

Kingsbridge Education Improvement Partnership

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Provider address

Kingsbridge Excellence Centre
Rosebridge High school
Holt Street
Wigan
WN1 3HD

Inspection dates

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Lead inspector

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Introduction

1. This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors supported by a team of specialist inspectors in accordance with the *Framework for the Inspection of Initial Teacher Education (2008-11)*.
2. The inspection draws upon evidence from all aspects of the provision to make judgements against all parts of the inspection evaluation schedule in the framework. Inspectors focused on the overall effectiveness of the training in supporting high quality outcomes for trainees and the capacity of the partnership to bring about further improvements. A summary of the grades awarded is included at the end of this report.

Key to inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

The provider

3. Kingsbridge Education Improvement Partnership established the provision of an employment based route into initial teacher education to address local recruitment needs in Wigan in 2003. At the time of the inspection there were 5 secondary schools and 8 primary schools in the partnership. The partnership offers training for both primary and secondary graduate trainees to gain Qualified Teacher Status. In the 2008/2009 cohort there were 10 primary trainees and 9 secondary trainees covering the subjects of English, mathematics, science, physical education, information and communication technology and drama.

Employment-based routes to qualified teacher status

Key strengths

4. The key strengths are:
- the commitment within the partnership to train teachers who successfully gain employment in schools locally
 - some very effective mentoring and strong pastoral support leading to good outcomes for trainees
 - high quality training for primary trainees in how to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy
 - trainees' good skills in communicating and working with others, and their positive response to advice and feedback

Required actions

5. In order to strengthen management's assessment of performance the provider must:
- improve the management of the partnership by clarifying roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability
 - use the data and information collected from monitoring to identify where specific action is needed to improve outcomes for trainees
6. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment the provider must:
- improve the quality of training plans and consistency of mentoring across the partnership
 - use assessment, target setting and review more effectively to ensure all trainees fulfil their potential

Recommendations

7. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment the provider should:
- ensure all trainers have consistently high expectations of trainees' potential relative to their starting points
 - strengthen the consistency and coherence of school-based training across the partnership
 - develop further trainees' skills in reflecting on their practice so that they identify clearly the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 3

8. Inspectors agree with the provider's judgement that trainees' attainment is good with an average of 80% of trainees graded good or better over the last three years. A significant proportion of secondary trainees are judged to be outstanding although the profile of primary trainees' competence is not as strong. Many trainees have significant experience of working with children and young people in a variety of contexts prior to starting the course and they make good use of these skills to enhance their teaching. Most trainees also have a strong commitment to their own professional development and these two factors make a strong contribution to their good attainment. Trainees are positive about the programme and how it has helped them to develop as teachers. They demonstrate a good level of skill in communicating and working with others and they act on advice and feedback to improve their teaching. They have high expectations of pupils and relate to individuals well; they manage behaviour issues effectively using a variety of strategies hence creating a good climate for learning in their classroom. They plan lessons that incorporate a range of activities and stimulating resources that engage pupils well and help them to make progress. Many trainees also use assessment effectively to check pupils' knowledge and understanding. Secondary trainees show a good knowledge of potential health and safety issues related to their subject such as e-safety in information and communication technology (ICT) lessons and safe chemical handling in science. However, while both primary and secondary trainees reflect regularly on their teaching, there is insufficient emphasis in their reflections on the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning. Similarly, secondary trainees' knowledge of how to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through teaching their subject is not fully developed.

9. Recruitment procedures are rigorous although not consistent across the partnership. However, the high level of involvement of headteachers and other school leaders in the recruitment process helps to ensure that the trainees selected have the potential to become effective teachers. The programme addresses local recruitment needs well with a high proportion of trainees gaining employment in partnership schools or the local authority. The partnership has been successful in recruiting men into primary teaching but less so in attracting minority ethnic trainees onto the programme. Each trainee undertakes an initial needs analysis against the standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) supported by thorough discussion with their mentor. The outcome of this audit feeds into the development of the trainee's training plan but there is wide variation in the quality of plans. The best examples are well tailored to meet the trainee's individual development needs with clear links between the QTS standards, school-based activities and central training sessions. Weaker plans are not well personalised, vary in detail and coverage and often just provide a brief indication of what a trainee will do. Nonetheless, the majority of mentors know their trainees well and have a secure knowledge of their development needs at different stages of the course, and subsequently provide experiences and development opportunities to address most identified gaps and/or weaknesses.

10. The quality of training and assessment is satisfactory and the provider's judgement of trainees' attainment at the pass/fail borderline is secure. Mentoring across the partnership varies significantly, from very high quality to satisfactory. The regular high quality support for some trainees promotes their good systematic progress, while other trainees' progress is less consistent. As a result, not all trainees do as well as they might. Most trainees receive helpful developmental feedback on their teaching but there is insufficient emphasis on evaluating the impact of trainees' teaching on pupils' learning. Similarly, trainees' own reflections are not reviewed or commented on so their progressive development as reflective practitioners is limited. Targets set vary in quality and often are focused on 'things to do' rather than identifying the next steps in a trainee's development. Trainees' evidence of meeting the standards varies from robust to tenuous and many trainees commented that they had not been given sufficient advice on how to select and use evidence. Mentors are starting to use agreed criteria to judge trainees' progress and some, predominantly in secondary schools, are using criteria to judge the quality of a lesson. The partnership recognises the need to achieve greater consistency in the use and interpretation of the criteria to judge trainees' progress and lesson quality. Similarly the partnership has identified that more work also has to be done so that all mentors know how to make effective use of the agreed criteria to accelerate trainees' progress.

