

Middlesex University

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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| Provider address | Middlesex University School of Arts and Education Trent Park Bramley Road London N14 4YZ |
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| Inspection dates | 1-5 March 2010 |
| Lead inspector | Sheena MacDonald 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

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

Explanation of terms used in this report

Attainment is defined as the standard reached by a trainee at the end of their training.

Progress is judged in terms of how well a trainee has developed professionally from their starting point to the standard reached at the time of the inspection or at a suitable review point.

Achievement is judged in terms of the progress made and the standard reached by a trainee at the time of the inspection or at a recent assessment review point.

The provider

3. Middlesex University works in partnership with more than 550 schools and settings, colleges and employers in several London boroughs and neighbouring counties to provide initial teacher education (ITE) leading to qualifications to teach in the primary, secondary and further education sectors. In the current year there are 346 primary, 306 secondary and 98 further education trainees.
4. The primary programme offers undergraduate and postgraduate routes to QTS (qualified teacher status). The secondary programmes provide training leading to QTS and a PGCE in a range of subjects and age ranges. The university operates in partnership with Southgate College to provide ITE in further education.

A commentary on the provision

5. The following are particular features of the provider and its initial teacher training programmes:

- high quality personal and pastoral support
- good development of trainees' ability to reflect on their practice and progress and to develop a good variety of teaching strategies which are well focused on learning.

6. There are particularly strong features in some programmes that could be applied to other programmes or aspects of the provision:

- the excellent identification and early addressing of trainees' subject knowledge needs prior to starting the course in the secondary phase
- the good practice seen in the primary phase in developing trainees' understanding and ability to use assessment for learning.

7. The following recommendations should be considered to improve the quality of the outcomes for trainees:

- improve the rigour of quality assurance systems
- systematically collect, analyse and use information to better inform and drive the trend of improvement in trainee outcomes.

Provision in the primary phase

Context

8. The primary programme offers two routes to qualified teacher status, a three year BA Honours degree with qualified teacher status (QTS) and a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) award with QTS. Trainees on both routes specialise in either the 3 to 7 or 5 to 11 age ranges. Currently there are 100 trainees on the one-year PGCE and 246 following the three-year BA course.

Key strengths

9. The key strengths are:

- excellent attention to equality and diversity including training for diversity and equality, English as an additional language (EAL), special educational needs and child protection
- the high level of professional attributes developed by trainees, including effective working with other adults and the ability to plan well-focused, well-organised lessons
- trainees' thorough understanding of assessment of learning
- well-designed assignments which bridge the gap between theory and practice and develop good understanding of how pupils learn
- excellent use of resources, including the use of the virtual learning environment, to support good communication, professional dialogue and the needs of trainees.

Recommendations

10. In order to improve the quality and consistency of training across the partnership the provider should:
 - more systematically gather and use information about the quality of school based training.
11. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider/partnership should:
 - take early action to identify, and quickly address, individual weaknesses in trainees' subject knowledge.
12. In order to strengthen management's assessment of performance and the impact of improvement planning the provider should:
 - make better, more systematic use of information about the quality of trainees' teaching to improve understanding of overall strengths and weaknesses to drive improvement.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

13. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good. As a result, the attainment of most trainees is good and for a substantial minority is outstanding.
14. Trainees become confident, reflective teachers who demonstrate strong professional attributes, such as collaborating well with other adults and deploying them effectively. They plan sequences of lessons, which are well designed to meet the needs of different groups and abilities, and their classroom and behaviour management skills are good. A key strength is trainees' understanding of assessment in general and the use of assessment for learning in particular. They also develop a strong understanding of issues such as inclusion, equality and diversity, child protection and how to support pupils who speak English as an additional language.
15. Recruitment and interview activities are geared to ensuring that well-rounded, critical thinkers are selected who have the potential to become good teachers. There is a strong and successful focus on recruiting trainees from under-represented groups, such as those students undertaking 'access' courses at partner colleges. The provider also recruits and retains a far higher than average number of minority ethnic trainees. Selection systems are rigorous and involve school-based colleagues along with centrally based staff. Tests of English and mathematics at interview are used to filter out unsuitable candidates, and those students receive helpful feedback. There are some useful pre-course tasks. However, no further use is made of information gained through the initial tests to identify individual weaknesses or gaps in subject knowledge, nor advice given as to how these could be addressed prior to starting the course.
16. Trainees are positive about all aspects of the course and are particularly enthusiastic about those elements of the central training where practical approaches model good practice, build confidence and provide good examples of varied teaching and learning strategies. This is particularly the case in science and some of the foundation subjects. Trainees are not as enthusiastic about the less practical approach taken in some of the other subjects. There is good cohesion between the central and school-based elements of the course. The combination of taught sessions, school experiences and well-designed, practically-focused assignments effectively merge theory and practice and support trainees' developing understanding of how children learn. Helpful and specific feedback provided on the assignments supports trainees' further progress. Tests early in the course for each core subject provide a starting point for the development of subject knowledge, but the outcomes are not sufficiently built on so that some trainees are unaware of gaps in their subject knowledge. A factor in this is also that schools have a limited role in developing trainees' subject

