

# Canterbury Christ Church University

## Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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Lead inspector	James Sage 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

### 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. Canterbury Christ Church University is a well-established and highly-regarded provider of initial teacher education. It offers a very wide range of programmes leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) for those wishing to teach in primary and secondary schools and to a variety of qualifications for those teaching, or wishing to teach, in the lifelong learning sector. Primary programmes are offered through undergraduate, postgraduate, flexible and employment-based routes. Secondary provision is extremely diverse with postgraduate programmes covering 19 subjects through routes in the following age ranges: 7 to 14, 11 to 18 and 14 to 19. There are employment-based routes in most subjects and a flexible route in three. In addition, there are small undergraduate routes in mathematics and science. While most of the primary, secondary and employment-based provision serves schools in Kent and Medway, there are also partnerships with schools in other locations such as the London Borough of Newham and parts of Essex. The provision for initial teacher education in the lifelong learning sector covered in this inspection is

based on partnerships with 16 further education colleges and providers of adult and community education across the south east of England.

4. The diversity of the university's initial teacher education provision brings a wide range of people into the teaching profession by providing routes suitable for all. The university is also extremely effective in identifying, and responding to, the needs of schools, colleges and other settings. These needs are often met through innovative and creative approaches to teacher education; this is something for which the university has a national reputation.
5. The university also has strong partnerships with local authorities and others to undertake professional development for teachers in the school and lifelong learning sectors. This is set within a clear continuum of training from initial training through all stages of a teacher's career. The university takes a leading role in many strategic partnerships in the region. The breadth of the university's activities in supporting and improving education across the region, often informed by high-quality research, is impressive. Christ Church is held in extremely high regard by partners across the region and beyond.

## A commentary on the provision

6. The following are particularly strong features of the provider and its initial teacher training programmes.
  - The many routes into teaching and highly innovative programmes which identify and meet the need for teachers in all sectors.
  - The extensive and high-quality collaborations across all programmes within the university and with a very wide range of external partners.
  - The particularly strong coherence between the secondary and post-compulsory 14 to 19 routes.
  - The high quality of provision across all phases and programmes.
  - The strengths of the partnerships on all programmes.
  - The high quality of leadership at all levels and the rigorous drive for continuous improvement across all programmes.
  - The extremely high importance given to the personal and professional needs of trainees, the personalisation of the training and the development of trainees' reflective practice.
7. The recommendations in paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 should be considered to improve further the quality of the outcomes for trainees on all programmes.
8. The university has developed a robust assessment system that provides a secure framework for assessment of trainees on all programmes. This is applied

flexibly to ensure that it meets the particular needs of the different programmes. The introduction of this system has improved the formative and summative assessments of trainees and improvements in the quality of feedback and target setting for trainees. However, a small proportion of mentors are still unclear about what exactly is being assessed and the university should consider further training and support for these mentors.

9. All programmes pay good attention to the promotion of equality and diversity. However, in schools, colleges and other settings where this is not an immediate priority, trainees lack depth of understanding in how to do this through their own teaching. The university should consider how to ensure mentors provide on-going support for these trainees. There is good practice in the primary provision phase that might be shared with other programmes.
10. The university collects a great deal of useful data about the outcomes for trainees to inform the cycle of self-evaluation, improvement planning, taking action and monitoring. This involves programme leaders and tutors in a great deal of data input and analysis that can be very time consuming. While senior and programme leaders, and tutors, are supported extremely well by non-academic staff, the university should consider the role of a data officer to provide further support for academic staff.

## Provision in the primary phase

### Context

11. There are seven primary routes to QTS with about 580 new trainees beginning undergraduate and postgraduate programmes each year. Trainees may follow three-year full-time or part-time undergraduate Bachelor of Arts programmes or full-time, part-time or flexible postgraduate programmes. One sixth of primary undergraduate and almost one third of full-time primary postgraduate trainees follow a languages route. The partnership covers a wide geographical spread including the Kent, Medway, East Sussex and Essex local authorities.

### Key strengths

12. The key strengths are:
  - the high-quality, personalised training that enables trainees to achieve outstanding outcomes
  - the outstanding leadership and management of the programmes and the rigorous drive for further improvement in trainees' achievement
  - the exceptional partnership with schools that ensures that trainees develop into highly effective practitioners with a clear understanding of pedagogy
  - the high quality of both the central and school-based training and the innovative use made of high quality resources which prepare trainees very well for their teaching careers
  - the dedicated commitment to promoting equal opportunities and diversity which ensures that the training fully meets the needs of all trainees
  - the partnership's anticipation of, and response to, national initiatives which results in newly qualified teachers who are well prepared for current demands in school.

### Recommendations

13. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:
  - consider how to provide trainees with more formal feedback on how well each of the QTS Standards is achieved to help them monitor their progress.
14. In order to further enhance its capacity to improve, the provider should:
  - consider how to develop further the use of data to evaluate the progress made by different groups of trainees and to plan for new initiatives and developments
  - consider how to enable schools to evaluate the quality of their provision to inform the overall self-evaluation.

## Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

15. Course leaders continue to build on the significant strengths in provision identified at the previous inspection. All those engaged in both centre- and school-based training understand the comprehensive training procedures and this ensures a very high degree of consistency. The overall attainment of trainees is outstanding. Well-qualified trainees are recruited and the overwhelming majority make good or better progress from their starting points. The trainees' commitment to their training is clearly evident and their approach is both professional and reflective.
16. Throughout both the undergraduate and postgraduate courses, trainees display highly professional attitudes. Trainees participate fully in the life of their placement schools by, for example, assisting with extra-curricular activities. They plan well-structured lessons which make clear what pupils are expected to learn and provide well for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Mentors comment on how well the trainees quickly form good relationships with their classes. Trainees display a good knowledge of how to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively to enhance their lessons. A particularly strong feature is trainees' ability to reflect on their own practice with a clear focus on the progress of their pupils. Trainees are highly committed to addressing their personal targets and make excellent use of opportunities to develop their teaching skills across a diverse range of educational settings. Trainees have full access to, and make extensive use of, a comprehensive range of resources to support them in their development. These include the new learning resource centre which has an extensive collection of reference materials and teaching aids.
17. The university is inclusive in its outlook. It recruits trainees with a wide range of academic backgrounds and prior career experiences. Selection procedures are carefully designed to ensure that the trainees have the intellectual capacity and the attributes required to make a good teacher. Primary programmes recruit fully from heavily oversubscribed applications. The flexible and part-time routes have successfully enabled mature trainees who have made career changes and/or who have family commitments to partake fully in the training. The provider has successfully met national targets for the training of primary language teachers through focused marketing events. The recruitment of male trainees is in line with the sector average; there is a similar picture for trainees who have disabilities. However, despite targeted marketing, recruitment from minority ethnic groups remains lower than the sector average. Retention rates are good, and well above national averages, on both the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Trainees in all identifiable groups achieve well with no significant differences. The majority of trainees secure employment following the end of their courses, significantly higher than the sector average. More than two thirds of newly qualified teachers in the Kent and Medway local

authorities are from Canterbury Christ Church, testament to the quality of the trainees and the strength of the partnerships.

18. The quality of training and assessment is outstanding, as demonstrated by the progress made by trainees. The success of the university's holistic approach to the trainees' professional development is reflected by schools who report that trainees are very well prepared to teach. Well-chosen tasks and specialist input at the university fully complement the high-quality training provision in schools. Assignments are very closely linked to classroom practice, marked thoroughly and support fully the trainees' understanding of key aspects of primary education. University tutors are very experienced and, through frequent discussions with colleagues in school, ensure that the course content is relevant and up to date. School-based tutors, and visiting tutors from the university, provide trainees with very relevant, accurate and helpful feedback on their teaching and progress. The regular, individualised targets are used very well to rectify difficulties and ensure that the trainees develop the skills and strategies they need to become effective teachers. Carefully tailored and personalised tuition further enhances the development and application of trainees' subject knowledge. On the few occasions where a trainee falls below the required standard, the quick intervention by tutors and course leaders ensures that rapid progress is made. Trainees receive high quality feedback on their overall progress and clear verbal feedback on the progress they are making against each of the QTS Standards; a checklist ensures coverage of each Standard. However, there is no detailed record of evidence of how well each Standard is achieved to help trainees evaluate their own progress against their starting points.
19. Trainers' roles and responsibilities are made clear in the course handbook and are understood fully. Partnership schools share the provider's high expectations and make an outstanding contribution to trainees' development as teachers. They are aware of the current priorities, for example developing trainees' awareness of promoting cultural diversity and the teaching of early reading skills, and make every effort to provide high-quality experiences. Schools consider that communication systems have improved significantly and report that university administrative systems are prompt and efficient. The introduction of moderation meetings based on geographical areas ensures that mentors are fully supported in consistently assessing trainees to ensure their progress is monitored carefully and sufficiently challenging targets are set.
20. Trainees receive excellent support for their personal well-being in the university and in schools. This contributes to the high retention rates as well as to the achievement of trainees. Tutors are quick to detect when an individual needs additional support and they respond extremely well to individual situations. The university monitors carefully the comparative achievement of different groups of trainees, for example by gender and ethnicity. They have been active in ensuring that all trainees receive additional support when necessary and have also targeted support for specific groups, such as male trainees.
21. The promotion of equality of opportunity and the valuing of diversity are outstanding; trainees know how to deal with harassment and discrimination in



schools. Excellent provision is made for trainees with particular needs, such as dyslexia and visual impairment. Those trainees who have physical disabilities feel extremely well supported in achieving their outcomes. Trainees who have additional placements abroad disseminate their experience to other members of their cohort, and trainees demonstrate a very secure awareness about issues relating to race and religion.

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

22. The provider's capacity to sustain high quality outcomes and to secure further improvement is outstanding. Leaders and managers across the partnership are consistent in their drive to seek improvements in the overall quality of provision. Their keen ambition is firmly grounded in accurate self-evaluation and exceptionally clear planning for further improvement. Consequently, high-quality outcomes have been sustained and continue to improve.
23. The quality of self-evaluation is outstanding and inspection findings accurately reflect the judgements of the provider. Internal cross-phase moderation and feedback from external examiners provide constructive feedback and identify the next steps for refining the effectiveness of all programmes. The views of trainees are an important component of course reviews and are based on written evaluations, group discussions and through the active participation of course representatives. The feedback is used by course leaders to target initiatives and developments which will improve the trainees' outcomes. School-based mentors play a key role in assessing trainees' outcomes and undertake this role with professionalism and diligence. However, the university is yet to fully involve all partnership schools in self-evaluation. Schools do not routinely evaluate the quality of their provision and feed this back to the university.
24. Leaders and managers at all levels anticipate and respond to change exceptionally well. Decisions made are firmly rooted in a thorough understanding of educational theory and best practice. Programme leaders ensure that current national initiatives, such as the teaching of early reading and mathematics, ICT provision and curriculum reviews are fully catered for in training. The professionalism of the primary team is trusted by trainees and partnership alike. The university has introduced an international dimension: partnerships have been extended overseas to Malaysia, India and Ghana. Placing the primary modern languages students in schools across Europe has led to improved staff and trainee development, a greater understanding of cultural diversity and trainees who are well prepared for teaching languages. Outstanding anticipation and response are further demonstrated by the provider's use of funding from the Training and Development Agency for a special educational needs project. This has led to increased numbers of trainees interested in taking up additional placements in special schools. The university also uses the expertise of its partnership schools to keep it up to date with initiatives. Close liaison with leading literacy schools ensures that trainers and

