

North East Partnership

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Provider address

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Inspection dates

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Lead inspector

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Introduction

1. This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's 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. The Inspector 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 North East Partnership offers training leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) and the award of a professional graduate certificate in education (PGCE) in physical education (PE). This secondary, school centred initial teacher training (SCITT) course, for which the University of Northumbria acts as managing agent, focuses on the 11-18 age range. At the time of the inspection there were 22 trainees.
4. The partnership includes around 25 secondary schools. About one quarter of these are 11-16, a further quarter are 13-18, and the remainder 11-18. The partnership also includes one primary special school to provide trainees with a greater breadth of experience in this area. The provider has strong and invariably long standing links with the partnership schools, which are spread across eight local authorities including; Newcastle, Gateshead, North and South Tyneside, Northumberland, Durham, Stockton and Redcar and Cleveland.

Provision in the secondary phase

Key strengths

5. The key strengths are:

- the high quality leadership and management which facilitates consistently high quality training across the partnership and outstanding outcomes for trainees
- the strategic and systematic improvement planning based on accurate self evaluation and highly reflective practice
- the rigorous recruitment and selection procedures which identify candidates with the necessary potential, resilience and commitment to succeed on the course
- the comprehensive skills and subject knowledge audits that signpost trainees' individual strengths and areas for development at an early stage and inform suitable, personalised intervention to boost trainees' progress
- the exceptionally coherent course content, structure, delivery and assessment which enables trainees to make rapid progress
- the particularly thorough and robust quality assurance procedures
- the highly flexible and adaptive course content that evolves and improves in line with new developments in the subject and the needs of local PE job markets
- the astute deployment of resources to maximise value for money and improve the overall quality of provision for trainees.

Recommendations

6. In order to further improve trainees' progress and attainment the provider should:

- consider how to sharpen the link between planning and suitable strategic intervention for the most able trainees 'at risk' of not meeting their potential.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

7. The North East Partnership's overall effectiveness in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is outstanding. Feedback from trainees is extremely positive. They feel very well prepared to embark on a career in teaching and marvel at how much they have developed since joining the course. The impact of the provider's work is reflected in trainees' high attainment and excellent progress during the

course. In each of the last two years over half of trainees attained the Standards at an outstanding level.

8. Rigorous, accurate assessment of trainees' teaching, robust, regular monitoring and evaluation of trainees' progress and personalised intervention, together with the high expectations demanded by all trainers underpin trainees' excellent progress relative to their starting points during the course. Very occasionally interventions do not challenge very able trainees to maximise their potential. Sound core teaching skills and the application of a range of suitable learning approaches allow trainees to teach effectively. Lesson planning is exemplary and focuses clearly on developing the key concepts, and processes that will enable pupils to develop the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin a competent and confident PE performer, official, coach or manager. There is an appropriate emphasis on personalizing the learning experience for pupils and of making learning accessible and enjoyable irrespective of pupils' ability. A cornerstone of trainees' success in lessons was the excellent rapport they developed with pupils, which promoted high engagement and commitment to the lesson. Similarly trainees gave pupils some responsibility for their own learning through leadership activities and a sense of their own progress against clearly established criteria through self and peer assessment tasks.

9. Recruitment and selection arrangements support high quality outcomes for trainees. The partnership is well regarded regionally and there are many more applicants than places each year. A blend of formal interview, written assessment, an evaluation of previous experience working in an educational environment together with a teaching episode is highly effective in helping staff to ascertain those candidates with the necessary attributes to meet the demands of the course. First-rate pre-course information helps trainees make an informed choice about their suitability for the course. Recruitment targets are consistently met and high employment rates in the locality demonstrate that local needs are met.