- knowledge other than what the trainee is expected to teach during placements.
17. There is excellent use and targeting of resources, including personal advice and individual support. Mentors, tutors and trainees all commend the virtual learning environment, which facilitates efficient sharing of information and excellent communication. There is good allocation of resources to support identified groups, such as minority ethnic trainees and also those requiring English language support. Very effective personal pastoral support and flexible arrangements are tailored to address trainees' individual circumstances, for example finding local placement schools or partnering male trainees with male teachers where possible. Another positive aspect of the support for particular groups is the additional 'bridging' school experience for trainees who are required to repeat a placement. The evidence suggests that this builds confidence, offers further opportunities to address weaknesses and enables trainees to make a good start in their subsequent placement. The positive impact of this varied support and excellent use of resources is evident in increased retention of some groups and the good progress made by most trainees, particularly in those aspects where the focus has been strong.
 18. Trainees are well prepared for their school placements. They are clear about the requirements and are fully involved in setting their personal targets for each school experience. Regular lesson observations with detailed feedback provide good training and support trainees' progress in a very practical way. The quality of lesson feedback seen during the inspection was generally good, with some excellent examples where detailed feedback provided practical information and ideas to support trainees' progress. The positive impact of this can be seen in trainees' developing expertise in lesson planning and assessment activities. When difficulties arise and are identified, the response is rapid and of high quality. However, there are a few cases where progress is slower because individual needs or weaknesses in teaching skills are not identified quickly enough and resulting action to address problems is therefore slower than it might be.
 19. A good system of weekly, mid-placement and end-of-placement reviews ensures that trainees are able to reflect regularly and accurately on their progress and are clear about their strengths, weaknesses and what they need to do next. There is much good evidence of targets being followed up from lesson to lesson showing that trainees' experiences are being built on and trainees are being guided to make good progress. Mentors and link tutors accurately assess trainees' achievement. The involvement of trainees in this process means that they have a good understanding of their attainment and engage well in professional dialogue. However, in a small number of cases, feedback is insufficiently detailed or sharply enough focused on the QTS standards. Some targets are too general to be helpful and not always clearly progressive. As a result, trainees are not always clear about how to improve their practice so that they will move from one level to another, for example from good to outstanding.

20. The partnership between schools and the provider is strong and each has high regard and respect for the other. Schools and school-based colleagues with particular expertise provide specialist input, for example by providing training and observation opportunities for trainees in aspects such as special educational needs, child protection, working with other adults and assessment. Communication across the partnership is good and the roles, responsibilities and expectations are clear and supported well by documentation and the virtual learning environment. Mentor training is effective and schools new to the partnership are well supported. However, quality assurance activities, such as joint observations of lessons or weekly meetings, are not regular and, as a result, there is some inconsistency in the quality of mentoring and support for trainees.
21. Placement schools offer varied and interesting contexts with high levels of diversity. This, underpinned by the university's emphasis on inclusion and a commitment to widen participation, promotes trainees' good understanding of what is required for teaching in a very diverse society.