trainees are fully up to date with the use of phonics in early reading, and other schools have provided excellent support with 'assessing pupils' progress' material.

25. Improvement planning is excellent and linked very closely to accurate self-evaluation and review. The leadership team takes responsibility for programme improvement and priorities are communicated exceptionally well across the partnership. For example, recent changes have sharpened the procedures for the assessment of trainees in response to review and feedback from schools. Action planning is very detailed and extremely thorough. However, although targets for course improvements are specific and tightly linked to ensuring high quality outcomes for trainees, the use of data to evaluate the progress made by different groups of trainees and plan for new initiatives and developments is underdeveloped in comparison to the extremely high quality elsewhere in the provision.

## Provision in the secondary phase

### Context

26. The university offers a wide range of routes into secondary teaching with the clear purpose of providing access to teaching for as wide a cross-section of potential applicants as possible. These routes are matched very carefully to the needs of schools across the region. Postgraduate training leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) is provided in the 7 to 14, 11 to 18 and 14 to 19 age ranges. Training for the 11 to 18 age range is offered in art and design, English, citizenship, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, mathematics, modern languages, music, physical education, religious education and science. Eleven of these subjects are also available for trainees wishing to teach the 7 to 14 age range. English, mathematics and music are available through a flexible route. Training for the 14 to 19 age range is offered in applied business, leisure and tourism, psychology, society, health and development, and creative and media. A small number of trainees follow undergraduate routes in mathematics and science. There were around 430 trainees on postgraduate programmes at the time of the inspection.
27. As well as its partnership with schools in Kent and Medway, the university also has a number of smaller secondary partnerships that have been developed in response to specific needs. For example, a group of schools in Essex provides placements for local trainees in mathematics and science.

### Key strengths

28. The key strengths are:
- the diversity of routes into secondary teaching matched carefully to recruitment and to clearly identified local needs
  - the quality of leadership at all levels and the rigorous drive for further improvement
  - the sharing of expertise and best practice across the provision within a common framework and philosophy, and with sufficient flexibility to ensure that the provision is matched well to the needs of that particular programme
  - the rigorous identification of trainees with the aptitude to go on to become good or outstanding teachers
  - the extremely effective integration of the elements of each course, combined with trainees' ability to reflect critically on their progress
  - the excellent attention given to the personal well-being and professional development of each individual trainee
  - the personalisation of the training, and the extremely high levels of commitment of all trainers to the progress made by each trainee.

### Recommendations

29. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:

- encourage more mentors to use a wider range of training strategies and match these more closely to trainees' targets
  - improve trainees' understanding of how to teach in a diverse society.
30. To continue to increase the proportion of trainees judged to be outstanding, the provider should:
- identify the characteristics of outstanding trainees and monitor more closely trainees who are potentially outstanding to ensure that they are set sufficiently challenging targets.

## Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

31. The diverse range of secondary training routes is particularly effective in attracting a wide range of people into teaching and in meeting clearly identified needs in schools across the region. This is evident in employment rates that are well above the national average. At least two thirds of newly qualified secondary teachers in the Kent and Medway local authorities are likely to be from Canterbury Christ Church.
32. The overall attainment of trainees across all secondary routes is good and in line with trainees' starting points for each route, age range and subject. More than one third of trainees are judged to be outstanding and this proportion is rising steadily. The proportion of trainees judged to be good or better is also rising and only a very small number are judged to be no more than satisfactory. Successful completion rates are above the national average and rising. The overwhelming majority of trainees make strong progress throughout the course as a result of the training and personal support they receive. There are no significant differences in the achievement of any identifiable groups. Taken together, these outcomes are clearly indicative of the high quality of all aspects of the provision.
33. The trainees on all secondary routes show impressive commitment and enthusiasm for teaching and for their subjects. School-based mentors comment on how well trainees form good professional relationships with the classes they teach and with colleagues in schools. Trainees quickly become confident classroom teachers, demonstrating high levels of subject knowledge which they apply well to their teaching, and showing confidence and flexibility when necessary. Their critical reflection and self-evaluations have a clear focus on students' learning, which helps their progress and enables them to absorb the feedback and guidance they are given. The trainees are notably good at taking responsibility for their own professional development.
34. Trainees on the 11 to 18 programme demonstrate high levels of subject knowledge to enable them to teach with confidence across the age range. They have a good understanding of developments in their subject. They also have a secure understanding of developments in 14 to 19 education and how this relates to their own subjects. Trainees on the 14 to 19 route work towards

qualified teacher status as well as obtaining a diploma in teaching in the lifelong learning sector (DTLLS). This provides them with a depth of understanding of curriculum organisation, teaching and learning, and assessment arrangements in schools, further education colleges and work-based settings, in the secondary curriculum and the implications for their own teaching. They also make excellent use of their prior experiences and knowledge to inform their planning and teaching. Those training to teach 7 to 14-year-olds have an impressive understanding of issues arising from pupils' transition from Key Stage 2 to 3. This covers not just the practicalities of transferring schools, but changes in approaches to teaching and learning, the development of pupils' independence and issues around progression in a number of curriculum areas. As a result, these trainees have a great deal to offer both primary and secondary schools.