10. Support for trainees and their welfare is excellent and a high priority. Trainees comment very favourably on the excellent communication and guidance they receive from school and centre based tutors, link tutors and the programme leader, who is always on hand. One trainee commented on how 'she is always there for us and is prepared to go the extra mile on our behalf'..... 'One night around 11pm I was fretting about a lesson plan and I emailed her for advice, I was very surprised when she responded within twenty minutes'. Equality and diversity is very well promoted and trainees say they feel confident in making declarations and would report any unlawful discrimination or harassment. The provider is committed to equality of access and there are well documented case studies illustrating how they have successfully supported the progress of trainee's with a range of additional needs. Expectations are high and the provider routinely reviews its policies, which is helping it to plan for further improvement. There is no difference in the attainment of male and female trainees, who attain equally well. Careful monitoring, early diagnosis of need and timely intervention ensure all groups of trainee attain highly and feel valued. Trainees are thoroughly prepared for teaching in a culturally diverse society and acquire a well developed understanding of relevant issues. In addition to various

taught modules they benefit from extended teaching placements in settings, which enable them to immerse themselves in multi-ethnic and special school environments.

11. The provider makes an initial assessment of trainees current attainment relative to the standards and through regular assessment, tracking and evaluation determines the extent to which trainees are progressing towards their target, potential grade. This process has proven highly accurate over time. Trainees' subject knowledge across a range of activities and aspects is very good and they develop a good pedagogical understanding of PE through the course. Training and assessment is highly effective in ensuring trainees fulfil their potential. The programme is very well designed so that the course content, structure, delivery and assessment of training enable trainees to successfully demonstrate their competence against the Standards. There is an excellent synergy between the different elements of the course, which are carefully mapped to ensure trainees receive a high quality, 'rounded' experience. There is an emphasis on personalising trainees learning so that their individual needs are met and any gaps in knowledge and understanding are filled and existing strengths consolidated. The quality of feedback to trainees both oral and written is excellent. Mentors and tutors accurately identify key strengths and areas for further development in relation to the Standards, and identify personalised support and challenge to enable trainees to successfully overcome previously identified targets. Trainees are evaluative and highly reflective and use these skills to set their own targets and discuss these with trainers to secure further improvements.

12. Centre based training is comprehensive and supported by a panel of visiting lecturers who are expert practitioners and explore a range of topical issues and developments in PE as well as core components relating to deepening trainees' understanding of education. Assignments, investigative tasks and the curriculum development project focus on experiential learning that enables trainees to demonstrate and apply their understanding in schools.

13. Coordination of the partnership is excellent and assures the consistency of quality. School mentors contribute to both school and centre based training. This is facilitated by the high quality progressive professional development they receive. Trainees and trainers know exactly what is expected of them. Mentors and schools demonstrate a high level of commitment and involvement in all aspects of the partnership with excellent collaboration, communication and coordination. Most schools in the partnership are longstanding members, with tutors that are highly experienced and very familiar with course protocols and procedures. Consequently they have a thorough understanding of the rationale for the course and provide high quality support and challenge to trainees who value their work immensely. There is evidence of very effective succession planning across the partnership, with very clear induction arrangements for new mentors.

14. Trainees report very favourably on their experiences within host schools and school centred mentoring is highly effective. Outcomes for trainees are consistently high across a range of schools and local authorities. Tutors and professional mentors ensure trainees follow well designed programmes covering all aspects of school life, including pastoral roles, safeguarding and whole school concerns such as inclusion

and the use of assessment to promote more effective learning. Partnership schools use an excellent range of training strategies to support trainees' development; for example, team teaching, coaching, demonstrating particular learning approaches, and focused observations of a range of other teachers in the department with thorough de-briefing.

15. Available resources are astutely deployed to maximise value for money and achieve outstanding outcomes for trainees. There is an annual audit of provision, resources and facilities, which informs subsequent budgeting and the focus for expenditure. This is carefully mapped to meet the needs of development planning and improving the outcomes for trainees. Centre based training takes place in well-equipped specialist training rooms. University based tutors, the panel of guest lecturers and school based staff are well-qualified and recognised experts in their fields. Additional equipment and resources for the practical components linked to current developments in the subject and new activity areas such as cheerleading and street dance have also been facilitated. This has led directly to improvements in the quality of provision and meets the needs of providers in the locality. Trainees rate resources highly and say they make good use of the e-learning portal, the twenty four hour library facilities and other resources available including the loan of laptops. School centred training is undertaken by high quality, experienced staff, who benefit from the coordinated on-going training the partnership provides, which keeps them abreast of current thinking and the latest developments in PE.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality Grade: 1