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

22. The provider's capacity to sustain high quality outcomes for trainees and to take the actions required to secure improvements where necessary is good.
23. The provider's approach to self-assessment and review is purposeful, coherent and focused well on improvement. As a result, self-evaluation is generally accurate, if over generous in terms of gradings. Monitoring and evaluation activities are routinely built into the annual calendar with practical timescales to ensure regular opportunities for review and amendment where necessary. There is clarity about where responsibility and accountabilities lie for implementing the different parts of the system. Course leaders effectively use detailed information from trainee outcomes, benchmarking data such as that provided in the newly qualified teacher survey and feedback from trainees, colleagues and external examiners, to identify strengths and areas for development.
24. Information is used effectively about the performance of particular groups of trainees, such as those joining from 'access' courses, minority ethnic groups, those who require additional support in written English and those requiring additional placements to inform self-evaluation and improvement planning and to target appropriate support. As a result, completion rates for all courses and groups are high and, despite a slight dip in 2008/9, the proportion of trainees judged to be good or better has remained high over a three-year period. This pattern of attainment is stable rather than improving.
25. Course leaders work well together, sharing each other's skills and knowledge. There are good systems for professional development and strong links with national groups and colleagues elsewhere involved in

- teacher education. Systems for involving all course tutors in evaluation and review are comprehensive. This extends the pool of valuable knowledge and skills, ensures that there is wide participation and a strong commitment to self-evaluation and improvement planning. School partners are also involved through recruitment activity, link tutor visits and more formally through the Partnership Forum.
26. Improvements in the cross-curricular nature of the course and practical phonics sessions for all trainees, combined with observations of good practice, demonstrate that the provider is alert to and responds appropriately to address national initiatives such as the Rose, Williams and Primary Curriculum reviews. An increased emphasis on discussion and investigation in science, resulting from the recent Ofsted publication 'Success in Science', has seen an increase in trainees' confidence to try out investigational approaches in their own teaching. Good use has been made of expertise in schools to inform and to drive improvements, both through involving school partners in central training and through providing all trainees with opportunities to undertake sharply focused observations of good practice. There is evidence to suggest that the provider responds well but anticipates less well and at times the action taken to address issues, for example the requirements regarding modern foreign language teaching, are slower than might be expected.
 27. Centrally-based tutors are also link tutors and they support trainees during school placements and monitor school-based training. As a result, they know the individual schools in the partnership well and gain useful information about the quality of trainees' teaching. The system of lesson observations, mid- and end-of-placement reviews feeds into self-evaluation, particularly through the good use of focused questions such as requesting information about trainees' ability to use assessment. However, school information is not being gathered systematically enough to inform the provider about overall strengths and weaknesses in trainees' teaching nor do schools receive feedback on the quality of their provision. Mentors do not routinely feed back on how well prepared trainees are for teaching. As a result, the current systems are not rigorous enough to iron out the inconsistencies in the quality of school-based training or to enable schools to contribute routinely to evaluation and strategic planning.
 28. The evaluation, audit and review systems feed directly into improvement planning. Improvement plans are also informed by annual audits of subject provision and national developments. Trainees' evaluations and feedback are invariably positive, demonstrating high levels of satisfaction with both the school and central elements of the course. When concerns are raised or criticisms made, the course tutors respond quickly to adapt courses and refocus on particular aspects, for example by amending the mathematics course to improve the emphasis on calculation.
 29. The provider has improved its use of benchmarking data and demonstrates careful evaluation of trend data. Good use is made of sharply-focused action plans and impact studies on aspects identified for improvement, such as the

achievement of minority ethnic trainees, trainees at risk of failing, and the teaching of phonics. These plans are carefully implemented, resourced and evaluated with a good focus on measuring the impact on trainees' achievement. There is clear evidence of improvement where the analysis of data from the newly qualified teacher survey has been used to target and improve aspects which, in the past, were below sector averages. The action taken to improve these aspects, such as working with other adults, special educational needs and assessment, has been robust and successful. This is leading to an improvement in trainees' responses so that, in most cases, satisfaction rates are at least average and often above. There are strengths in the use of data, trainee feedback and external examiner feedback to inform improvement planning. However, the links between improvement planning, feedback from schools, monitoring and quality assurance of training are not currently as sharp as they might be.

30. The positive impact of self-evaluation and improvement planning is demonstrated by trainees who leave well equipped to join, and to enhance, the teaching profession.

Provision in the secondary phase

Context

1. The provider recruited 306 trainees to secondary programmes starting in September 2009. Training leading to QTS with the award of a PGCE is provided in the following subjects: art and design, business studies, citizenship, design and technology, drama, English, geography, information and communication technology (ICT), mathematics, modern foreign languages, science, music and physical education. Provision across the subjects spans the following age ranges 11 to 16, 11 to 18 and 14 to 19 (business studies only).

