



# London Metropolitan University

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A primary initial teacher training  
short inspection report  
2006/07

Managing inspector  
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## Introduction

The London Metropolitan University works in partnership with 92 schools to provide primary initial teacher training courses. It offers two PGCE courses for primary, 3 to 7 and 5 to 11 years. At the time of the inspection there were 127 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 accurate self evaluation of the courses by the management group
- the very good support and guidance for the trainees throughout their course and the rapid and effective response of tutors to their individual needs
- the strong sense of partnership which has resulted in good quality, cohesive training in all aspects of the course
- the excellent attention to inclusion and diversity, which values the contributions all trainees are able to make to the course
- the good quality training for school-based tutors to match their experience.

## Point for action

- ensuring all trainees on the 5 to 11 course have sufficient teaching experience to enable them to teach competently across the key stages for which they are being trained.

## Points for consideration

- making better use of data and information from schools about the quality of the trainees' teaching to strengthen longer-term, strategic planning
- ensuring a greater level of consistency in the degree of subject-specific feedback the school-based tutors give trainees when observing their lessons
- using the information about how well trainees teach specific subjects in order to plan central training more effectively.

## The quality of training

1. The content and structure of the training are well planned to ensure that most trainees have a good breadth and balance of experiences in both their central and school-based training. However, there are gaps in the relevant school-based provision for trainees on the primary course and recently there have been too many trainees who have had insufficient experience at Key Stage 1. In 2005/06, 12 trainees were in this group. The provider has recognised this weakness and is developing a number of strategies to ensure that the issue is fully resolved, but it is not yet possible to judge the success of these.

2. Training programmes take good account of the National Curriculum, the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the Primary National Strategy. The professional studies programme ensures that trainees develop skills, such as behaviour management and teaching English as an additional language. A strong emphasis is placed on inclusion. Subject modules provide a good balance between theoretical and practical aspects of teaching and cross-curricular issues are addressed well; for example, during a dedicated cross-curricular week. Good account is taken of the Standards in the content of the training. Trainees on the primary programme are made aware of the Key Stage 3 curriculum, and the links to the Foundation Stage curriculum are good. Similarly, those on the early years programme are given good insights into the Key Stage 2 curriculum.

3. There is good cohesion between taught sessions, school-based tasks and assignments. The connection between the professional studies and subject training is particularly effective; for example, in linking learning styles to how children learn to read and write. The links between central and school-based training are good and provide trainees with well timed opportunities to put into practice what they have learned in theory.

4. The good quality training identified in the last inspection has been maintained in English and mathematics; in science it is also good. Centre-based trainers are well qualified. A key feature is the modelling of good primary practice. Trainees' evaluations indicate high levels of satisfaction with the course. School-based training effectively complements centre-based training, and mentors provide helpful generic feedback to trainees on the quality of their teaching. However, feedback to trainees on how well they teach specific subjects, and how this can be improved, is too variable.

5. The support for trainees' individual needs is good. There are effective systems and structures to ensure that all trainees' needs are accurately identified early in their training. Well planned and individualised support strategies, such as tutorials and workshops, are put in place and monitored closely, particularly in mathematics and science.

6. There is a wide range of assessment activities which provide a rigorous and effective way of measuring trainees' progress towards, and knowledge and

understanding of, the Standards. Trainees are given helpful advice on how they can improve and their teaching is carefully assessed against groups of Standards. Assignments are well marked to clear criteria.

## Management and quality assurance

7. The criteria for selecting trainees are rigorous and well designed to ensure that there is transparency and fairness for all applicants. Applications are carefully screened and suitable candidates are invited for interview. Headteachers and experienced mentors from partnership schools are involved in the selection process. The candidates' qualifications are checked thoroughly and all trainees' suitability to work with children is checked with the Criminal Records Bureau prior to the first school placement. The improvements made in the selection process since the last inspection has led to the recruitment of well qualified candidates, and retention rates are high.

8. The course prospectus and web site provide detailed information about the courses and the requirements for entry. The programme teams demonstrate a strong commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion. There is an emphasis on encouraging diversity, which is explicitly highlighted in all course information, including on the web site and in the pre-course materials. The provider's policies for equal opportunities and race equality are clearly stated, and appropriate reference is made to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. A key strength of the provision is the way the courses and schools benefit from the wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the trainees. This is very well exemplified in the way trainees are encouraged to empathise with children for whom English is an additional language. All successful candidates receive helpful information which enables them to prepare for the course.

9. The partnership is well managed. The management has been restructured over the past two years and this has led to some staff changes on both programmes. These changes have ensured that the good quality of the training has been maintained, and in some subjects, for example in mathematics, further improved. Overall, the subjects are well managed; tutors have shaped courses that effectively meet trainees' group and individual needs.

10. The roles and responsibilities of those involved in the partnership are clear and appropriate. Significant advances have been made in developing the roles of school-based mentors since the last inspection. These are now consistent and carried out effectively. This is because of well focused mentor training and very clear written guidance that is widely understood.

11. Underpinning the management of the partnership is a very clear agreement that is valued by schools. The partnership schools have been involved in developing and reviewing the agreement. This is an effective means of ensuring that it continues to meet all partners' needs. The management group, together with the newly formed primary partnership group ensures that trainees' and mentors' voices

are heard and acted upon when changes to provision are being planned. For example, the mentoring conference held at the start of this academic year provided good opportunities for all partners to share views. The provider makes effective use of the expertise found in schools to strengthen the planning and delivery of the course.

12. There are good procedures for ensuring that trainers discharge their roles well. Mentor training is very effective and evaluated positively by school-based staff. The move to provide more whole-school training and to tailor it to meet particular needs is a valuable development. For example, the university has arranged to train the entire teaching staff in partner schools as stage 1 mentors. Tutor induction and development are carefully managed. The communication across the partnership is good so that all parties are fully briefed on requirements and changes to provision. Resources are deployed well to support effective training. However, resources for information and communication technology, though better than at the time of the last inspection, are still not easily accessible or available.

13. Quality assurance procedures are good overall and meet the Requirements. There are very good systems to ensure that the university's race equality and equal opportunity policies are monitored well. The university models itself very successfully as an organisation committed to the inclusion of every trainee. School-based training is monitored well through the visiting tutors; they ensure that trainees are well supported in their school placements. University-based training is also monitored well through observations by peers and managers and by trainees' regular evaluations. This has contributed to the improvements to training since the last inspection.

14. The strategies for evaluating the course give the university clear information about how well it provides for trainees. Trainees have a strong role in these; their views are sought several times a year and prompt action is taken to address any areas of concern. Visiting tutor meetings and annual partner meetings provide further opportunities for internal evaluation. Procedures for external evaluation of the provision are good and lead to helpful reports from external examiners; these are acted upon swiftly. While the university has a very clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in provision, informed by good use of benchmarking data, it does not systematically feed these back to schools to share some of the excellent practice. Opportunities are missed to use information from the partner schools to develop subject-specific central training. Longer term strategic planning is underdeveloped; it draws insufficiently on evaluative information, especially that from schools.

15. Trainees' assessments are moderated well, particularly those relating to practical teaching. The partnership has ensured that the systems for internal and external moderation are robust. The use of joint observation of trainees between visiting tutors and school mentors contributes to the consistency and accuracy of judgements.