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University of Chichester

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A primary initial teacher training
short inspection report
2006/07

Managing inspector
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Introduction

The University of Chichester works in partnership with 250 schools to provide primary initial teacher training courses. It offers a one-year postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE), flexible PGCE courses and a three-year BA course with qualified teacher status. All courses are in the 3-7 or 5-11 age ranges. At the time of the inspection there were 448 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

- very good cohesion between all aspects of the training
- high quality university-based training where good classroom practice is modelled
- inclusive and well differentiated training which makes excellent use of assessment information
- very effective recruitment and selection procedures
- a very good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and a proactive approach towards addressing the weaknesses.

Points for consideration

- improving strategic planning to focus more on trainees' teaching
- ensuring that lesson feedback provides consistent guidance on how to improve the teaching of specific subjects
- providing more opportunities for disseminating good practice within the partnership
- ensuring that all trainees on the early years route have sufficient practical experience in a nursery setting.

The quality of training

1. The training has many strengths and has improved since the last inspection.
2. The PGCE and undergraduate programmes are well structured to ensure that trainees have a broad range of experiences in planning and teaching the National Curriculum and using the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage. Although trainees are fully trained to teach across two key stages, with good insight into the key stages before and after these, a few trainees with a specialism in early years do not have sufficient experience of nursery settings.
3. Trainees' individual needs are met very well and this is a major strength of the provision. From initial interviews onwards, trainees' subject knowledge is audited carefully, tracked assiduously and supported very effectively. Throughout the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, subject support is tailored to meet trainees' needs so that they learn and develop skills at a good rate. An excellent example of this is in science where tutors support individual trainees in the preparation of video presentations that explain scientific concepts they find hard to understand. University tutors use data about trainees' progress on school placements very creatively to plan well structured, differentiated sessions.
4. Another key strength is the way the various course elements link together and relate to classroom practice. The professional values and practice course forms a good core, around which subjects are taught. Training in each of the core subjects includes aspects from the professional values and practice course so that, for example, trainees understand the importance of English as an additional language, or the need to make provision for pupils with particular learning needs. Tasks and assignments, as well as taught sessions, have a clear link to practical teaching so that trainees can see their relevance to the classroom. For example, a Year 3 mathematics task requires trainees to track pupils' progress through a series of lessons, building on university sessions on inclusion. The *Every Child Matters* agenda is well covered in the professional values and practice sessions and followed up in subject teaching, such as healthy living in science.
5. University-based training sessions are of high quality and trainees respond well to them. This is because they are planned thoroughly with clear learning outcomes for trainees. Their content is interesting and relevant, engage trainees in practical activities and give them intellectual challenge. Tutors model primary classroom practice well, for instance by involving trainees in mental and oral starter activities in mathematics. In English, trainees are given tasks between sessions that help them to prepare for the next one.
6. The trainees' progress towards the Standards is monitored well and accurate assessments are made of how well trainees meet them. They receive regular feedback on tasks and assignments. Marking of these is very good and tutors provide helpful advice and guidance about how to improve. Trainees' teaching is

assessed regularly so that they know very clearly how well they are making progress. There is inconsistency in the way that mentors and link tutors give trainees subject-specific feedback on lessons. Although feedback on generic teaching skills is clear and helpful, lesson observation forms do not always provide clear judgements on how well the subject is being taught, or how it can be improved. This leads to lack of opportunities for subject tutors to evaluate the success of central programmes. Nevertheless, the training enables trainees to meet the Standards effectively.

Management and quality assurance

7. Management and quality assurance are good overall with some very good elements. A number of improvements, particularly in recruitment and selection, have been made since the last inspection.

8. Recruitment and selection procedures are outstanding. The selection process, which has the active involvement of partnership schools, is rigorous, fair and effective in filtering out unsuitable applicants at an early stage. Once trainees have been selected, high quality individual pre-course action plans provide a very effective means of ensuring that each trainee is fully prepared for the training, and this links very well to strategies which support their individual needs throughout their training. Recruitment initiatives, including a range of well designed and inclusive pamphlets, 'taster days' and visits to sixth forms, attract a wide range of applicants. The university, which has a strong commitment to inclusion, has been successful in attracting under-represented groups, such as men, onto the training courses. However, in spite of the university's best efforts, the proportion of trainees from minority ethnic groups has only risen slightly. Withdrawal rates are low.

9. The partnership is well managed and the close collaboration between the university and schools ensures that the training is of good quality. Programme leaders and subject managers provide effective leadership. With link tutors, they ensure that there is good cohesion between the university and school-based training. Management committees, which include representatives from schools and trainees, are well organised and deal with issues raised within the partnership. As a result, the quality of the provision is kept under close scrutiny and is continually being improved. Day-to-day communication between the university and partnership schools is good. However, there are insufficient opportunities to disseminate good practice within the partnership; for example, there are no regular meetings of mentors as a group and no regular newsletter.

10. The partnership agreement is well designed and ensures that there is a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. It is supported by helpful written guidance to schools on trainees' placements. A recently introduced three-day training course for mentors is of very good quality, although not all mentors have yet benefited from this. The university has put in place interim half-day training for mentors who have not yet attended, and this ensures a satisfactory level of

understanding throughout the partnership. Comprehensive records are kept concerning the level of training that each mentor has received. University staff are well qualified and experienced. Training for link tutors is good and ensures that they provide effective support to mentors before and during school placements.

11. The university is rigorous in monitoring and assuring the quality of the training. It carefully analyses the numerous evaluations from schools, tutors and trainees and is prompt to respond to the issues raised. Regular moderation meetings, joint observations, double marking of assignments and a system of triangulated evaluation at the end of each school placement all help to ensure that judgements are fair and accurate across the partnership. External examiners provide clear and helpful reports which moderate the university's judgements and their recommendations are acted upon.

12. In the short term, improvement planning is a strength because it puts in place effective actions to address identified weaknesses. However, strategic planning at subject and programme level is underdeveloped because it does not focus on how the training will improve in the longer term and result in measurable improvements in the quality of trainees' teaching.