

# University of Greenwich



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A primary initial teacher training  
Short inspection report  
2007/08

Managing inspector  
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## Introduction

The School of Education and Training at the University of Greenwich works in partnership with 185 schools to provide primary initial teacher training courses. It offers a three-year primary BA (Hons) with qualified teacher status (QTS), a one-year primary, full time and flexible postgraduate programme. Both programmes lead to the recommendation for QTS. Postgraduate trainees can specialise in a modern foreign language (French). At the time of the inspection there were 563 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 next inspection of this provider will take place in accordance with the ITE inspection framework.

## Key strengths

- the quality and cohesion of the centre-based training
- the good communication between all partners
- the swift response to any issues or concerns that are raised
- the good attention paid in centre based training to supporting trainees' individual needs
- the effective selection and recruitment procedures which result in the selection of appropriate trainees.

## Point for action

- improving the consistency of school-based training.

## Points for consideration

- ensuring that more mentors are accessing the training they need to support their school-based training
- identifying success criteria in improvement planning which enable the outcomes to be measured against improvements in trainees' teaching skills
- ensuring that information gained from trainees' pre-course self audits are used more effectively to inform the training at the outset.

## The quality of training

1. The quality of the training is good overall although centre-based training is stronger than school-based training where there are some inconsistencies. The structure and content of the training programme fully meet the Requirements. Course structures are good and there are cohesive links within subject training which enable trainees to apply their knowledge well. There is a good focus on the Standards and these are clearly indicated in module plans and assignment information. Since the last inspection the PGCE course has been revised and revalidated to build on existing strengths and respond to changes. For example there are clearer links than previously between educational studies and core subjects in areas such as assessment and the development of research skills. However, although there is explicit reference to Every Child Matters in educational studies, it is less well developed in the core subjects.
2. A key strength is the quality of the centre-based training in the core subjects and information communication technology (ICT) to ensure that trainees have a good understanding of the National Curriculum and the Curriculum Framework for the Foundation Stage. Resources are good and trainees are well prepared for using ICT in classrooms. For example, they benefit greatly from seeing modern technology such as interactive whiteboards and digital microscopes used in lectures and workshops. Educational studies provide trainees with a broad and balanced knowledge and understanding of the theory and practice of education.
3. Tutors are well-qualified and enthusiastic. They inspire trainees' confidence, model good primary practice and provide valuable opportunities for trainees to reflect on their learning. Lectures and workshops are well planned and provide a mix of practical and relevant activities. As a result, trainees are confident when they begin a school placement and are up-to-date in their understanding of initiatives such as the Rose Report on the teaching of early literacy skills. Trainees are very positive about the quality of their training and speak enthusiastically about how it is preparing them to teach. For example, they are confident in preparing work for pupils whose home language is not English.
4. The quality of school based training is less consistent. The best training is linked well to centre-based training and written feedback to trainees on their teaching is evaluative, helpful and detailed. However, in some instances trainees are not provided with sufficient subject specific feedback or information on the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning. As a result, it is not always made plain to trainees how they might improve their practice. In addition, although trainees are responsible for tracking their progress towards meeting the Standards, not all mentors monitor their trainee's folders with sufficient rigour.
5. Training is very responsive to the individual needs of trainees. Trainees who need additional support are identified through on-going audits, and good quality support is provided through tutorials and well focused differentiation in lectures and workshops. Criteria for assignments are clear and enable trainees to know what is expected. The marking of assignments is detailed, helpful and accurately informs

trainees about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. A percentage of assignments are double marked and this helps to ensure consistency. Tutors are particularly proactive in ensuring that trainees make appropriate use of Standard English.

## Management and quality assurance

6. The management and quality assurance of the partnership are good. Recruitment and selection procedures are detailed and effectively identify suitable trainees. Considerable efforts are made to recruit trainees from a wide range of social and ethnic backgrounds and from under-represented groups. Although the number of male trainees is slightly lower this year, the proportion of trainees from black and minority ethnic groups is relatively high and demonstrates the positive impact of these strategies. The rate of withdrawal has reduced as a result of improved selection procedures and the provision of good quality support for vulnerable trainees.

7. Interview days are well planned and managed with good involvement of partnership school headteachers and mentors. A strength is the quality of the common interview questions. Most candidates' writing skills and suitability to teach are recorded well. Rigorous systems are in place to ensure that essential qualifications and suitability to teach checks are carried out effectively. Once selected, suitable pre-course reading is recommended. All trainees undertake focussed observations in primary schools and complete self audits in English, mathematics, science and ICT. However, insufficient use is made of these to inform training at the outset because some of the questions are too vague to be of real value.

8. The training programmes are well led. The management structure effectively supports their development and day to day running. Management committees and partnership consultative groups focus appropriately on evaluating and improving the training. There is very good consultation with trainees. As a result, problems are swiftly identified and resolved.

9. The partnership handbook and supporting documentation are of a good quality because they provide detailed and helpful guidance to partnership schools. A particular strength is the aide-memoires for mentors and link tutors, detailing weekly placement tasks. The role of the link tutor, which was a weakness at the time of the last inspection, has been considerably strengthened as a result of extensive and well-designed training, and this is reflected in greatly improved evaluations of their impact. Communication between the School of Education and Training and partnership schools is good.

10. Procedures to ensure that trainers have the knowledge, skills and understanding to successfully discharge their roles are good overall, although some school-based mentors are less secure in their understanding. There is a strong sense

of collegiality amongst centre-based tutors and they collaborate well in the planning and delivery of the training. Managers effectively monitor centre-based training and link the outcomes well to professional development activities. The support for newly appointed tutors is good. The School of Education and Training provides very good differentiated training for mentors. However, not all partnership schools take full advantage of this and some mentors lack confidence as a result. Systems to monitor and record the extent to which mentors have been trained have only recently been introduced. It is too soon to judge how effective these will be in identifying those mentors who need more support to ensure greater consistency across the partnership in school-based training.

11. Extensive and robust systems to evaluate the quality of the training are securely in place. A wide range of evaluations and reports from trainees, trainers, managers and external examiners are rigorously scrutinised and suitable actions are put in place to resolve issues. For example, this year the number of link tutor visits during placements has been increased and a mid-placement review has been introduced following last year's evaluations.

12. Systems to monitor trainees' progress towards the Standards are effective and trainees receive good guidance on developing their professional development portfolios. However, there are some inconsistencies in how progress is tracked during school placements, particularly where mentors are less well trained. The School of Education and Training has recently introduced promising new strategies such as joint observations and proformas to track progress against the Standards, but it is too soon to judge their impact.

13. Improvement planning at both subject and programme level is satisfactory. Clear and relevant priorities are identified from evaluations and monitoring reports. As a result, the plans are having a positive impact on training, although success criteria are not always clearly measurable against improvements in the quality of trainees' teaching.