Key strengths

2. The key strengths are:
 - good quality trainees who exhibit strong professional attributes
 - the subject knowledge displayed by trainees
 - the inclusive ethos of the provider, in particular the way it actively supports equality and diversity for trainees and, by doing so, increases the number of positive role models in the teaching workforce
 - excellent recruitment and selection procedures that consistently identify and support good quality trainees from a range of backgrounds
 - high quality pastoral care for trainees, particularly to retain and support those that need to interrupt their programmes of study
 - innovative and effective use of resources to support trainees very well through their training.

Recommendations

3. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider/partnership should:
 - share more rapidly the best practice that exists across subject areas to increase attainment
 - clarify the role of coordinating mentors in school-based quality assurance and course improvement so as to raise the standard of school-based training to match the best in the partnership
 - coordinate the training of new mentors, particularly in new placements, to ensure they are fully prepared for their role.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

4. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good.

5. Recruitment is a rigorous process resulting in the selection of trainees with the potential to be good and better teachers. Initial needs analysis is a full part of the process. Information gathered at interview is very well used to set pre-course tasks to boost trainees' progress from the beginning of their course. These include subject-specific booster courses in some subjects and other subject-specific tasks. Trainees report these as being highly beneficial. Records of selection for current trainees are of variable usefulness in determining a baseline for trainees to measure their progress during the course. This has been addressed by the adoption of new, more comprehensive documentation following a successful pilot as part of the science course for trainees being selected for the September 2010 cohort. Recruitment from under-represented groups and a wide variety of backgrounds is a core mission for the course and is extremely successful. For example, the recruitment of minority ethnic trainees is three times the sector average. The university has realised that late recruitment to some courses can limit the effectiveness of pre-course activities, and funds have been targeted successfully to boost recruitment levels and enable earlier selection.
6. Approximately three-quarters of trainees attain well by the end of their course across the 13 secondary subjects with the university reporting a probable increase for the current cohort. There is, however, significant subject variation in attainment, with the previous three years showing strengths in English, physical education, drama, modern foreign languages and art. For all trainees, professional attributes are particularly strong. Trainees are popular in partner schools for their professional approach and are often employed where they train. They are reflective and perceptive individuals who usually prepare well, are organised and become positive role models for pupils.
7. Formal analyses of trainees' subject needs, undertaken after starting the course, vary in terms of style and the extent of their content across subject areas. Despite this variation, trainees have developed good awareness of their subject strengths and areas for development, partially through school experience and partially through the well-regarded central subject training. Due to this, and the good work of subject mentors, subject knowledge was a particular strength noted for trainees visited by inspectors.
8. Coherence of the course is good. Coordinating mentors in schools are required to set up school-based components that fit in with requirements of the course, including assignments. Effective communication, particularly by email, facilitates this. Good documentation, including subject handbooks, supports consistency of approach across schools. School-based professional studies are well regarded by trainees who find the context of such sessions useful in improving their practice and in building on taught university sessions. As a result of this good quality training, most trainees demonstrate effective classroom management skills. The use of questioning is evolving for trainees with different techniques becoming established, but not fully embedded, in trainees' practice at this early stage of their second school experience. High-quality assignments have been introduced with the aim of supporting development in this area.

Differentiation was limited in lessons visited by inspectors, both in terms of support of the less able and challenge for the most able pupils. Information and communication technology is well used to structure lessons but less well developed in supporting and developing learning.