35. Trainees on all routes are committed to the need to match their teaching to the needs of individuals and groups of students, and do this well. A minority of trainees do not have a sufficient grasp of how to use information about students' prior achievement in their planning and teaching. The training in the university and in schools gives much attention to promoting equality and diversity. However, for many trainees in schools where this is not an immediate priority, mentors do not routinely show trainees how to teach students from a wide range of cultural backgrounds.
36. Secondary recruitment is strong, even in shortage subjects. Many carefully calculated risks are taken, for example by recruiting trainees with non-standard backgrounds, and there is good recruitment from groups traditionally under-represented in teaching. The diversity of the cohorts is used very well in training. The very high and improving successful completion and employment rates show that the university is successful in recruiting trainees with the potential to become good or outstanding teachers.
37. The quality of the training and the personal and professional support provided for trainees is outstanding. The very detailed analyses of trainees' strengths and weaknesses at selection, early in the course and in the early stages of the first placement help trainees make rapid progress from the start of their training. Trainees' progress is carefully monitored throughout the course, and the assessment review points in the two school placements are particularly thorough.
38. The university has introduced a common system for the assessment of trainees that has established consistency across the partnerships, with the large majority of mentors clear about what is being assessed and graded, and why. The system provides a secure framework that allows different routes to use it flexibly to best meet the particular needs of that route. On the whole mentors successfully balance the demands of a holistic view of trainees' progress, the excellent formative use of a common set of grade characteristics and the need to gather evidence for the QTS Standards. Trainees receive frequent, high quality feedback on their teaching and, in the large majority of cases, on their overall professional development. They are set challenging targets and the very large majority of trainees are clear about where they are and what they need to

do to improve. Some written feedback and targets lack challenge and clarity and have insufficient focus on subject-specific issues and a small minority of trainees need this greater clarity to help them make progress. A few mentors do not fully understand what outstanding trainees look like and do not provide sufficiently challenging targets for them.

39. Trainees are supported well in making links between the different elements of the course to make progress. They are able to integrate what they learn from the high-quality, university-based curriculum subject and professional studies training with that which they receive in schools and most are able to transfer what they have learnt to their teaching. University tutors use their own research and that of colleagues to ensure that the training is up to date. The partnership is very strong, with many examples of highly effective clustering and sharing amongst schools to ensure that all available expertise is used well. Many trainees are placed in 'mentoring departments' where they work with a number of experienced teachers. This leads to a wider range of approaches to training and higher quality feedback. Conversely, in a minority of schools, mentors use only a narrow range of training techniques to help trainees meet their targets. They make insufficient use of, for example, collaborative teaching, coaching and focused observations of other teachers. The quality of support for trainees' personal and professional development is exceptionally high; all trainees receive highly personalised training. Many trainees describe tutors 'going the extra mile' and 'going way beyond what is expected'. Detection and intervention are rapid and effective for any trainees in difficulty. Very careful account is taken of trainees' personal circumstances and professional development when determining school placements; these needs are balanced extremely well.
40. Trainees keep reflective learning journals and these are a very effective tool for recording and supporting their progress. Many include interesting and readable blends of the highly pragmatic, emotional responses and thoughtful reflection that both chart and support the trainee's professional development. A minority of trainees do not have this rich mix and lack some clarity about how the journal should be used.

The capacity for further improvement  
and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 1

41. All the outcomes for trainees have been sustained at a high level or improved. The proportion of trainees judged to be outstanding, and the proportion judged to be good and better, have improved in the previous two years and continue to improve. Retention and employment rates have improved and are consistently significantly above national averages. There is a clear and marked trend of continuing improvement that can be attributed to developments and improvements to the programmes. While the provider was somewhat modest in its self-evaluation grades, the analysis was incisive and accurate. Thus, the recommendations for the secondary provision in this report are already well

known to the university, and to many schools in the partnership, and plans are in place to deal with them.

