

Gloucester Initial Teacher Education Partnership

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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Lead inspector

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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. The Gloucester Initial Teacher Education Partnership (GITEP) is a partnership between the Gloucestershire Association of Secondary Headteachers and the University of Gloucestershire. GITEP offers one-year employment-based routes to qualified teacher status (QTS) through the graduate teacher programme (GTP) in the primary and secondary age ranges. Trainees in the primary phase train to teach pupils in the 3 to 7 or 5 to 11 age range, as appropriate to their employing schools. Secondary trainees mainly train to teach in the 11 to 18 age range, with a small number training for the 11 to 16 age range. At the time of the inspection there were 34 primary and 33 secondary trainees.
4. Secondary trainees attend subject pathways training alongside trainees from the university and from the Gloucestershire SCITT Consortium. In schools these trainees are treated equally and share training in professional preparation. Primary trainees also have access to training through the cluster groups of schools. There is close collaboration between the GTP course programme leaders and those for the university and the SCITT provision.

5. This report covers the provision for both primary and secondary phases.

Key strengths

6. The key strengths are:

- good trainees who develop excellent relationships in, and make a significant contribution to, the partnership schools in which they are placed
- the high proportion of trainees who secure employment in partnership schools following the completion of the course
- the innovative and very effective use of resources to support and enhance the outcomes for trainees
- the tireless and highly effective support given by training managers, course leaders and subject mentors for trainees' individual personal and professional needs
- the impact on trainees' achievement of the very high-quality subject pathways programme in secondary and cluster-based training in primary, that utilises expert trainers from the partnership and beyond
- the high-quality training in all aspects of diversity that combines with carefully thought-out school placements to ensure that trainees have a very good understanding of how to teach in a diverse society.

Recommendations

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

- ensure consistently sharp and challenging target setting and review for all trainees from the beginning of their course to help trainees achieve their potential
- focus self-evaluation and action planning more sharply on the outcomes for trainees, particularly in primary.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

8. The overall effectiveness of the partnership in securing high-quality outcomes for trainees is good. Aspects of its work are outstanding, including the innovative and effective use of resources and the way in which equality and diversity are promoted. The attainment of a very large majority of trainees is good or better, with the partnership demonstrating an improving profile for the current cohort across both phases. Retention and successful completion rates are at least in line with national averages. The very large majority of trainees secure employment at the end of the training, with many taking up teaching posts in partnership schools.
9. Recruitment to both primary and secondary phases is a rigorous process resulting in the selection of trainees with the potential to become good or outstanding teachers. The local rationale for employment is very strong; many partner schools have employed trainees and in some cases they make up a

significant proportion of the staff. Headteachers are clear that the high-quality teachers they recruit from the partnership are partly responsible for the maintenance and improvement of standards in their schools, and that this is a driving force for their involvement.

10. Recruitment from minority backgrounds is a challenge for the partnership but targeted advertising is beginning to boost numbers in both phases. Conversely, the partnership exceeds local and national benchmarks for recruiting men into primary teaching. In primary, trainees are recruited to one of four geographic clusters, first through central and then school-based interviews. In secondary, trainees are interviewed in school or through competitive central interviews. The partnership is looking to boost consistent competitive recruitment in its drive to raise trainees' attainment further. Information gathered at interview is used effectively to personalise the training. Trainees are given specific pre-course tasks to boost their progress when they formally begin their training. These include subject knowledge enhancement in some secondary subjects and other individual tasks. Selection information is used well to determine a baseline against which trainees' progress is monitored. In secondary, baseline indicators are being used to target intervention to help trainees meet their potential. An individual training plan is developed in both phases that becomes increasingly personalised during the course.
11. Trainees are carefully selected for their ability to communicate effectively and they demonstrate this very well in lessons and in their interaction with trainers. Almost all trainees demonstrate very high levels of professionalism in their personal conduct in schools and develop good relationships with other staff and pupils as a result. They are often highly valued members of staff.
12. Exceptionally high levels of commitment to the partnership exist across the placement schools and this makes a significant contribution to trainees' progress and achievement. Trainers are clear about their roles and responsibilities and carry them out effectively in supporting trainees. Procedures for working with the trainees on a weekly basis and over an extended period of time are well documented in handbooks. Training managers in school provide very strong school-based support to trainees and their mentors. They communicate well with the partnership course leaders to establish and evaluate placements. For most trainees, the two school placements are contrasting and well-thought-out timetables mean that trainees have good opportunities to develop their teaching.
13. In secondary, a formal subject needs analysis, including self-assessment using GCSE examination papers, gives trainees and subject leaders a clear awareness of subject strengths and areas for development. Strong centre-based training in subject pedagogy is delivered through weekly pathway sessions shared with trainees from the university and secondary SCITT. This effectively draws on expertise from the partnership and beyond, and is universally described as 'fantastic' by trainees. This has provided a firm basis for trainees to develop their subject-based knowledge of teaching and learning; a consistent strength of trainees. However, the link between subject leaders and subject mentors is not consistently developed across the provision. In a small minority of cases,

subject mentors do not maximise the potential of subject sessions by systematically following them up with trainees in the school setting. In primary, central cluster training is very effective in developing trainees' awareness of educational developments and key requirements to meet the QTS Standards. It also draws well on expert trainers.

