; they can communicate and explain the concepts and skills clearly. However, the trainees are not as secure about such issues as how to apply their knowledge of *Every Child Matters* or promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development within their subject. They have a confident grasp of the National Curriculum programmes of study, the National Strategies and statutory frameworks, including health and safety, but two of the six science trainees have an insufficient understanding of how to ensure good progression from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3.

3. The trainees are enthusiastic teachers and confident in their specialist subjects. They plan individual lessons and sequences of lessons conscientiously and well, demonstrating a good understanding of progression. They understand the importance of setting clear lesson objectives, and are successful in doing so. They carefully match the learning activities and resources, including the use of teaching assistants, to the intended outcomes of each lesson. They use a range of strategies effectively, some of which are particularly innovative and creative, to teach good lessons, notably in science. They make good use of open questioning to challenge pupils and develop their thinking skills. Trainees, especially in science and media studies, plan well to meet the varying needs of individual pupils, recognising the value of diversity and the need to be as inclusive as possible. A particular strength is the trainees' class organisation and behaviour management; their classrooms are

safe and purposeful environments in which pupils are confident to express their views.

4. The trainees have a good understanding of National Curriculum levels and are developing an appropriate range of assessment strategies. They use assessment information well in planning, but are less secure in their day-to-day marking, assessment and recording of pupils' progress.

The quality of training

5. The course structure is well planned to enable trainees to make systematic progress towards achieving the Standards. The induction period provides trainees with good opportunities to understand the expectations of the programme and their role as reflective practitioners.

6. All trainees have good opportunities to teach and assess pupils across the full age and ability range, and across the breadth of the subject. The decision to start the second placement earlier than in the previous year has been particularly effective in giving trainees more sustained experience in their second school. This is significant in helping to meet trainees' needs and gives them more opportunities to collect evidence of how well they are meeting the Standards, especially in terms of subject knowledge and the planning and assessment of pupils' learning over a longer period of time.

7. The comprehensive general professional studies (GPS) programme is a strong feature of the course; it enables trainees to discuss major issues, such as assessment and provision for pupils with learning difficulties, and to share their different experiences. However, the planned relationship between GPS and continuing subject studies is not as coherent as it should be. The provider is aware of this and has planned a more structured approach to enable trainees to develop GPS topics and apply them in a subject-specific context. Good arrangements ensure trainees experience provision in multicultural schools, for example, the week's placement in a school in the London borough of Redbridge. Assignments make a good contribution to training, for example in encouraging reflective thinking and making links between theory and practice. However, the timing of each assignment is not as helpful as it could be in supporting trainees' development.

8. Training is of at least good quality. It enables most trainees to make good progress in how to teach their subject. The well prepared tutors in the GPS sessions draw on a wide range of resources and are good role models for trainees. There is an appropriate emphasis in training on effective classroom practice. Trainees find the sessions that model good practice particularly helpful, although accessing them depends upon which placement school they are in. The training is not so effective in developing trainees' planning of specific learning outcomes, which can be used to evaluate and assess pupils' learning.

9. Subject and generic tutors have the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to fulfil their roles successfully. They are experienced practitioners who bring a good range of expertise to the training. Nearly all tutors carry out their roles well. The subject lead tutors are not as effective as they should be in ensuring consistency in the quality of training.

10. The partnership is committed to a flexible approach to training and, where possible, adapts the programme to suit individual trainees: this is a strong feature of the course. The information gathered at selection and during induction is used very well to develop programmes that are closely matched to trainees' needs. Occasionally, trainees' experience is limited by the curriculum offered in schools at certain times of the year or by their tutor's lack of confidence or expertise, for example in using ICT in the classroom. The provider is aware of this and has it under review.

11. Good systems ensure trainees receive regular support and make good progress overall. The early auditing of trainees' subject knowledge and ICT skills is effectively used to start the process of individual action planning, but this process is not sustained and upgraded throughout the course.