11. The centre-based induction week for all trainees helps them to develop a basic knowledge of, for example, lesson planning and assessment. The induction week and subsequent weekly training sessions also allow trainees to get to know each other as a group and access regular peer support. School-based training provides trainees with a range of beneficial experiences and learning opportunities but there is insufficient planning for this training across the partnership and the partnership board has no overall picture of the training delivered in each school. The limited coherence of all training elements leads to some missed opportunities for trainees in both phases to extend and apply their learning. Primary trainees recognise the high quality training they have received in developing their understanding of how to teach literacy and numeracy through the centre-based sessions led by consultants from the local authority. Sessions covering the foundation subjects are also included in central training sessions but training to ensure trainees fully understand how to develop pupils' ICT skills is very variable and for some trainees too limited. Subject knowledge development for secondary trainees is also variable. Some trainees benefit from the use of detailed audits and close working with their mentors and other colleagues in a systematic way to successfully address gaps in their knowledge. For others, there is a more haphazard approach. Consequently some trainees are less secure in their subject knowledge and are, for example, not always aware of common errors and misconceptions that pupils may have.

12. The extent to which resources are used efficiently and effectively is satisfactory. The rationale for the allocation of resources across the partnership is clear and effectively communicated to the partnership headteachers. Additional resources are used responsively to meet individual needs of most trainees as they arise. However, the limited availability of mentors for some subjects in some schools restricts placement opportunities for a small minority of trainees. Trainees have

access to a range of key texts and laptops for the duration of the course. The Kingsbridge Excellence Centre provides a good learning and social environment for trainees.

13. There is a strong commitment within the partnership to provide training that meets local recruitment needs. Mentors and Initial Teacher Education (ITE) coordinators are clear about their roles and responsibilities but their attendance at mentor meetings is variable. Although planned, training has not been given in the use of criteria to judge trainees' progress and performance. All trainees have had the opportunity to teach in two different schools with the second placement providing trainees with access to a wider range of experiences both in teaching and school environment. The choice of placement, however, does not always focus on ensuring that identified development needs are fully addressed.

14. Trainees have a sound preparation for teaching in a diverse society. Centre-based sessions and school-based training ensure trainees have the opportunity to learn basic strategies for teaching pupils with specific needs such as having English as an additional language or a learning difficulty or disability. Some trainees benefit from additional opportunities such as shadowing the local authority consultant for minority ethnic achievement or a specific school placement, which enhance these training sessions. However, not all trainees have access to these good quality additional opportunities and trainees identify wide variation in the quality of support and training available from school to school. The partnership adheres to local authority policies and procedures in relation to equal opportunities, race equality and sexual, racial and personal harassment. There are no recorded incidents of harassment or discrimination and trainees have a sound awareness of what to do if they have concerns. Trainees' welfare is well supported because of the close working relationships between mentors and their trainees.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality Grade: 3

15. The effectiveness of evaluation to improve outcomes for trainees is satisfactory. The partnership has collected views from across the partnership, including those of trainees, trainers and leaders. For example, trainees regularly feedback on the usefulness of centre-based training sessions and share their reflections on key questions in relation to the second placement and the programme overall. However, much internal monitoring focuses on the implementation of programme elements rather than requiring stakeholders to evaluate the quality of provision and its impact on trainees' outcomes. The partnership has been slow to respond to points raised by external moderators and the Training and Development Agency (TDA) for Schools about the over reliance on informal procedures and lack of rigorous evaluation. Managers have limited documentary evidence of how well their planned actions have been implemented, and what impact they have had. In some respects, the partnership has had too positive a view of its effectiveness. Nonetheless, internal review supplemented by external reporting has provided the partnership with a basic understanding of its strengths and areas for development.

Consequent action has been beneficial. Improvements to recruitment and training, for example, are ensuring that all trainees meet the QTS Standards, gain employment and take on management responsibilities. Developments over the last twelve months, including the appointment of two former partnership colleagues on a consultancy basis, have strengthened the leadership of the programme. These new arrangements are increasing the rigour with which performance is evaluated, ensuring that the partnership board is better placed to make well founded decisions about provision and its impact on outcomes for trainees. However, a lack of clarity about accountability and responsibility across the partnership remains.

16. The partnership successfully ensures that training is relevant and up to date. For example, primary trainees have a sound understanding of the implications of the Rose review and secondary trainees have attended a session to increase their awareness of 14-19 developments. Some trainees also benefit from informative school-based training on Key Stage 3 curriculum developments and recent national initiatives such as Assessing Pupil Progress. Planned programme changes for the 2009/2010 cohort demonstrate the partnership's increasingly effective response to ensuring that trainees benefit from comprehensive training on local and national initiatives.

17. A detailed action plan is in place, focusing on key priorities identified from recent evaluation and the outcomes of completing the self-evaluation document in autumn 2008. The current plan is more sharply focused on trainees' outcomes than the plan of 2007/8, with success criteria linked to outcomes for trainees. Resources required to deliver the plan are quantified and there are clear timescales and milestones in place to allow for effective monitoring. The partnership has steadily improved trainees' outcomes through a range of successful actions. These have included the improvement of induction arrangements and greater mentor involvement to support transition into, and progress during, the second school placement. Improvements to recruitment procedures have reduced over time the number of trainees withdrawing from or failing the course.

Summary of inspection grades¹

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is satisfactory; grade 4 is inadequate.

Overall effectiveness

		Employment-based routes
How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?		3
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	3
	To what extent does the training and assessment ensure that all trainees progress to fulfil their potential given their ability and starting points?	3
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	3
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	3
Promoting equalities and diversity	To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination?	3

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

		Employment-based routes
To what extent do the leadership and management at all levels have the capacity to secure further improvements and/or to sustain high quality outcomes?		3
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		3
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		3
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		3

¹ The criteria for making these graded judgements are in the *Grade criteria for the inspection of ITE 2008-11*; Ofsted July 2008; Reference no: 080128.

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