

Ninestiles GTP Consortium

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Provider address	Ninestiles School Hartfield Crescent Acocks Green Birmingham B27 7QG
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Inspection dates	5 - 8 May 2009
Lead inspector	Philip Mann HMI

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Introduction

1. This inspection was carried out by 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. The Ninestiles Graduate Training Placement Consortium is a small training provider that achieved full accreditation in 2006. It is based in Ninestiles School and provides an employment based route for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The provider aims to recruit within the subject areas that are recruitment priorities within the partnership schools. At the time of the inspection there were 17 trainees on the one year course employed by their training schools. The partnership is successful in recruiting trainees for shortage subjects such as mathematics.

Employment-based routes to qualified teacher status

Key strengths

4. The key strengths are:
- a strong partnership that is led well by the course director
 - the very close attention paid to meeting the individual needs of all trainees
 - the professional studies programme that prepares trainees well to work in the schools of today
 - the excellent use made of information and communication technology (ICT) and other resources to support the training programme
 - the well developed assessment procedures used to monitor the progress of trainees against the Standards
 - the efficient lines of communication and effective distributed leadership which support the careful monitoring of trainee progress and the quality of provision.

Required actions

5. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment the provider must:
- ensure targets set for trainees are clearly linked to the Standards and subject development
 - ensure trainees are provided with feedback from trainers that clearly focuses on the impact of teaching on learning
 - ensure that improvement planning identifies success criteria linked to trainees' outcomes.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

6. The overall effectiveness of provision is good with some outstanding features. Provision for the training across the partnership is firmly rooted in practical work-based learning and tailored very carefully to the needs of each trainee. The quality of personal support and guidance is outstanding and ensures that the principles of equality and diversity are fully reflected throughout the partnership. Excellent use is made of a wide range of innovative resources to enable trainees to teach effectively.

As a result, trainees achieve well overall and this is confirmed by predominantly good trainee outcomes over the last three years.

7. Analysis of comprehensive tracking data against the Standards confirms that most trainees make good progress from the time they start the course. Current data suggests that trainees will achieve similar outcomes this year and inspection evidence supports the accuracy of provider evaluations of trainees' performance. Very detailed lesson plans, comprehensive portfolios of evidence against the Standards, the effective management of pupil behaviour and good subject knowledge overall are just some of the key strengths observed in the trainees' teaching. A few weaker trainees do not always have a secure grasp of how to apply their subject knowledge most effectively in their lessons.

8. Good recruitment and selection procedures support the achievement of good quality outcomes for trainees. Effective use is made of a wide range of criteria at interview to assess teaching potential and the contribution that trainees can make to their placement schools. This data is collated to help inform the overall assessment of trainees' progress and the impact of the training on outcomes for individual trainees. Weaknesses in subject knowledge are carefully identified and additional training and support are provided where necessary. Recruitment targets are met, especially in shortage subjects such as mathematics. The proportion of trainees from minority ethnic groups is well above that seen nationally. Retention rates, including those of trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds, have steadily improved over the last three years. The majority of trainees are employed in local schools.

9. The quality of training is good. It meets the needs of individuals and groups of trainees well and enables them to make good progress. The balance between school-based activity and that undertaken weekly at the centre is very good. Teacher trainers set challenging but realistic expectations of all trainees. Both current and past trainees speak highly of the wealth of practical learning experiences programmed throughout the course. These experiences enable the trainees to get off to a good start in their teaching career.

10. The assessment of trainees' progress against the Standards is good. The accurate evaluation of their initial strengths and learning needs provides a firm foundation for the construction of very detailed individual training plans. The plans identify clearly what trainees need to do to achieve qualified teacher status. Careful analysis by school-based tutors and subject mentors ensures that training plans are regularly reviewed and updated to provide trainees with the opportunity to make good progress. Progress against the Standards is logged in individual professional development records. The good engagement of trainees in this process is a very positive feature.

11. Trainers at the centre and in schools provide good levels of guidance and personal support to trainees. The quality of feedback on trainees' performance is good overall with some examples of very good practice observed. As a result, the majority of trainees are very clear about their strengths and what they need to do next to improve. For a few trainees, feedback has insufficient focus on subject knowledge and subject specialist teaching skills. Consequently these trainees make

slower progress; although targets are set regularly they are not always linked closely enough to the Standards.

12. The comprehensive and coherent training programme across the partnership is underpinned by clear procedures which are well-understood. Trainees value the rigour it imposes and recognise that, although demanding, it prepares them very well to teach in diverse, inner city contexts. The partnership makes good use of advanced skills teachers, subject specialists and experienced trainers to effectively teach the professional studies programme. Trainees are very complimentary about the topics covered and the quality and relevance of the input. Much of the material is very up to date and this gives them the confidence to share their knowledge and understanding in meetings and discussions with teaching colleagues at host schools.