12. Overall, the quality of tutors' feedback and target setting is satisfactory, but it is not always sufficiently focused to challenge trainees. Lesson feedback clearly identifies trainees' progress towards selected Standards. The most rigorous evaluations help trainees to plan, teach and assess effectively. However, feedback rarely includes a judgement on the overall quality of the lesson. Joint observations by tutors help to ensure consistency of expectations across schools. There is clear guidance for this and for what trainees must do to collect evidence of achievement against the Standards, but not all tutors follow this consistently and trainees occasionally receive conflicting messages.

13. The assessment procedures are comprehensive with the Standards interpreted at three stages to provide useful reference points to inform judgements of trainees' progress and attainment. There are good systems for transferring information from one placement school to the next. Tutors share the responsibility for the assessment of trainees, and final assessments are fair, accurate and appropriately moderated.

Management and quality assurance

14. The selection procedures are good. The information contained in the online prospectus is of good quality and those considering making an application are well supported. The programme handbook is clear and easy to follow; the guidance documents provide helpful additional advice. Interview questions and selection tasks are designed well and used effectively to assess candidates' subject knowledge, previous experience and potential. The auditing of each applicant's subject knowledge and ICT skills informs the construction of a personalised training

programme for each trainee, which starts at the interview stage and carries on into the induction week. The procedures for verifying the quality of late applicants are not as rigorous as they should be and this has resulted in two withdrawing from the course this year. The provider is aware of this and has taken steps to remedy the situation; from September, interviews of late applicants will be delayed to enable them to be seen in front of a class and a learning contract for trainees is being introduced. The partnership has met its target for the recruitment of trainees from minority ethnic and other under-represented groups, and systematically monitors the implementation of its equal opportunities and race equality policies.

15. The partnership arrangements ensure that the partners collaborate effectively in strategic management and planning. The core members of the partnership are all training schools and there is good coherence between initial teacher training activities and wider initiatives including professional development programmes and the drive for whole school improvement.

16. The partnership documentation clearly states the rationale and principles underpinning the partnership and how its structures function. The various committees have well defined roles and responsibilities that are easily understood and followed; they all contribute effectively to planning, selection, training and development activities. The programme manager provides good leadership for the partnership, and is very highly regarded by trainees and tutors. He has a very good understanding of the partnership's strengths and weaknesses. Overall, there is increased partnership working and a growing sense of collegiality among the subject teams. However, some subject lead tutors are uncertain about the extent of their roles and responsibilities across the partnership; as a result, the science team lacks the sense of identity and cohesiveness of the other teams. The provider is aware of this and has put in place a strategy to improve the situation.

17. There are good policies and procedures for monitoring and evaluation; they take account of the views of trainers and trainees. Monitoring has been effective in improving the quality of the training programme, for example by identifying problems with trainees' placements. There are also good procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of the trainers, including the observation of training sessions and the joint observation of trainees' lessons. However, the impact of some of the monitoring is limited at present. In practice, much of the responsibility for monitoring falls on the training school directors in the core schools. Consequently, the good practice that exists is not applied consistently across all schools and subjects.

18. There is a very good link between the process of evaluation and improvement planning. For example, the partnership's evaluation of trainees' progress in 2004/05 identified a dip in their performance following their transfer from their first to their second placement school. In response, the development group brought forward the timing of the transfer, and established a structured handover procedure, including a transition meeting and induction programme in the trainees' new school. This solved the problem in 2005/06. The development of core units in the continuing subject studies programme and plans to improve the

coherence between it and the GPS programme in 2006/07 are also the products of effective evaluation.

19. Clear and secure systems ensure consistency and rigour in the assessment of trainees' progress. All assessments are subject to internal and external moderation. The partnership's assessment group plays an effective part in ensuring the consistency and accuracy of assessments. The new transition meeting between all tutors at the end of the trainees' first school placement has led to greater consistency in internal moderation. The partnership also makes good use of the external moderator's reports to validate its assessment of trainees, with particular attention paid to the pass/fail borderline.

20. The partnership's improvement planning is very good and it makes increasingly effective use of benchmarking data to inform its quality assurance systems. The partnership has responded very well to the previous inspection report and the issues raised during the training visit. However, improvement planning in individual subjects does not always match the quality of the partnership's improvement planning.