

# High Force Education

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High Force Education  
Barnard Castle CE Primary School  
Green Lane  
Barnard Castle  
DL12 8LG

A primary initial teacher training  
Short inspection report  
2006/07

Managing inspector  
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## Introduction

High Force Education works in partnership with fifteen schools to provide primary initial teacher training courses. It offers a primary post graduate certificate in education. At the time of the inspection there were twenty eight 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: 1

The overall quality of training is at least good.

The provider will receive a short inspection in three years.

## Key strengths

- rigorous recruitment and selection procedures
- the outstanding leadership and management of the consortium
- the role of headteachers in ensuring that all trainees have access to high quality school experiences and training
- the highly effective monitoring of trainees' progress to ensure that the individual needs of all trainees are met well
- the structure, content and coherence of the courses
- robust quality assurance procedures that ensure high quality training across the consortium.

## Points for consideration

- ensuring greater consistency in the extent to which trainees receive subject- specific feedback on their teaching.

## The quality of training

1. The high quality training identified in the previous inspection has been maintained. The strengths of the training now include the very good structure and content of the programme that meets the Requirements well and the tight cohesion of its elements. Trainees are prepared thoroughly to meet the Standards.

2. All elements of the programme, including professional studies and the training in core and foundation subjects, are well structured and coherent. Taught modules are sequenced very well with school experiences. School-based tasks and assignments provide excellent opportunities for trainees to put theory into practice. As a result, trainees develop their skills in planning, teaching and assessment very well. Professional studies thoroughly covers key issues in teaching and learning at a theoretical level. There is a strong emphasis on developing trainees' subject knowledge, particularly in the core subjects. Current national issues including the *Every Child Matters* agenda are addressed effectively throughout all programmes. Trainees develop a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 3 through practical school experiences. All elements of the programme are clearly referenced to the Standards.

3. Course tutors are well qualified and highly experienced primary practitioners. Very good use is made of local authority advisers and advanced skills teachers to deliver sessions, for example on English as an additional language and diversity. Trainee and external evaluations show that course tutors model highly effective classroom practice, particularly in the use of different teaching and learning styles. The evaluations further show that trainees are challenged in the sessions and welcome the lively, interactive approach of their tutors and the opportunities for practical work.

4. The quality of training is enhanced by the very good contribution of well trained school-based tutors. Joint classroom observations by centre and school-based staff ensure that the feedback given to trainees guides them to improve their teaching and progress towards the Standards. The regular observation of trainees' teaching provides them with a clear picture of their strengths and weaknesses. However, while good examples of subject specific feedback were seen in trainees' records, some observations made little reference to subject knowledge and were too generic in nature.

5. Support for trainees is outstanding and a strength of the provision. The small size of the consortium and the strong focus on meeting individual needs ensures trainers and trainees know each other well. School-based tutors are highly conscientious in supporting trainees. Prior to each school experience and assessed teaching placement the whole partnership meet to discuss the progress of individual trainees. Here the next host school has the opportunity to share valuable information on the trainees' individual targets with the head and tutor from their previous one.

6. Secure mechanisms enable the assessment of trainees' achievement against the Standards. In school, the structured records of observation, performance records and regular reviews combine well to give a good overall view of the trainees' progress in meeting personal targets and specific Standards. Assignments and tasks draw on school experiences and taught sessions very well and assess clearly trainees' achievements against the Standards. Assignments are marked against clear criteria and trainees receive feedback that is supportive and constructive. Trainees' individual learning profiles and records of progress provide very good evidence bases to enable trainers to track trainees' progress in meeting the Standards effectively.

## Management and quality assurance

7. The management and quality assurance of the partnership are highly effective. Since the previous inspection the provider has made very good progress on tackling the points for consideration. This has been accomplished through the outstanding leadership of the course together with the support from high calibre partnership headteachers. A wide range of schools is actively involved and totally committed to the partnership. There are high expectations for the quality of schools in the partnership.

8. Rigorous selection procedures lead to the recruitment of high calibre trainees. Both retention and employment rates are high. The partnership is successful in recruiting males in to primary teaching and is unstinting in its efforts to recruit trainees from minority groups, for example through career presentations at universities with high numbers of minority ethnic students. The selection procedures are monitored carefully to ensure consistency. At interview, trainees are assessed for their ability in English and mathematics as well as their teaching potential and interpersonal skills. Very helpful guidance is sent to trainees prior to the course outlining what is required to improve their subject knowledge.

9. Headteachers and course directors meet regularly throughout each term to monitor, review and adapt the provision for trainees. This leads to highly effective management of the provision to ensure that all trainees have access to high quality school experiences and training. A robust partnership agreement clearly defines all roles. Most notably, the selection and de-selection criteria for membership are unequivocal and fully understood by all in the partnership. The explicit role of partnership headteachers ensures the successful brokering of high quality support and school experiences for trainees. Very good communication ensures all members of the partnership work well together to the benefit of the trainees. All take their responsibilities seriously and are passionate about their roles.

10. School-based staff know what is expected of them and are given very good guidance in how to work with trainees to promote their progress. This ensures training is geared well to trainees' individual needs. Trainers new to the partnership

receive appropriate training from the validating university as well as from within the existing staff. The work of all trainers is monitored thoroughly. It is a requirement that trainers undertake and pass a regional qualification in diversity and inclusion awareness. The way in which this underpins all aspects of the training is a strength of the partnership. A rigorous anti-bullying and race equality policy is known by all and reviewed regularly.

11. Moderation procedures are rigorous and effective. The moderation meetings between school and centre-based staff ensure the consistency and accuracy of the assessment of trainees. Clear arrangements for joint observations with partnership headteachers and the programme manager confirm and moderate school-based trainers' judgements.

12. Quality assurance procedures are robust. Lesson observation forms are routinely scrutinised by centre based subject leaders for subject-specific issues identified in the feedback which are used to inform subsequent training. Whilst there are examples of very good subject-specific feedback this is not consistent across the partnership. Course directors analyse school-based trainers' records of trainees' progress and use this to ensure high quality training is maintained.

13. Self-evaluation is extremely thorough and leads to improvements. For example, all training evaluations are scrutinised at partnership meetings and the course adapted where issues emerge from the trainees' feedback. Trainee satisfaction with all training throughout the programme rarely rates below good and is often judged to be excellent. External monitoring by highly qualified and experienced consultants ensures that the partnership is fully aware of strengths and areas for development. Short and long-term improvement planning are based firmly on the identified needs of trainees, as well as being sufficiently far reaching to encompass local and national initiatives. External examiners' reports are robust and identify pertinent issues to be considered in order to improve the provision.

14. The partnership deploys high quality resources well. All trainees are provided with a laptop and the centre is well resourced with a range of journals and teaching materials. All partnership schools make their resources available to all trainees.