

# London Diocesan Board for Schools

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36 Causton Street  
London  
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A primary initial teacher training  
Full inspection report  
2007/08

Managing inspector  
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## Introduction

The London Diocesan Board for Schools works in partnership with around 40 schools to provide a school-centred primary initial teacher training (ITT) course. It offers a professional Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in the early years. At the time of the inspection there were 17 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 full 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

Standards achieved by trainees: Grade 2

Quality of training: Grade 2

Management and quality assurance: Grade 2

The next inspection of this provider will take place in accordance with the ITE inspection framework.

## Key strengths

- the leadership and management of the training
- the quality of centre-based training, including the balance and cohesion between the different elements of the course
- trainees' skills in planning their teaching which takes good account of their very good understanding of what influences pupils' progress and development
- the professional attributes displayed by trainees
- trainees' use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support teaching and learning
- the strong emphasis placed on professional studies, and spiritual, moral and social development as integral parts of the training.

## Points for consideration

- ensuring greater consistency in school-based training, especially in phonics
- improving the consistency with which subject knowledge audits are used
- strengthening links between improvement planning and the quality of trainees' teaching.

## Standards achieved by trainees

1. The trainees meet the Standards at a good level. They enjoy very good relationships with pupils and communicate high expectations of behaviour and learning. As a result, pupils are positive and eager to do well. The trainees display professional attitudes towards their colleagues and demonstrate effective team working skills. In particular, they work well with other adults in the classroom to support pupils' learning and play a full part in the life of the school. Trainees communicate well with parents, assist on trips and present a high profile in playgrounds. They are effective at evaluating and improving their own practice.
2. The trainees' subject knowledge is satisfactory overall. They have a good theoretical understanding and knowledge of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 curriculum and the revised frameworks although a few are less confident in applying theory to practice when teaching early reading and writing. They have a secure knowledge of the Primary National Strategy and a clear overview of the Key Stage 2 curriculum. They are confident in their understanding of child development and the importance of planning for progression. The trainees use ICT, such as interactive whiteboards, very well to support their teaching. They manage pupils' behaviour well and are skilled at using formative assessment to set differentiated tasks which are matched to pupils' individual and group needs. As a result, pupils make good progress in their lessons.
3. The trainees demonstrate a very good understanding of how pupils' progress and well-being are influenced by a range of developmental, social, ethnic, cultural and linguistic factors, and they adapt their teaching and personalise learning accordingly. They make good use of opportunities to gain an understanding of pupils' diverse backgrounds; for example, some worked well with teachers to plan a 'refugee week'. The trainees are aware of their placement schools' policies on safeguarding children as well as their statutory responsibilities as teachers.
4. A particular strength is the way in which many trainees link their medium term planning to the school's curriculum maps and use this to plan sequences of lessons. They are diligent in annotating and subsequently adjusting future lesson plans to take account of how well pupils respond to their teaching. The work of other adults in class is usually well planned, although sometimes teaching assistants are under-deployed during whole class teaching sessions.
5. Trainees demonstrate the teaching skills expected of good teachers. They use a range of imaginative strategies to engage and motivate pupils: for example, in one lesson a trainee used a 'dinosaur shop' to support teaching about money. Resources are well prepared and are of high quality. Trainees work hard to ensure that the classroom environment supports learning well, for example by using a word bank wall display.
6. Trainees use a range of both formative and summative assessments well to monitor and track pupils' progress and inform their planning. They maintain

comprehensive records of pupils' achievement. In lessons, trainees use effective strategies to assess pupils' progress and to extend their learning further. They target their questioning well to gauge pupils' understanding. Trainees are diligent in marking pupils' work and provide constructive feedback in child-friendly writing and language. They also level pupils' work accurately.

## The quality of training

7. The quality of training is good. There is a good balance between coverage of the Foundation Stage and of Key Stage 1, and between central and school-based training. The course is well designed to ensure that there is sufficient time for in-depth central training and for sustained school experience. School-based tasks are planned well to link the two.

8. Central training in English, mathematics and science is well structured and delivered. Tutors possess up-to-date subject knowledge; they engage trainees in interactive methods of working and model good early years and primary practice well. The trainees evaluate their training very positively and particularly value its practical nature and the enthusiasm of the subject tutors.