9. School-based training by mentors is good overall. Feedback to trainees following observations of their teaching varies from satisfactory to outstanding but most is good. The structure of feedback documentation accentuates standards-based feedback that is helpful in allowing trainees to gather evidence to demonstrate their attainment. However, a side effect of this approach is that written feedback is often based on processes and what teacher and pupil are doing. Targets for improvement are then given conscientiously by mentors and class teachers, but these can become quite generic and lack evaluation of the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. This in turn results in trainees' planning becoming comprehensive in terms of what trainees and pupils will do, but being less explicit about how learning will be achieved and assessed. Assessment reports completed at the end of the first school experience by trainees and mentors are generally accurate, but when they do err, it is on the side of generosity. In some examples seen, targets for the next placement were very well documented, specific and reported by the next mentor to be accurate and extremely helpful. In others, they were too generic, requiring the new mentor to gather further evidence of the trainees' needs before driving their progress forward.
10. Schools are committed users of the training provided at Middlesex. Coordinating mentors communicate well with subject tutors to establish placements and are keen to support the university. Their level of commitment is high to developing good quality trainees for the local partnership. The success of these endeavours can be seen in the number of former trainees now mentoring across the partnership. However, there is less obvious commitment in some partner schools to eradicating inconsistency in the quality of school-based training to maximise trainees' progress. This is demonstrated in two ways; the first being the fact that coordinating mentors have differing views on their role in quality assuring and improving the training taking place in their schools; the second being the relatively low attendance at mentor meetings despite recent improvements through local clustering arrangements. There are several mentors who have not attended any training for some time. The university mitigates this well by responsive subject leaders visiting mentors, particularly those that are new to their role, to deliver training. However, the timing of visits to some new mentors means that occasionally they are working with trainees without any formal training at the start of a school experience. As a result, mentors' expectation of trainees' attainment by the end of a placement is inconsistent given similar trainee starting points. Mentors' understanding is also uneven of how best to structure lesson observation and feedback over time to drive higher trainee attainment. It is very good and driving outstanding progress in some placements and satisfactory in others.
11. The use of resources in the partnership is exemplary. Trainees state that they have all the resources necessary to meet their needs in their school placements. University staff are very responsive to reported need from trainees.

Human resources are very well used by the partnership to support trainees, with extra tutor visits arranged on the basis of trainee or placement need. Extra enhancement courses are freely available to trainees, for example a physical education student spoke glowingly of how his needs had been met by extra dance and swimming courses. Outside speakers significantly benefit trainees by bringing their expertise to central training sessions. A particularly strong feature of provision is the virtual learning environment extensively used by trainees to upload their best resources for sharing, and reported as a real boon. Returning trainees, who have interrupted their studies, are very well supported by being matched to the most suitable placements in the partnership to enable them to achieve at a good level. The sharing of all documentation electronically is appreciated across this large partnership. Resource allocation is under constant review with the partnership forum and is well understood by schools.

12. The ethos is one of inclusion and of developing positive role models for partnership schools. The high quality of personal care demonstrated by subject leaders is reflected in the fact that almost all trainees report being exceptionally well looked after. This results in a family atmosphere on some courses with former trainees often still in contact with their tutors for advice and guidance later in their career. Trainees report no incidents of harassment and knowing who to turn to if there were such incidents. Trainees are very well prepared to teach in a diverse society due to their exposure to very varied school settings and good quality central training in, for example, teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language.

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

13. The provider's capacity to sustain high quality outcomes for trainees and to take the actions required to secure improvements where necessary is good.
14. The provider has good systems in place to secure and sustain improvement, which are kept under continuous review, and the quality of support for trainees is very high. There are a large number of university-based quality assurance systems. The systems are common to all subjects, comprehensive and conscientiously followed. The annual monitoring report is well designed, completed to a common format and draws on suitable evidence from external and internal monitoring. Managers amend the action plans at key points during the year. Generally, the provider has a secure grasp of the quality of school-based training; many mentors are past trainees and there are communication networks built up over many years. Systems for the quality assurance of training within schools are less rigorously applied; joint observations between mentors and coordinating mentors were rare in the schools visited, and much reliance was placed on the experience of longstanding mentors and informal chats. Most responsibility for quality assurance therefore falls on tutors, who visit three times during each placement.
15. Subject leaders use information on well-designed and well-completed placement reviews to monitor school-based training. In some subjects, for

example drama, effective electronic communication enables subject leaders to monitor the weekly mentor meeting. The extent of this excellent practice varies between subjects. In a few cases, the induction of new placement schools before the arrival of trainees is not timely enough to ensure that school colleagues are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.

