

# Portsmouth Primary SCITT

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Portsmouth Primary SCITT  
The Dame Judith Professional Centre  
Sundridge Close  
Cosham  
Portsmouth  
Hampshire  
PO6 3JL

A primary initial teacher training  
Short inspection report

2006/07

Managing inspector  
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## Introduction

The Portsmouth Primary SCITT works in partnership with 17 schools to provide primary initial teacher training (ITT) courses. It offers a 5 to 11 primary PGCE course for 25 trainees. At the time of the inspection there were 22 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

- the effective management and very good communication which ensures the maintenance of high quality training and support
- the very good provision for individual needs of trainees
- the very good coherence between school and centre based training
- the very effective quality assurance systems which rigorously analyse the training and ensure continuous improvement
- the provision of an extensive range of opportunities for trainees to develop an understanding of the wider professional role of the teacher
- the excellent selection procedures which are effective in identifying high quality trainees
- the mentor training which focuses very well on the needs of mentors and improvement priorities.

## Point for consideration

- ensuring that opportunities to develop more explicit links between centre-based subject training are not missed.

## The quality of training

1. The quality of training has been at least maintained since the last inspection and has several very strong features. The course is very well planned, meets the Requirements fully and provides trainees with the appropriate experience, knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning across all subjects in the key stages for which they are being trained. It also provides good experience of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 3. Centre and school based training are very well balanced. A strength is the involvement of an extensive range of professionals and services, such as the Portsmouth Ethnic Minority Achievement Service.
2. A key strength of the course is the very good cohesion between centre- and school-based training. Strong and effective links between all partners are in place and this ensures high levels of consistency. Aspects of the *Every Child Matters* agenda are well covered in the course and are further amplified through good liaison with a range of local services such as the Family Learning Service. Information and communication technology is well integrated across subjects and there are good examples of cross subject working, for example in the child study assignment which requires trainees to assess pupils' learning in all subjects. However, there are some missed opportunities in the centre-based training to develop greater cross curricular links. Key elements of the course blend very well to develop trainees' knowledge of pedagogy and practice. Tasks and assignments provide intellectual challenge and are rooted in good classroom practice. These strengths, allied to very effective systems of communication, moderation and evaluation result in very high levels of consistency and cohesion.
3. The quality of training, both centre and school based, is of a consistently high standard. The partnership makes good use of a wide range of highly qualified, enthusiastic trainers who bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the course. Tutors model good primary teaching strategies: for example all taught sessions have clearly articulated learning objectives and outcomes. The trainees evaluate the training sessions very positively and particularly value the opportunities to be active participants in their learning. They develop confidence in teaching subjects such as art, physical education and science as a result of the practical nature of the training. Centre-based training is augmented by the use of a wide range of amenities and local groups, for example the Portsmouth Outdoor Centre and local museums. Trainees value this as excellent preparation for their wider professional role as a teacher within a local community.
4. School based training is of a very high quality. It is supported by well trained mentors and the very detailed and developmental guidance which is included in the handbooks. As a result of these strengths, trainees are confident and enthusiastic: they demonstrate good teaching strategies and subject knowledge.
5. The individual needs of trainees are met exceptionally well and this is a key strength of the course. A focus on assessment for learning is not only a strong feature of trainees' work in schools, but is also modelled well by tutors and mentors

as a way of ensuring that good account is taken of trainees' prior learning and individual and group needs. Exceptionally good use is made of regular subject audits and the acquisition of trainees' knowledge is carefully tracked and guided. Mentors are provided with information from the audits and are thus in a good position to tailor the school-based training accordingly. Pre-placement meetings between trainees, link tutors and current and future mentors ensure that individual strengths and areas for improvement are well planned for and that support is consistent and well informed. Regular, incisive targets are identified and appropriate activities are planned to ensure that trainees achieve well against the Standards. Opportunities are taken to develop trainees' subject and teaching strengths and the main study assignment affords trainees the opportunity to develop their own interests further and extend their own learning.