9. Trainees have benefited from recent improvements in ICT resources such as laptop computers and digital cameras for each trainee. Spiritual, social and moral development is an important thread which is interwoven effectively throughout the training. Professional studies provide a strong backbone to the training and promotes overall cohesion very effectively. Aspects that cut across subjects, such as planning and assessment, are first introduced in professional studies and then followed up in subject specific sessions, with subject tutors fully briefed about content. Good attention is paid to equipping trainees with the skills to teach pupils with English as an additional language and to teach those with additional learning needs. There is a strong emphasis on inclusion.

10. School-based training is satisfactory overall with some good features but it varies between schools. Although most mentors support trainees well and provide them with clear, evaluative feedback on the quality of their teaching, they do not routinely evaluate the impact of the teaching on pupils' progress. There is also some variation in how a few schools are supporting the good central training in the teaching of phonics and some trainees lack confidence in this area as a result. Nevertheless, school-based training is well planned and trainees benefit from teaching in a wide range of settings. Through additional and personal learning programmes, they are able to pursue in-depth investigations of areas of interest and of those topics where they need to undertake further study. This is enhancing trainees' subject and professional knowledge and understanding.

11. The trainees' individual needs are generally well met. Frequent and regular meetings between the training manager and the link tutors, along with detailed and well organised records of professional development, help to ensure that both

trainers and trainees have a secure understanding of strengths and areas for development. Feedback from assignments is helpful and evaluative. Lesson observations clearly identify individual targets and these are followed up in subsequent observations. However, the timing and use of subject audits varies too much from subject to subject. The provider is aware of this issue and plans to address it at an advanced stage.

## Management and quality assurance

12. The management and quality assurance are good and much has improved since the last inspection. The most significant factors are the leadership and management of the training manager, which are very good. There is a strong sense of direction and a relentless focus on improving the quality of provision. The administrative support is effective and makes a significant contribution to communication across the partnership as well as the management of information systems. The training manager is well supported by the three management committees, which hold the partnership to account for its provision. Between them, they have successfully expanded the partnership and enabled more schools to be involved in the training programme and its management.

13. Recruitment and selection procedures are well designed and effective. Although this year there has been a higher than usual number of withdrawals, these could not be foreseen. The calibre of trainees is generally good with almost all successful candidates gaining qualified teacher status and subsequent employment as a teacher. The provider is successful in recruiting trainees from under-represented groups, such as males and those from minority ethnic groups. This is as a result of careful monitoring at all stages of the application process and of targeted advertising. There is significant involvement of partnership headteachers and mentors in interviews. All stages of the selection process are closely monitored. For example, initial subject knowledge audits have been improved in the current round of interviews to ensure that more accurate and detailed information is collected to inform recruitment decisions and training. Pre-course tasks are helpful and give trainees a good start to their studies. Identity, qualifications and criminal record checks are carried out rigorously.

14. Since the last inspection, the partnership agreement has been reviewed and is now of good quality. It sets out roles and responsibilities very clearly and has the support of partnership schools. Despite the variability in the quality of school-based training, mentors have access to a well planned training programme. Regular mentor meetings also provide good opportunities for partnership schools to share good practice, for example in supporting trainees who are experiencing difficulties.

15. The partnership has good procedures to check the quality of provision and to bring about further improvements. The training manager effectively monitors subject and link tutors' practice and sets high standards for course delivery. Good attention is paid to gathering evidence on quality from trainees, schools and external

examiners. Regular contact between the training manager and link tutors leads to the partnership having a very secure knowledge of where particular strengths in mentoring may be found. This information is used well to place trainees in schools and especially for their second placement.

16. Good systems exist for assessing trainees, monitoring their progress and moderating mentors' judgements. As a result, accurate assessments are made of trainees' progress towards meeting the Standards and of their final grades. External examiner's reports are helpful in confirming the accuracy of assessments. In addition, annual evaluations of subject provision make a positive contribution to the provider's capacity for determining overall effectiveness and planning for improvement, although these plans are not always sufficiently targeted at raising trainees' achievements in the classroom. This is because not enough use is made of the information about trainees' teaching to analyse particular strengths and weaknesses in subjects or overall. The provider is aware of this issue and is developing strategies to resolve it, but it is too soon to judge the impact of these.