42. The leadership of the secondary provision at all levels is of extremely high quality. The degree of integration and collaboration across all secondary routes is very impressive. There is a rigorous drive for improvement across the provision, including in schools. Trainees are sensitive to this culture of improvement and it encourages them in their own efforts to make progress.
43. The university anticipates and responds well to local and national initiatives. This is apparent in trainees' depth of understanding of changes in the secondary curriculum, the implications of changes in primary education for their own teaching, developments in 14 to 19 education and a range of initiatives in their own subjects. Secondary programmes are extremely well informed by tutors' research in highly relevant areas such as behaviour management. The university's central role in many regional bodies, such as the 14 to 19 strategy group, means that it is fully engaged with local and regional developments and frequently takes the leading role. Internal review and evaluation are also used effectively to ensure that all secondary programmes are fully responsive to external developments and are often 'ahead of the game'.
44. The cycle of review, self-evaluation and improvement is extremely strong, informed well by extensive and rigorous analysis of data about the outcomes for trainees, and based on a robust, research-led model of improvement. Self-evaluation is incisive, involves all of the partnership and covers all aspects of the secondary provision. The university has absolute clarity about what is working well and what needs further development. Schools are clear about the priorities for improvement and about their role in securing these. Improvement planning is informed well by self-evaluation; it is focused on key priorities and on improving the outcomes for trainees. Similarly, the impact of any actions taken is monitored rigorously in terms of impact on these outcomes.
45. The university has a strong track record of applying innovative solutions to clearly identified and thoroughly researched needs. Recent developments in this vein include the establishment of training in mathematics and science in parts of Essex, the Inspire programme which enables post-doctoral scientists to train to teach in London schools, and the successful 7 to 14 programme which supports transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3. This adds further evidence of the provider's outstanding capacity for improvement. At the same time, the quality of the university's work on 14 to 19 programmes has been nationally recognised: the dual-accreditation model is unique and has been studied carefully by many interested bodies.
46. The university collects, analyses and interrogates large amounts of qualitative and quantitative data related to the outcomes for trainees and to the quality of the provision. Secondary leaders at all levels use this effectively in their monitoring of the quality of the provision and planning for improvement. It is often used to intervene with individual or small groups of trainees as well as with larger cohorts. However, this is very time consuming and there is little support for academic staff in this process.





## Employment-based routes to qualified teacher status

### Context

47. The university offers a route to QTS through the graduate teacher programme, working extensively with a diverse range and large number of primary and secondary schools in Kent, Medway and other neighbouring local authorities. It has also established links with the London Borough of Newham and has developed a programme to meet the needs of Newham primary schools. At the time of the inspection there were 224 secondary and 78 primary graduate trainees. This includes 40 secondary trainees who were school- or self-funded and filling a vacancy.

### Key strengths

48. The key strengths are:

- the self-motivated, reflective and highly committed trainees
- the management of change and its impact on the outcomes for trainees
- the quality of self-review and improvement planning which has a clear focus on improving the outcomes for trainees
- the commitment of all partners to the programme
- the high level of personalisation of the training and the impact of this on the outcomes for trainees
- the high employment rates resulting from the high quality of the training and the strength of the partnership with schools and local authorities.

### Recommendations

49. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should ensure that:

- subject mentors are trained to have a thorough understanding of the assessment criteria and that the criteria are rigorously applied to all areas of trainees' performance
- weekly targets for each trainee make explicit the skills they need to develop.

### Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

50. Effective recruitment procedures ensure that the provider attracts and selects trainees who are very well suited to the demands of the programme. The training and assessment are outstanding and lead to trainees, and all groups of trainees, consistently making progress towards challenging targets. The employment rate of those completing the programme is well above the national

average and the proportion of trainees completing the course has been increased to the point that it is also significantly higher than the national average. The provider has been particularly successful in significantly reducing the proportion of science trainees not completing the programme.

51. Attainment for trainees who complete the course is good and the provider has succeeded in increasing the number of trainees who are judged to be good or outstanding by the end of the programme. Trainees show a very high level of professionalism in the way they commit to both their training and the schools in which they are trained. They are particularly well motivated and willingly take responsibility for their own training. They reflect well on their teaching and their self-evaluations focus explicitly, not just on what they as teachers have done, but on what their pupils have learned. Primary trainees, in particular, are skilled at establishing exciting and informative learning environments for their pupils, often in schools operating under difficult circumstances. Trainees make good use of a range of assessment strategies and are adept at providing on-going verbal feedback to their students and pupils. Trainees are less skilled at using the assessment data at their disposal for planning in detail for future learning.
52. Recruitment to the programme is buoyant. The provider has developed rigorous recruitment and selection systems which meet the differing needs of secondary and primary schools and, in the case of the Newham schools, which are particularly responsive to local needs. The fact that systems are phase-specific has allowed the provider to increase the proportion of trainees from under-represented groups, such as men in primary training. The process by which secondary trainees are interviewed by 'their' school before being interviewed by the provider gives trainees a very clear picture of the context in which they will be training and accelerates their induction into their placement. The selection of participating schools is also rigorous and is dependent on high quality self-evaluation by schools of their training potential. All trainers are very clear that they are training teachers to teach, not just in their institution, but in any school. Subject knowledge audits give the central- and school-based trainers a very clear picture of the strengths and areas for development of trainees. These inform the early stages of central subject training, although this is done more effectively and rigorously in some subject areas than others.
53. Trainees value their central subject training very highly. Subject leaders and other central trainers exploit their limited time well by focusing on the application of subject knowledge in the classroom and, in this, they model good practice. Trainees are challenged in these sessions to extend their thinking beyond the practice of their schools and they respond enthusiastically to the challenge. Secondary trainees would like more of this central training and primary trainees refer to their central training as 'inspiring'.
54. The employment-based trainers (EBTs) in schools play a pivotal role in ensuring the personalisation of the training for the graduate trainees. Their induction programmes ensure that the necessary core activities are placed securely within the contexts of trainees' schools and a comprehensive needs assessment meeting is used particularly well as a bridge from that structured induction programme to the trainees' individualised training plans. These training plans

drive the training and trainees, with the support of their subject mentors and EBTs, are encouraged to take responsibility for their own training and to evaluate their progress towards achieving the QTS Standards. This they do willingly and well.

