

Bishop Grosseteste University College

School of Teacher Development
Lincoln
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A primary initial teacher training
short inspection report
2007/08

Managing inspector
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Introduction

Bishop Grosseteste University College works in partnership with around 220 schools to provide primary initial teacher training (ITT) courses. It offers postgraduate and professional certificates of education, and undergraduate BA routes to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). At the time of the inspection there were 500 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 next inspection of this provider will take place in accordance with the Initial Teacher Education Inspection Framework.

Key strengths

- the high quality leadership and management which is very strongly focused on enhancing the quality of training
- the experienced and well qualified tutors who act as excellent role models for trainees
- the strong partnership with schools which has been strengthened by the introduction of skilled school-based lead mentors
- the excellent communications which ensure that all parties have a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities
- the excellent cohesion between all parts of the training programmes
- the excellent use of information and communication technology (ICT) to improve trainees' learning
- the strong approach to meeting the needs of individual trainees, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Points for consideration

- ensure that managers monitor regularly the progress being made towards achieving the university college's action plan goals and that they evaluate the impact of each initiative on trainees' teaching
- review the use of generic marking criteria for assignments to ensure that they are matched more carefully to the specific requirements of the task.

The quality of training

1. The good quality training across the different programmes has been maintained since the previous inspection and in several major aspects it has improved significantly. All elements are structured very well with a very good balance between centre-based and school-based training. They meet the Requirements fully and provide trainees with very good opportunities to demonstrate meeting the Standards. The cohesion between all elements is excellent. The strong emphasis on the *Every Child Matters* agenda underpins the training very well. There are very effective links between the centre-based training and the school-based tasks which enable trainees to put theory into practice and to reflect on their experiences.
2. The content of the training programmes has been designed very carefully to ensure that trainees are fully conversant with all the relevant educational initiatives including the National Curriculum, the National Strategies, the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage, the *Every Child Matters* agenda and recent developments such as the Rose Report. Other recent improvements include the enhanced focus on enabling trainees to make very good use of information and communication technology (ICT), both in schools and for their own personal development. Trainees also gain significantly from working in schools with pupils for whom English is an additional language.
3. The experienced and well qualified tutors provide excellent role models with the result that trainees are motivated and inspired to become high quality teachers. The quality of their teamwork is exceptional. Centre-based training is enhanced by good quality contributions from external tutors, including school-based staff. Tutors make excellent use of ICT to improve trainees' learning. For example, they use the virtual learning environment very effectively to stimulate discussion, provide support and promote learning. In addition, the recent purpose built teaching and learning observation area with cameras and microphones, demonstrates the university college's vision for raising the quality of training still further.
4. Partnership school staff provide good support for trainees during their school experience. The placements are matched carefully to trainees' needs and, as a result, contribute very effectively to their development. The appropriately trained lead mentors in all partnership schools ensure that trainees' individual needs are met very well. They monitor trainees' progress closely and provide extra opportunities to address particular aspects that need further development. The auditing of trainees' subject knowledge is well thought out and trainees are provided with very good support to improve. Trainees with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are also provided with very good support which enables them to access all elements of their respective programmes.
5. The arrangements for monitoring trainees' progress towards the Standards are good. Trainees receive good quality feedback from lesson observations and comments are often referenced to specific Standards. The end-of-placement reports identify appropriate targets for subsequent placements. These are followed up and

addressed systematically so that trainees make the progress expected. Tasks and assignments are marked to a high standard. Feedback is helpful and developmental. However, there is potential to make further improvements by ensuring that the use of generic marking criteria for assignments are matched more carefully to the specific requirements of the task. Trainees make good use of their professional development portfolios to record evidence of their progress and to demonstrate how they are meeting or exceeding the Standards.

Management and quality assurance

6. The university college's rigorous selection procedures are very successful at identifying those applicants who have the capability and aptitude to complete the training programmes well. Successful applicants are given good guidance about how to prepare for the start of their respective programmes. As a result of this attention to detail and the personal support provided throughout the training programmes, withdrawal rates are low.

7. The university college is committed to widening participation. It has a detailed equal opportunities policy and race equality policy which meets the Requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 fully. Great care has been taken to redesign the prospectus and the website to provide comprehensive information about the various training routes and to promote the ethnically diverse nature of the teaching profession. These changes are part of the providers' focused efforts to increase the number of applications from under-represented groups. Whilst the university college has not been able to meet its target for recruiting trainees from minority ethnic groups, it is broadly in line with other providers in recruiting male trainees. It has successfully increased the number of trainees with disabilities.

8. Leadership and management at all levels are strong. There is a clear and well articulated shared vision for the future development of the provision. This focuses appropriately on enhancing the quality of the training and improving trainees' teaching. The university college has bid successfully for additional funding which it has deployed very effectively to resource specific initiatives. The effects of these and other changes are already making a positive impact on the training experience. New appointments have brought particular expertise which has strengthened and complemented the strong team. For example, this has improved and strengthened the teaching of ICT, which is now excellent.

9. The university college's partnership with schools is a strength. There is excellent leadership and communication. This is exemplified in the recent initiative to introduce a lead mentor into all partnership schools. This strategy has already improved further the quality of training in schools and its coherence with the centre-based training.

10. The partnership committee sets high expectations for all members to achieve and is a significant driving force for improvement. These high expectations are clearly reflected in the selection and de-selection criteria for partnership schools. The

partnership agreement is detailed and comprehensive. It makes a significant contribution to the success of the training provision. Roles, responsibilities and entitlements for all parties are very clear.

11. Very good use is made of the university college's quality assurance procedures to ensure that the assessment of trainees is not only rigorous but consistent and accurate. The external examiner reports and the internal evaluations are analysed thoroughly to assess the quality of provision and to identify where further improvement is needed. These priorities inform the annual course reviews and set out appropriate areas to be addressed in the next round of improvement planning. The strategy works well. However, there needs to be further emphasis on monitoring progress towards achieving the goals identified in the university college's action plans and a greater focus on evaluating the impact of each initiative on the quality of trainees' teaching.