13. Trainees have good access to a wide range of resources to support both their own development and their teaching. Information and communication technology is used particularly well, through a virtual learning environment, to give all trainees the opportunity to extend their reading and improve aspects of their training. The innovative use of video material enables trainees to record, and subsequently reflect on, their own teaching practice. The partnership engages other local providers of initial teacher education to enhance its subject knowledge training programme. For example, very good use is made of a local specialist to provide training on the 14-19 curriculum developments and diplomas.

14. The quality of placements, including those in second schools, is good and matched carefully to the needs of trainees. School based trainers provide good levels of guidance and support. The best subject mentoring ensures that trainees are given very good guidance on the specific skills applied to teaching their subject. Staffing changes have led to some inconsistencies in the quality of subject mentoring for a small number of trainees. Despite good quality induction for school based trainers some of them remain unsure about how to set well focused, Standards-related targets. The provider has recognised and is acting on this as an area for improvement.

15. The partnership values diversity and promotes equality of opportunity, and inclusion very well. The excellent attention paid to trainees' individual circumstances and individual needs contributes to their good progress. The culturally diverse context of partnership schools ensures that all trainees have very good opportunities to teach pupils of different faiths and ethnicities. The training and school experiences prepare them well to plan for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Procedures for promoting equal opportunities are rigorous and well monitored by the course director and steering group. There are no recorded incidents of discrimination or racial harassment. The very positive feedback from both current and past trainees confirms that all have equal access to very good resources, good training and development, together with personal support of very high quality.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality Grade: 2

16. The course director provides strong leadership for the partnership and works tirelessly to ensure that its aims are fulfilled. Roles and responsibilities are delegated effectively and key stakeholders are fully involved in the process of self-evaluation and review. There is a strong sense of ownership and a shared understanding of the partnership's purpose. All of the Government's requirements for initial teacher education are fully met and safeguarding procedures are applied rigorously. Efficient lines of communication and effective distributed leadership amongst a core of subject specialist tutors are significant strengths within the partnership. The good leadership of the course director has ensured that a very wide range of systems and procedures are now in place to both monitor and further improve on the good quality of provision. The implementation of these is relatively new and, consequently, they have yet to have sustained impact on improved outcomes for trainees. Nevertheless, much has been achieved this year in the identification of areas for improvement, action planning and course design. The partnership demonstrates good capacity for further improvement.

17. Self-evaluation is thorough and action planning leads to improvement. The clear vision of the course director is instrumental in the identification and effective implementation of a good range of well thought out procedures to further enhance the provision and the progress that trainees make. These include comprehensive quality assurance and regular meetings of the steering group which are used well to support the programme of self-review and improvement. Trainees and all key stakeholders are consulted about the quality of training. Good use is made of external moderation to assess the quality of provision, validate teacher trainers' judgements of trainees' progress against the Standards and evaluate the effectiveness of the training. External moderation reports are highly evaluative and exploited well by the provider to inform detailed action plans to improve outcomes for trainees in for each subject. The provider has a clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses but was slightly generous in its gradings in the self-evaluation document presented prior to the inspection.

18. The ability of the partnership to be innovative and anticipate change is excellent. The use of a wide range of advanced skills teachers, external consultants and experienced practitioners helps to shape, deliver and improve the overall training programme, leading to good quality outcomes for trainees. Trainees are well prepared to teach in schools because trainers ensure that the training covers the most up to date topics. As a result, trainees are confident in discussing their role in the context of national initiatives such the teaching of phonics and the findings of the Williams report, the Every Child Matters agenda, changes to the 14-19 curriculum and the emphasis on community cohesion. The recently introduced web-based electronic portfolio has the potential to facilitate further the efficient and effective compilation of trainees' evidence against the Standards.

19. The quality of improvement planning for both the medium and long term is good overall. Good lines of communication are in place across the partnership. The effective trialling of subject-based action planning for physical education in the previous academic year has led to the implementation of very detailed medium term planning for all other subjects. These detailed plans clearly identify areas for improvement, lines of accountability and the resources needed to enable such improvements to take place. Success criteria are identified but not all are precisely linked to improvements in trainees' outcomes.

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?		2
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	2
	To what extent does the training and assessment ensure that all trainees progress to fulfil their potential given their ability and starting points?	2
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	1
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	2
Promoting equalities and diversity	To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination?	1

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?		2
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		2
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		1
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		2

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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