

# University of East Anglia

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School of Education & Lifelong Learning  
Norwich  
NR4 7TJ

A primary initial teacher training  
short inspection report  
2007/08

Managing inspector  
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## Introduction

The University of East Anglia works in partnership with 219 schools to provide primary and secondary initial teacher training (ITT) courses. It offers Early Years (3-7 years), Lower Primary (5-9 years) and Upper Primary (7-11 years) Primary PGCE course together with Primary Language (7-11 years) courses specialising in French, German and Spanish. Subjects offered as part of the Secondary Years PGCE include Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Maths, English, Modern Languages, Religious Education, Physical Education, Geography and History. At the time of the inspection there were 167 trainees on the Primary Years PGCE course.

## 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 rigour of the selection procedures that identifies applicants that have the potential to succeed in the classroom
- the high quality of the leadership and management at all levels of the partnership
- the university's strong partnership with local schools
- the excellent communication between all partners
- the very good support trainees receive from school-based staff
- the commitment of the partnership to continuous improvement
- the excellent level of personal tuition for trainees needing extra support.

## Point for consideration

- sharpening the usefulness and quality of assignment marking by ensuring that the assessment criteria are matched closely to the specific requirements of the task.

## The quality of training

1. The quality of training is at least as good as it was at the time of the last inspection.
2. The structure and the content of the training programme are well conceived. The course has been revised since the previous inspection and now offers very good opportunities to specialise in modern foreign languages. The first school experience has been changed to include a paired placement, which provides trainees with excellent opportunities to work together and share experiences. The course fully meets the Requirements.
3. The course content includes very good opportunities for creativity and inclusion and emphasises strong cross-curricular links between the different components. It provides good coverage of the core subjects, information and communication technology (ICT), foundation subjects and up-to-date current educational initiatives, which ensures that trainees are informed fully of educational developments. This includes elements that contribute well to trainees' understanding of community cohesion.
4. Both school-based and centre-based training promote trainees' very good understanding of the key underlying principles of teaching and learning. Tutors model primary practice very well, which helps trainees develop their understanding of teaching and learning and enthuses them to teach their own good lessons. Centre-based training is enhanced by very good contributions from outside speakers who are often staff working in partnership schools. School-based provision complements the centre-based training very well with an excellent balance of theory, practice and well-focused support for trainees.
5. The procedures to support and meet trainees' individual needs are very good. The subject audits used to assess trainees' knowledge and understanding of the core subjects and ICT are extremely thorough; they identify trainees' individual strengths and any areas needing improvement with great accuracy. Tutors and school-based staff possess a very good knowledge about the trainees they are supporting. Those trainees identified needing additional support receive excellent levels of personal tuition.
6. The monitoring of trainees' progress is a strength. This is because staff in partnership schools are fully conversant with their roles and responsibilities and they possess a very good understanding of the university's expectations and its demands in terms of monitoring trainees' progress during teaching practices. As a result, each trainee's progress is monitored systematically against the Standards; they receive high quality oral and written evaluations in relation to their teaching performance.
7. Assignments and tasks are carefully chosen and purposeful; each of the tasks has a particular focus to develop trainees' knowledge, skills and understanding of teaching and learning in a meaningful and incremental way, thus contributing to

their evidence and research base that is needed to complete the formally assessed assignments. Overall, the assessments and the tasks link well to school-based practice. However, because the marking criteria are not aligned closely enough to the specific requirements of each assignment, the quality and usefulness of tutors' marking is variable.

## Management and quality assurance

8. The university continues to be an outstanding provider of primary initial teacher training. This is because the training programme is expertly led and managed and, as a result, the course leaders have built and maintained a strong team who work together extremely well.

9. The university has developed a well-deserved reputation as a leading teacher training provider and, consequently, attracts very high numbers of applicants for its training programme. It continues to be proactive and constantly seeks ways to promote the training programme to all sections of the community. This effort is paying off as the university is increasing the number of applicants from under-represented groups, particularly males. By working closely with, and listening carefully to, staff from partnership schools the university has a very good understanding of the calibre of applicants that schools are seeking. This knowledge has been used to excellent effect in developing rigorous selection procedures that are highly effective at identifying those candidates likely to succeed in the classroom. As a result, withdrawal rates are low.

10. A strong feature of the partnership's success is the high quality of the leadership and management at all levels. Although there have been recent changes to the primary team its leaders possess a great wealth of expertise and experience, which they use to extremely good effect. A strong sense of collegiality resides within the team and, together, they have created a shared sense of purpose and priority, which has enabled them to bring about change and overcome some significant challenges. For example, a recent restructuring of local authority schools reduced the number of school placements available for trainees. The primary team acted quickly to address the problem by working with and strengthening its partnership with schools, which was successful in ensuring that all trainees were able to complete their training.

11. The university's partnership with schools is a strength of the training programme. Despite the wide geographical spread of schools the university has developed strong relationships and excellent communications with its partners. Partnership leaders have added to and enhanced the quality of communications and strengthened overall management. The primary team are actively seeking to increase the numbers of schools working with the university. This is so they can improve trainees' teaching experiences further by providing greater numbers of contrasting school placements. Their efforts have successfully exceeded expectations as over sixty schools, new to the partnership, have expressed interest in taking

trainees next year. All schools offering trainee placements sign a partnership agreement to indicate their acceptance of the responsibilities. The agreement supports high quality training by making clear the school's commitment to participate in relevant training and, by referring to other documentation, sets out the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. It also makes clear the financial reimbursements that schools receive for each trainee they host. The university's systems for selecting and de-selecting schools from the partnership agreement work well but the criteria used are not set out explicitly in documentation circulated to schools.

12. The attendance of school staff at training events has increased significantly since the previous inspection. The quality of documentation provided to schools is extremely good and links the school-based element of the training programme closely to the training delivered at the university. As a result, the vast majority of trainees receive excellent support during their placements.

13. Arrangements for monitoring the quality and consistency of assessment are good. The university tutors work closely with school-based staff to moderate trainees' progress in teaching and professional development. Formal lesson observations are an integral part of the process and, where necessary, as in the case of a new school-based mentor, these are moderated by conducting a joint observation with an experienced colleague. Moderation meetings are held for each assignment.

14. The primary team has a very good knowledge of the strengths of the training programme and the areas it wants to improve. This is because the monitoring and evaluating arrangements are designed well. Evaluations of all aspects of the programme are gathered from the relevant parties and analysed to identify where change is needed. For instance, while the evaluation of the initiative to introduce paired placements into school experiences was judged a success it also identified that further work was needed to address issues raised. External examiners' reports provide further evidence about the course with appropriate recommendations to improve the quality of provision, which adds to the primary team's evidence base.

15. The partnership is committed to continuous improvement; this is evident from the thoroughness and honesty of the annual course review and the rigour with which the university compares its performance against other providers. All the evaluation data is collated and used well to judge the effectiveness and overall impact of each component of the training programme on trainees' progress towards the Standards. Much of this work takes place at the end of each academic year, which then leads to the preparation of the partnership's comprehensive and detailed annual development plan ready for the subsequent academic year. Plans are already in place to produce a longer term development plan that builds on the current very good practice.