55. The training opportunities in the trainees' host schools are extended well by the contrasting school experiences. Training needs are very well identified and suitable placements chosen to address those needs. The second placement is of particularly good value when the EBT of the host school reinforces the coherence of the training by visiting the trainee during the placement. There is some flexibility with regards to the duration and timing of the contrasting experience. This is not always taken up by schools and a small number of trainees would benefit from slightly longer in the second school to consolidate their skills in a different setting.
56. Trainees receive very good and regular feedback, not just from their mentors but also from other teachers in their schools. Feedback is very well targeted to their needs and concentrates well on the subject or pedagogy the trainee is developing. Mentors monitor trainees' progress carefully and trainees' professional development files contain secure and well-chosen evidence of their achievement of the QTS Standards. While written feedback on trainees' teaching is regular and effective, the weekly targets in the individual training plans are too often expressed as tasks rather than as skills to be developed. This does not help the trainees as effectively as it might to monitor the development of those skills.
57. All schools show excellent commitment to the programme as a whole and to their heightened role as trainers. All partners have a shared understanding of the demands of the graduate trainee route and a very clear idea of the qualities required of a good graduate trainee. The regional area teams, which are now firmly embedded in the management structure of the programme, have brought many benefits to the programme. Training for EBTs can be regionalised, and therefore specific to need, and collaboration at regional cluster level has meant extended training opportunities for trainees. There are agreed systems of assessment which are thoroughly moderated at school, regional and programme level. The provider has targeted this year the need for rigour when assessing at the highest levels. While the assessment criteria are, in the vast majority of cases, applied well, a very small minority of school-based trainers are not yet applying those criteria with sufficient care.
58. The provider makes very effective and creative use of resources at programme level to support both central and in-school training. Resources are well targeted to need and considerable extra resource is used to support trainees experiencing difficulties. Personal support for the trainees is very strong. Communication between university tutors, EBTs and the area team leaders is regular and any vital information relating to trainees' well-being or progress is shared on an equally regular basis with the programme director. Trainees are well trained to value diversity, but the provider wishes to extend the depth of this knowledge to ensure that trainees have a very clear picture of the extent of the pupil diversity they will encounter in their schools.

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

59. The provider has outstanding capacity to improve as shown, in particular, by the continuing improvement in trainees' outcomes and by the high-quality and well-targeted action taken by the leaders of the programme. The programme director is very clear on what needs to be developed and her work is characterised by a rigorous drive for improvement. Partner schools speak very highly of the management of the programme and of the impact of the changes that have taken place.
60. Self-evaluation is rigorous and is based on a careful analysis of trainees' outcomes. For example, selection procedures are regularly reviewed in the light of trainees' subsequent progress and attainment. The self-evaluation process also takes on board a wealth of evaluative data from a range of sources: all elements of the programme are evaluated by all partners. The regional structure has allowed for the greater involvement of local stakeholders and has extended the opportunities for feedback. Quality assurance systems are explicit and the EBTs have an important part to play in assuring the quality of the school-based training. Great care is taken to ensure judgements are moderated and training programmes are regularly monitored. Not all EBTs, however, are as rigorous in assessing the quality of the weekly meetings between subject mentor and trainee. The external examiner has made a significant contribution to the evaluation of the programme and an additional visit this year has supported the interim evaluation of the programme. Reports are detailed and highly evaluative and pick up clearly on areas for development from previous years. The level of detail of the feedback in the reports is high and gives the provider a clear idea of what still needs to be improved. The programme is described as being 'dynamic and responsive to identified need'.
61. The very well-organised management of change has helped secure the improvements already made. The creation of the regional structure has provided an additional layer of management and has facilitated a better-informed view of the progress made by trainees. Area team leaders monitor the work of the university tutors very effectively and the fact that they are answerable to the programme manager as part of the line management structure ensures an additional layer of accountability. Team leaders are very well inducted into their roles and the role provides very good opportunities for professional development for those middle managers.
62. The provider has ensured that trainees are kept well up to date on national and local initiatives in education. As a result of training on early reading, the primary cohort fully understands the implications of the Rose review, and secondary trainees show a secure understanding of 14 to 19 Diplomas even when their main placement does not allow for direct experience of them.

63. The cycle of improvement planning is transparent and well considered. The plans themselves are very well informed by reviews which consider a range of evaluative data. University tutors and team leaders are well involved in the writing. The strategic objectives are focused and related very well to a concise, but very appropriate, range of targets. Success is to be measured by impact on trainees' outcomes and the plan is regularly reviewed and progress is evaluated. Schools are appropriately involved in the process and are well versed in the strategic priorities.

## Initial teacher education for the further education system

### Context

64. The university operates in partnership with 12 further education colleges, four providers of adult and community education and five police forces to provide in-service training for teachers and trainers. Police force training was not included in this inspection. The geographical spread of the in-service provision is broad, with partners situated all over the greater London area, and from Bexhill-on-Sea in Sussex to Broadstairs and Folkestone at the eastern and southern extremes of Kent. Post-16 partners include sixth form, land-based, inner-city general further education and rural regional colleges. Adult and community learning (ACL) partners are either adult education colleges or local authority services, and are dispersed across south London, the Medway towns and Kent. Partners are grouped into one of four clusters: London colleges, Kent and Sussex colleges, ACL providers or public services providers. The provision in partner institutions is overseen by programme co-ordinators. In addition to its large part-time in-service provision, the university offers a one-year full-time pre-service professional graduate certificate in education (PGCE), delivered partly at its campus and in placements across the south east. Provision and placements at each partner institution are managed in-situ by a centre or programme coordinator. The university department for post-compulsory education and training manages all programmes.
65. At the time of the inspection, 1,258 trainees were enrolled on in-service courses leading to university-validated foundation degree and teaching awards (FDTA), which comprise a suite of awards such as the DTLLS. Some 75% of each course is taught by the partner institution and 25% by university link tutors and teaching staff visiting the partner's premises. The FDTA programme complies with the university's wider foundation degree framework and provides opportunities for credit accumulation. Modules can accommodate learners requiring both initial teacher education and continuing professional development.
66. In addition to its in-service provision, the university offers a one-year, full-time pre-service PGCE, delivered at its campus and in placements across the south east. Provision and placements at each partner institution are managed by a centre or programme coordinator. Twenty-five trainees were enrolled on the pre-service PGCE at the time of the inspection.