6. Systems for monitoring progress are comprehensive and effectively track trainees' progress against the Standards. Criteria against which to evaluate progress are detailed and clearly articulated in the handbooks. Trainees' assessment and placement files are regularly and rigorously monitored. Feedback and marking of assignments is detailed, subject specific and identifies areas for improvement. Trainees' personal evaluations demonstrate increasing knowledge and understanding about the impact of their teaching upon pupils' learning. The Record of Professional Development is used well to monitor and record individual progress against the Standards. Feedback from lesson observations is detailed, very useful and has good focus on the Standards, subject knowledge, pedagogy and pupils' learning.

7. Assessment is rigorous and accurate. There is a good range of directed tasks and assignments which relate well to the Standards and are carefully planned to ensure effective links between subjects, professional studies, practice and research. Assignments are accurately assessed using clear criteria and involving both school- and centre-based trainers.

## Management and quality assurance

8. The procedures for the selection of suitable trainees are very effective and fully meet the Requirements. In recent years almost all trainees have completed the course to a high standard and have gained teaching posts as a result. Although information provided for prospective candidates on the web site and in the prospectus lacks sufficient detail regarding the content of the training, the interview process itself is excellent. This is because it includes a very wide range of activities which accurately assess applicants' experience, subject knowledge and suitability to teach. This is a key strength of the provision. A strong feature is the requirement that candidates give a presentation on 'the teacher that I would like to become'. Partnership school staff are fully involved in hosting interview days in their schools and effective systems exist to ensure that interviewers are well briefed, judgements are consistent and that outcomes comprehensively recorded. Detailed feedback is given to both successful and unsuccessful candidates. Clear guidance is given to those who are selected on how to address any identified weaknesses before the

start of the course. Systems to check criminal records and academic qualifications are well established and effective. The partnership has been proactive in trying to attract trainees from minority ethnic communities and mature trainees and numbers have increased slightly as a consequence.

9. The leadership and management of the partnership by the training manager and course co-ordinator are excellent. They know schools and trainees well, are easily accessible and are very effective in ensuring that school placements match the needs of trainees. They are very well supported by highly committed trainers from the local authority and partnership schools, and the very effective communication between schools and the centre is a strong feature of the partnership.

10. The committee structure is well defined with clear remits and responsibilities. Because all partnership headteachers sit on the management committee, there is a strong sense of ownership and commitment by partnership schools. As a result, the training is well planned and organised and trainees are very well supported both in the centre and in placement schools. Resources such as a range of educational software and an up-to-date training library are well organised and enhance the training.

11. The partnership documentation is detailed and helpful. It clearly describes the roles of all trainers and what is expected of trainees. A strong feature of the provision is the team of link tutors, who not only provide effective support to schools and academic and pastoral support to trainees, but also undertake a quality assurance role to ensure that the assessment of trainees is accurate and consistent across the partnership. Schools provide good venues for training, and only schools of proven commitment and quality are invited to join the partnership.

12. Training for school-based mentors is a key strength and is of a high standard; it effectively meets the needs of both new and experienced mentors and appropriately focuses on the partnership's development priorities. For example, recent training on assessing trainees' subject knowledge is having a very positive impact on the quality of mentors' assessment of trainees' teaching.

13. Systems to monitor the quality of centre and school based training are robust and managers take firm action to address issues when they arise, particularly with regard to the quality of the delivery of training. Trainers are given clear guidance on what they are expected to provide and this is monitored closely.

14. Quality assurance procedures are a key strength because they ensure that detailed evaluations of the training are closely scrutinised and result in timely and well-planned improvements. The training is evaluated regularly by both trainers and trainees and the extensive data are well used to undertake on-going improvements and inform longer term development planning. School-based training is effectively monitored by link tutors and senior managers. A system of joint observations by link tutors and mentors is well established, and mentors also undertake observations in second schools, which contribute to effective continuity between placements.

15. The partnership's development plan is well designed and makes very good use of external examiners' reports, evaluations and data from similar providers to help identify suitable priorities. Achievable targets, with clear actions, timings, resources and success criteria are a strong feature of the plan, which has a central focus on how to improve the provision with regard to outcomes for trainees.