16. Subject annual monitoring reviews rightly rely on external examiners' suggestions for improvement. Although the overall annual monitoring review is linked to the self-evaluation document (SED), it does not draw conclusions based on differences between attainment in subjects. This is reflected in the SED, which is less explicit about explaining variations than in showing actions leading to improvements. Trainees' attainment has been maintained at a good level but there is no definitive trend in improvement. The overall proportions gaining the different attainment grades remain roughly the same over three years. However, attainment in different subjects is variable with some showing improvements, some fluctuating and others declining. Measures put in place by the provider in 2008/09 closed the gap between minority ethnic and other trainees postponing completion in that year. Efforts to improve retention generally have been good. The quality of the provider's self-evaluation is good. The SED is very rigorously completed, with suitable reference to data where relevant, for example the recruitment of under-represented groups is carefully analysed. The annual monitoring review identifies 'good practice suitable for dissemination' in different subjects. However, this has not always been rapidly adopted across different subject areas.
17. The provider relies extensively on trainees' feedback to evaluate quality. Trainees' comments seem to be overwhelmingly positive, with 90% rating highly subject studies and school experience in 2008/09. Where evaluations are less positive the provider is quick to reflect on any weaknesses in central training and moves to remedy them. However, this conscientious and reflective approach does not always translate to schools. In the sample, inspectors found considerable confusion amongst coordinating mentors who were unsure of the university's systems for gathering feedback from trainees on the quality of placements. There was also lack of clarity regarding the expectation for schools to provide feedback to the university on the quality of trainees and the central support provided.
18. There are several examples of initiatives to respond to change, for example the setting up of the National Challenge Trust at Chase High School after working with, and supporting, staff there for three years. The provider has responded appropriately to national initiatives. Good links with the Training and Development Agency to support initiatives, and good recruitment to shortage subjects, particularly mathematics, demonstrate this. Subject leaders attend National Strategy training and disseminate information well through central training. It is less clear that changes in response to particular initiatives are always efficiently communicated to all schools. For example, coordinating mentors working closely with the university and hosting several trainees were not particularly involved in, or necessarily aware of, the main developments taking place at university level.

19. There are many good examples of the provider planning for and taking action to improve. For example, although there is still variation in practice between subjects in the way trainees' progress is monitored, the provider is working towards a common approach. The interview process has been standardised for the 2010/11 intake in a way which enables secure judgements to be made about trainees' starting points.

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Context

1. Middlesex University operates in partnership with Southgate College to provide in-service and pre-service training for teachers and trainers who are teaching, or intend to teach, in settings across the further education sector. A significant proportion of the trainees teach at Southgate College. At the time of the inspection, 98 trainees were enrolled on courses leading to the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS), of whom 18 were on the second year of the course. Both this qualification, and the Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTLLS), which is embedded in the first year of the course, are endorsed by Standards Verification UK (SVUK) and satisfy the Secretary of State's requirements for further education teachers. Courses are part-time and start both in September and January, with evening or daytime options.
2. The training programme is designed to be flexible. Although all trainees are registered with the university for the full DTLLS course, they have the option of finishing their training once they have completed the first year of the course which includes the CTLLS award. Those who leave before this stage may be awarded an internal certificate confirming that they have met the requirements of the Preparation to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector award, although this qualification is not yet formally endorsed by SVUK. Southgate College is responsible for all aspects of delivering the course, while the university retains responsibility for academic standards and the quality assurance of the course.

Key strengths

- good subject specialist support for second-year trainees
- the effectiveness of training in drawing on trainees' diverse range of backgrounds and specialisms to benefit their learning
- the effectiveness of the training programme in helping in-service trainees to review and improve their range of teaching strategies.

Required actions

In order to improve trainees' completion rates, the partnership must:

- ensure that trainees are enrolled for the most appropriate course that enables clear progression routes to higher levels
- make sure that all trainees progressing from year 1 to year 2 of the course have made sufficient progress to reach the required standard by the end of the course.

In order to evaluate the provision and plan for improvement, the partnership must:

- ensure that information on trainees' progress and outcomes for each cohort is collected and analysed rigorously, so that the partnership understands clearly the improvements needed in recruitment and selection to raise completion rates.