### Key strengths

67. The key strengths are:
- the highly effective use of personal development plans to promote reflective practice amongst trainees

- the highly-valued and productive link tutor system which aids quality improvement, models best practice and raises the aspirations of trainees
- the democratic, cohesive and inclusive partnership which is clearly focused on improving trainees' outcomes
- the high quality support for trainees, with swift and effective interventions
- the very effective subject specialist mentoring across the partnership.

## Recommendations

68. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:
- continue to refine partners' understanding and application of procedures for grading trainees
  - use the partnership's virtual learning environment more effectively to provide trainees with strategies to promote equality and diversity in their teaching
  - continue to improve the measures to monitor the effectiveness of literacy, numeracy and ICT support following the initial assessment.

## Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

69. In 2008/09, 76% of in-service trainees' attainment across the partnership was good or better. However, there were marked variations across clusters, with attainment at only 64% good or better in London colleges newer to the partnership. In the ACL cluster and the Kent and Sussex college cluster, attainment was about 20% higher. The university has taken steps to address this disparity which are beginning to have a positive impact. Trainees' outcomes are now improving, and achievement is good or better in all colleges inspected. The attainment of pre-service trainees on the PGCE course is outstanding.
70. The large majority of trainees successfully complete their courses. Amongst smaller ACL partners, completion rates were lower than in other settings, an outcome attributed to shifting employment and the irregularity of contracted hours for ACL trainees. Between groups of trainees from different backgrounds there was little variation in completion rates.
71. Most trainees make good or better progress from their individual starting points. The initial assessment process, which establishes a sound baseline from which to measure subsequent progress, also identifies if trainees need support with literacy, numeracy or ICT. Staff support is put in place quickly when a need arises and is generally very successful in ensuring that trainees are able to make progress and complete their programmes. However, the quality of the monitoring of this support varies across the partnership.
72. Most trainees are confident teachers who employ a range of effective strategies to engage their students. Trainees use good quality resources to support learning, and are confident in their use of ICT and other technologies. Trainees

plan classes well to meet the needs of individual students, and use a wide range of assessment methods to monitor progress and motivate students.

73. Recruitment and selection procedures are good. Trainers and administrators have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and clear criteria for selection are generally applied consistently across the partnership. Prospective trainees undertake a good range of well-managed tasks which effectively identify any skills deficit or other needs; these are then addressed well. During recruitment for the PGCE programme, university staff exercise great care to ensure suitable, high-quality placements are available for trainees before making an offer of a place on the programme. The university collects and analyses a good range of data on applications and enrolments. This information is used to carefully monitor recruitment from a range of groups. Improvements in selection procedures have contributed to the improving success rates across the partnership.
74. The quality of training is good. Trainers and course managers generally make good use of cluster structures to support the effective sharing of good practice. Trainees are very appreciative of the variety of approaches to which they are exposed, and they particularly value and benefit from the input of university tutors. Graded teaching observations by tutors, mentors and coordinators improve trainees' progress and motivation and lead to the setting of good individual targets for improvement. Trainees have a good understanding of their targets and see the target-setting process as instrumental in improving their practice. Written and oral feedback from observers is clear and helpful, with good practical guidance to trainees on ways to improve. Trainers mark assignments and other written work with care, providing clear comments on trainees' strengths and areas for improvement.
75. Trainees receive very high levels of mentor support, and most are able to identify ways that mentor guidance has helped shape and improve their professional practice. Links between all those contributing to training are very strong. Mentors' guidance is particularly valuable in identifying vocationally-specific strategies for improving trainees' practice and their students' outcomes. Trainees value the discussions they have with mentors, and generally feel very well supported by more experienced specialist colleagues.
76. The personal development plan in use across the partnership is highly effective in encouraging trainees to reflect on their professional practice and on their progress. Trainees often display sophisticated levels of reflection in their plans and in their explanations of their practice. Academic progress is evident in the growing sophistication of academic writing and in improvements in trainees' planning for teaching and learning. Trainees can effectively describe and evaluate links between the taught elements of the course and their classroom practice. They have a good appreciation of the ways in which a deeper understanding of teaching and learning theory has informed their practice.
77. The promotion of equality and diversity is generally good across the partnership. Managers carry out comprehensive data collection and analysis around the application, recruitment, progress and achievement of all



identifiable groups. Course managers demonstrate inclusive practice in their partnership planning and strategic thinking, while trainers and link tutors effectively model good practice in their approaches to equality and diversity in the classroom. The majority of trainees have a good knowledge of equalities legislation, and all have at least a satisfactory understanding of rights and responsibilities with regard to equality and diversity. Trainees comment on how this knowledge and understanding prepares them for their professional role and gives them confidence. In several partner colleges, good strategies exist to ensure that students with disabilities have access the full range of learning opportunities. For example, in one college, a particularly good range of measures provided for trainees with hearing impairments. Adult and community learning trainees work in very diverse settings, from community venues to prisons and from military barracks to college classrooms, and the trainees successfully consider the variety of settings and student needs within their reflective practice. Helpful equality and diversity guidance materials are available on the university's virtual learning environment. However, this does not provide sufficient clear and easily applicable examples setting out teaching scenarios to support and guide trainees in their teaching of equality and diversity.