16. The provider has outstanding capacity to sustain high quality outcomes for trainees and to take the actions required to secure further improvements. Programme leaders and management have established a strong track record of continuous improvement over the last three years, which has seen a rising proportion of trainees attaining the Standards at an outstanding level and a falling number at the satisfactory level. The leadership, management and process of improvement planning are high quality and key drivers in the effectiveness of the partnership and the high quality outcomes attained by trainees. In particular, the dedication, organisational skills and energy of the programme leader ensures not only the smooth day-to-day coordination of the partnership, but she is pivotal in medium and longer term strategic planning.

17. Self evaluation is rigorous and accurate and involves all partners. All aspects of provision are routinely appraised including amongst others; the quality of feedback to trainees and mentor training, assessing the standards, the effectiveness of placements, the impact of module content and trainee and partnership member views. Consequently the provider knows those aspects of the course that work well and those where further developments are needed. Identified priorities are then mapped against appropriate resource allocation to secure the desired outcome. The provider is also in tune with which schools best support more vulnerable trainees and those that provide high levels of challenge for those trainees that require it.

18. The SCITT undertakes regular evaluation of the impact of resource allocation and takes account of any findings. All those responsible for assessment and quality assurance including internal and external moderators and examiners are clear about their roles and provide insightful and incisive reports that are evaluative and help to shape future practice including recruitment and selection procedures, the quality of training and equality of access. For example amendments were made to the trainee 'reflection' pro-forma, asking trainees to specifically identify next steps in learning for pupils, making use of core tasks and establishing stronger connections to national curriculum levels in their assessments of pupils. High quality cross moderation and standardisation across the partnership add further weight to the validity of judgments reached.

19. Completion rates are excellent over time but last year there was a slight dip, which was atypical. The provider analysed the reasons for each instance of non-completion very carefully and has improved both selection procedures and the support for individual trainees as a direct result.

20. The provider undertakes thorough analysis, monitoring and review of trainee outcomes and progress against robust success criteria and uses the results to improve the quality of provision in all aspects. However, there is scope to further increase the number of grade one trainees by refining the link between planning and strategic intervention for able trainees at risk of not meeting their potential.

21. The programme leader puts her 'heart and soul' into ensuring provision is of the highest quality. Together with her team she demonstrates excellent capacity to anticipate and drive change, and to take timely and effective action to improve the quality of the course. For example the course has adapted to meet the changing needs of PE initial teacher training, by for example, responding to accommodate new developments in the subject such as the PE and School Strategy for Young People. The effective use of resources is further demonstrated by the responsiveness of the course to local and national agendas such as the 14-19 agenda and the new national curriculum for PE. Managers have been both proactive and quick to respond to needs by shifting resources to scaffold areas of provision requiring improvement such as the information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure in partnership schools, redesigning course materials, investing in staff development, upgrading teaching rooms at the centre and into the taught programme.

22. All partners participate in decision making and improvement planning is systematic, focused on key priorities and underpinned by clear plans for implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Following consideration of the various collected data, a detailed development plan is produced, which is presented to the Management and Finance Committee. This ensures that priorities are carefully identified and sufficient human and material resources are deployed appropriately. Progress towards meeting development targets is monitored regularly against clear and agreed success criteria. As well as the detailed review and subsequent development by the programme leader and management committee, the programme is further evaluated by the university- wide review mechanisms to ensure the highest possible outcomes are sustained.

23. The partnership has been successful in improving the proportion of trainees reaching the highest standards and sustaining high quality outcomes overtime. Previously identified weaknesses have also been tackled. Astute target setting, high expectations and high quality action planning feed this cycle of improvement.

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

		Secondary
How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?		1
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	1
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	1
	To what extent does the training and assessment ensure that all trainees progress to fulfil their potential given their ability and starting points?	1
	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?	1
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

	Secondary
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?	1
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?	1
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?	1

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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