Recommendations

In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the partnership should:

- ensure that all trainees working towards the full teaching role benefit from sufficient breadth of teaching and development opportunities.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of partnership arrangements, the partnership should:

- review arrangements between the university and the college so that both trainees and trainers benefit more from the partnership
- improve the arrangements for rigorous quality assurance procedures that improve further the quality of provision.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 3

3. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is satisfactory.
4. Trainees' attainment is satisfactory. Too many trainees fail to complete the two-year training programme for which they are registered. Completion rates are satisfactory for those trainees who progress to the second year, and retention rates on the first year of the programme are improving. Inspectors agreed with teacher trainers' judgements on trainees' attainment. Most second-year trainees' attainment is either good or satisfactory, but a small number do not meet the required standard. Many trainees make good progress from relatively low starting points as a consequence of good training and careful attention to their individual needs. There are no discernible differences in the achievements of trainees from different social and cultural backgrounds. Most trainees, who complete either the first year or the second year of the course, secure posts in teaching or training. A small minority of first year trainees struggle to acquire sufficient teaching experience to meet the requirements of the course.
5. Most second-year trainees develop sound teaching skills. A minority demonstrate very good practice; their teaching is highly effective, and they engage in intelligent and self-critical evaluation of their work. A small minority, however, do not demonstrate the capacity to fulfil a full teaching role, because they have not yet grasped the fundamentals of sound teaching. Most trainees are adept at detailed lesson planning that pays attention to the range of individual needs in the class. Second-year trainees benefit from good subject

specialist support. Mentors are conscientious and provide extensive support to trainees; they are good role models. Trainees' support for one another and their sharing of ideas and experiences also contribute to the good progress that many make. The quality of trainees' written work reflects the wide spectrum of abilities recruited to the course. A minority of trainees do not acquire sufficient breadth of experience, both teaching and non teaching, to satisfy the expectations of training for the full teaching role.

6. Recruitment and selection procedures are inadequate. Too few trainees have been successful in completing the DTLLS programme for which they have registered. Too many trainees have withdrawn from the course in year 1 without achieving an endorsed teaching qualification, although retention rates for the current year 1 cohort have improved. It is inappropriate to enrol all trainees for a two-year programme when a significant minority are unlikely to require a full teaching qualification because they have a training role, and when many trainees are not in a position to make a commitment to a two-year programme. A small minority of trainees progress from year 1 to year 2 of the course despite being unlikely to attain teaching skills to at least a satisfactory level. The commitment held by the partnership to a highly inclusive recruitment and progression policy is commendable in theory, but in practice it is not in the best interests of those trainees who do not have the aptitude to succeed. The programme attracts trainees from diverse backgrounds and of all ages, although the partnership's use of data to analyse trends in the recruitment of different social and ethnic groups is insufficiently systematic. Initial assessment to assess trainees' literacy and numeracy skills is thorough, although a minority of trainees are slow to improve their skills where this is needed. The initial diagnosis of trainees' information and communication technology (ICT) skills relies too much on trainees' own assessment of their skills.
7. The quality of training and assessment is satisfactory. Trainees value highly the training sessions and regard the teacher trainers as excellent role models. Trainers are adept at encouraging in-service trainees to reflect upon and improve the range of teaching methods that they deploy. Many in-service trainees report that the course has given them the confidence to move from methods based on teacher presentations to those where learners are much more active and involved. However, arrangements to ensure that all trainees have the opportunity to observe and learn from outstanding classroom practice are underdeveloped. Trainees benefit from the diversity in backgrounds and subject specialisms of the groups they are in, and trainers are adept at encouraging trainees to share their experiences and apply others' insights to their own teaching. An imaginative module in the second year of the course helps trainees to develop their evaluative skills through a piece of research grounded in their own teaching practice. Assessment is rigorous and accurate, and observations of trainees' teaching by trainers and mentors result in helpful and comprehensive feedback. Trainees report that the personal support that they receive from trainers is outstanding. However, trainees' files indicate that their progress is not always monitored sufficiently rigorously, and actions to be taken are not always followed up. Despite the many strengths in the quality of training, a minority of trainees struggle to reach the required standard, and others give up the course before completion. Interventions to ensure that all

trainees do succeed are neither sufficiently effective nor sufficiently swift to prevent a minority of trainees continuing to deliver weak lessons. Teacher trainers are, on occasion, too reluctant to take decisive action by counselling trainees who are unlikely to succeed.