78. The university's deployment of human and research-based resources is outstanding. The highly-valued and productive link tutor system very effectively provides localised and clearly communicated quality improvement strategies and raises trainees' aspirations and outcomes. The university also provides well-structured continuing professional development and associate tutor programmes, which are successful in raising standards amongst partnership staff. University staff are major contributors to national and regional research projects. Research outcomes feed directly into strategic and operational activities that benefit trainees and partner staff. Teaching resources are good or better at all institutions, and are outstanding at the university. In most partner colleges and services, skills for life teaching and support materials are readily available in libraries or on local intranet systems. Most trainees make good use of the virtual learning environment. Materials on the system are of generally high quality, clear and accessible, and frequently updated.

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

79. Despite very significant expansion of the in-service partnership since the previous inspection in 2006, the university has maintained an outstanding record of continuous improvement.
80. The university leaders and managers are highly committed to democratic and responsive partnership working. Careful, well-managed growth has enabled newer partners to draw on the established strengths and good practice already available in the partnership. New partners' more diverse demographic experiences are already enhancing the partnership's work on equality and diversity, and are providing opportunities for a broader more inclusive

curriculum offer to trainees. Communication within the partnership is excellent, and all partners are fully involved in development work and planning.

81. Self-evaluation processes are open, inclusive and comprehensive. Links between self-evaluation and improvement planning are clear. The current self-assessment is accurate in its identification of strengths and areas for development, and contains very clear accounts of actions already undertaken as well as actions for further improvement. The self-assessment takes into account a wide range of evidence, including feedback from trainees, partners and external examiners, and rigorous analysis of data about the outcomes for trainees. All partners are fully involved in self-evaluation and consequently there exists a well-developed culture of continuous improvement across the partnership. College and service managers and staff are clear of their roles and responsibilities in the partnership. The collaborative provision handbook provides useful guidance and is well used, as are the mentor and trainee handbooks.
82. Trainees' evaluations are gathered frequently, and issues identified are promptly dealt with. An appropriate range of formal measures exists to gather trainees' feedback, such as end-of-module surveys, but the university's close contact with partners, through the link tutors, also allows it to be responsive to issues that crop up unexpectedly. For example, the university acted swiftly to find a new mentor for trainees who had been experiencing difficulties with their initial mentor. However, trainees currently lack the means to offer any systematic formal evaluation of the quality of the mentoring they receive.
83. The partnerships' quality improvement cycle is well established and effective and well understood in individual institutions. University link tutors attend meetings at partner institutions where action is taken promptly when necessary. Cluster, pathway and module leadership arrangements are very effective in affording partners a voice in the development and improvement of provision.
84. Opportunities for staff development are wide ranging, focused on improving outcomes for trainees and include the associate tutor development programme, which provides a very good means to develop understanding of teaching in higher education. All those teaching on DTLLS programmes are required to engage with this programme. Other opportunities available to trainers include participation in module development and other professionally-focused meetings, frequent conferences on topics such as conducting action research and mentoring and involvement in the link tutor arrangement.
85. The provider's anticipation of change and responsiveness to national and local initiatives are outstanding. A very wide range of research activity informs and underpins developments within the partnership. The head of post-compulsory education and training and the FDTA programme director have been closely involved with national developments by acting as advisers to the independent, employer-led sector skills council responsible for the professional development of staff working in the lifelong learning sector. Through the development of online, distance-learning courses for teachers of 14 to 19 Diplomas, university

staff have developed insights now being applied to the flexible delivery of PGCE and FDTA programmes. University tutors' expertise and experiences in research are shared widely across the partnership, and often help support action research carried out by staff in partner institutions. Trainees are well informed about national developments, and reflect this in their confident discussions and references in assignments and personal development plans.

86. Measures to review and improve the provision are highly effective at all levels. The head of post-compulsory education and training and the programme directors for FDTA and PGCE provision have an excellent understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the provision and they lead development and review from an informed and constructive perspective. There are effective partnership agreements and procedures for ensuring that all university and partner programme staff are involved in continuous quality improvement. Revised and improved data collection and analysis measures have resulted in better use of data within the university and across the partnership. As noted in the current provider self-assessment, improved 2007/08 data reporting is enabling better-targeted quality improvement strategies.

## Annex: Partnership colleges and services

The partnership includes the following colleges and services.

Bexhill College  
Adult Education College Bexley  
Canterbury College  
Carshalton College  
Hadlow College  
Kensington & Chelsea College  
Kent Adult Education Service  
Lambeth College  
Medway Adult Learning Service  
Mid Kent College  
College of Haringey and North East London  
Orpington College  
South Kent College  
South Thames College  
Sutton College of Learning for Adults  
Thanet College

## Summary of inspection grades<sup>1</sup>

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

### Overall effectiveness

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

### Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

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

<sup>1</sup> 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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