8. Resources within the college are satisfactory. Module handbooks are very well prepared, and the library stock is adequate. The virtual learning environment that trainees use is satisfactory, but would benefit from further development. In line with the partnership agreement between the university and the college, trainees do not benefit from the university's resources. Although trainees are officially members of the university, inspectors could not discern any direct benefit to trainees of this status.
9. Equality and diversity are promoted satisfactorily. The partnership's approach to recruitment is highly inclusive, although its analysis of recruitment patterns, for example, by ethnicity, is superficial. There are no significant differences between the outcomes of trainees from different ethnic backgrounds. Trainees benefit from the diversity of backgrounds represented on the course, and a culture of mutual respect and interest in others' experiences permeates the course. Equality and diversity are given a high profile in the course, particularly in the second year. Trainees show good awareness of the challenges of teaching in a diverse multicultural environment. However, inspection evidence shows that trainees are less successful in building this awareness into the content of both their teaching practice and their academic work.

Capacity to improve further and/or to sustain high quality outcomes Grade: 3

10. The partnership has satisfactory capacity to take the actions required to secure improvements. The provider recognises the urgent imperative to raise standards by ensuring that completion rates improve and that all trainees who complete the full teaching role qualification have the capacity to be good or better teachers.
11. Quality assurance procedures, including the partnership's self-evaluation, the university's annual monitoring reports, and the contribution of boards of study, are satisfactory. Programme leaders in particular demonstrate a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of operational aspects of the provision. However, quality assurance procedures at partnership level have not been sufficiently self critical, particularly in the analysis of trainees' outcomes. The collection and use of data have not been sufficiently rigorous to provide a full account of the strengths and areas for improvement of the provision. Self-evaluation has given insufficient weight to the consequences of enrolling all trainees for a two-year programme and the resultant high rate of non-completion. As a consequence, until very recently, improvement plans were not sufficiently sharply focused on strategies to improve completion rates. The areas for improvement articulated in the partnership's self-evaluation and the annual monitoring reports do not prioritise what needs to be done nor set clear targets. The self-evaluation document relies too much for its evidence on the findings of the previous inspection of the provision in 2007/08, and pays

insufficient attention to the final outcomes for the trainees who were in the first year of the new programme at the time of that inspection.

12. Improvements are evident in some aspects of the programme. The quality of subject specialist mentoring for second-year trainees has improved and is good. Course handbooks are comprehensive and provide trainees with clear guidance on exactly what they need to do, although some of the references contained in the handbooks are out of date. Assessment and moderation are increasingly rigorous, and expectations are rising of the standard of work that trainees need to achieve. Programme leaders at the college can articulate a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses both of each aspect of the programme and of each individual trainee. However, the overall partnership self-evaluation arising from these insights is over descriptive in its analysis and over generous in its judgements.
13. Trainees have good opportunities to give their views on their experience of the programme, and they report that their views are listened to and valued. The coverage of, and response to, trainees' views through self-evaluation procedures are satisfactory. Arrangements are underdeveloped for collecting and acting upon the views of trainees who leave the course before completion.
14. The partnership's response to local and national initiatives is satisfactory. The partnership has responded satisfactorily to the changes in further education teacher training brought about by the reforms from 2007. Suitable adaptations have been made to ensure that trainees fulfil the assessment requirements if they complete either the CTLLS or the DTLLS qualifications. Despite this, the design of the course is not well suited to those trainees who may have neither the aptitude nor the inclination to commit themselves to a two-year programme, or who would wish to embark on a shorter course before committing themselves to a teaching career. The partnership has responded well to the requirement for teachers from across the lifelong learning sector to acquire teaching qualifications. Many trainees work in private training organisations or community and voluntary groups. Despite this, recruitment targets have not been met over the last two years. Strategic planning in response to the changing external environment tends to be reactive rather than anticipatory. Nevertheless, the partnership has established the foundations to build on its current strengths and tackle the underlying structural weaknesses in the programme that inhibit improvements to 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

| | | Primary | Secondary | ITE for FE |
|--|--|---------|-----------|------------|
| How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees? | | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Trainees' attainment | How well do trainees attain? | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Factors contributing to trainees' attainment | To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes? | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| | To what extent does the training and assessment ensure that all trainees progress to fulfil their potential given their ability and starting points? | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| | To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently? | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| The quality of the provision | To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality? | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Promoting equalities and diversity | To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination? | 1 | 1 | 3 |

CAPACITY TO IMPROVE FURTHER AND/OR SUSTAIN HIGH QUALITY

| | Primary | Secondary | ITE for FE |
|---|---------|-----------|------------|
| 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 | 2 | 3 |
| How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality? | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives? | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement? | 2 | 2 | 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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