14. School-based training is good in both primary and secondary. Most mentors focus well on developing trainees' practice to boost pupils' learning through observation and feedback. Feedback to trainees usually provides accurate assessment and qualitative commentary, leading to targets which are sharply focused. In a minority of cases, targets for development become sharper as the course progresses and this good practice can be traced to the quality assurance work and intervention of training managers. A few mentors are less adept than their peers in maximising trainees' progress. This is particularly true for potentially high-attaining trainees; a small minority of these trainees are not always sufficiently challenged. However, trainees universally describe their training as good and inspectors agree. Assessment procedures are comprehensive and accurate in judging trainees' final attainment. Joint observation work by mentors and training managers with visiting course leaders and other tutors serves a dual purpose. These joint observations effectively support trainees' progress and provide them with high-quality feedback that complements and builds well on the feedback provided by mentors. These observations also provide good training for mentors and promote consistency in judgements of trainees' achievement.
15. Secondary trainees' progress is carefully monitored through a QTS Standards tracker and the good use of a set of characteristics of trainees at different levels of achievement. An analysis of trainees' achievements midway through the autumn placement is used to provide an extremely useful benchmark that is then used well to monitor trainees' future progress against expectations. The excellent formative use of the grade characteristics at the end of the second, twin school placement gives a rounded and detailed view of the trainees' achievement; this is then used well to set individual targets for the final placement. This assessment also enables trainers to carefully plan interventions for those who need it, although this works more effectively for trainees graded as satisfactory rather than providing higher levels of challenge for some potentially outstanding trainees. The introduction of this monitoring system has had a highly significant impact on improving secondary trainees' achievement and attainment.
16. Coherence between the different elements of the course is good. Attendance at mentor training is high and mentors usually organise a joint observation with the receiving mentor on change of school placement. Training managers in schools set up training opportunities that fit in well with requirements of the central programme. As a result of this good training, and the experience of working with the full ability range of pupils in contrasting schools, most trainees demonstrate effective classroom and behaviour management skills. Lesson planning skills are strong and developing, with consistent use made of learning objectives to demonstrate expectations and to review learning. Higher-attaining

trainees demonstrate enhanced ability in matching work to the needs of learners and developing independent learning. A few weaker trainees find using pupils' progress data challenging when planning for individual needs. They can then struggle to understand and assess the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning. Trainees use information and communication technology well to support their teaching. They develop strong reflective skills through their training and are usually able to analyse how their teaching could be improved.

17. The use of resources in the partnership is outstanding. Trainees state that they have all the resources necessary to meet their needs in their school placements. Schools are well resourced and trainees develop strong skills in the use of interactive whiteboards and podcasts for learning. The use of electronic portfolios for secondary trainees is being developed and demonstrates the potential to enhance training and assessment. Partnership staff are very responsive to reported need because of close working relationships. 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. The close-knit nature of the partnership results in rapid response to identified need in both primary and secondary; for example, trainees can easily visit other partnership schools to enhance their training. Trainees report that through the integrated work of training managers, course leaders and mentors, support for their personal well-being is excellent. Outside speakers significantly benefit trainees in bringing their expertise to central training sessions. Resource allocation is under constant review and is well understood by schools.
18. Trainees report no incidents of harassment and know who to turn to if there were any such incidents. They are well aware of their own equality of opportunity. High-quality training in all aspects of diversity combines very well with carefully thought-out school placements to ensure trainees are very well prepared to teach in a diverse society.

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

19. The partnership's capacity to sustain high-quality outcomes for trainees, and to take the actions required to secure improvements where necessary, is good. The partnership is focused on raising the attainment of trainees by improving the quality of provision they receive. There is a trend of improvement in trainees' achievement over recent years. Retention and successful completion rates have been sustained at a high level. The proportion of trainees securing employment in partnership schools remains impressively high. The absolute commitment of all headteachers to the partnership means that initial teacher education has an unusually high priority in schools. There is also clarity about the role of each of the tiers of management and full representation for all aspects of the partnership; this provides a very strong framework for maintaining quality and for further developments.

20. Good leadership has established comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems to inform improvement planning. Training managers have a very important role in gathering and collating information from mentors and trainees to establish the quality of school- and cluster-based training. The partnership also captures feedback from current trainees and its own staff to assess the impact of the training programme. The partnership is aware that 'mentor voice' is relatively underdeveloped and is working to address this. In primary, although data are collected from the clusters via training managers, the partnership is yet to establish trends in trainees' achievement between clusters as tracking processes are relatively new. In recent years, continuing into the current cohort, there has been a significant rise in the proportion of trainees with good attainment. The partnership has correctly identified boosting the proportion of outstanding trainees as an area for development.
21. Moderation of assessments, including those by external examiners, verifies trainees' achievements and makes certain there is consistent application of assessment criteria. The wide range of data collected by the partnership are very well collated and analysed in a self-evaluation document. This is largely accurate and recognises, for example, that systems for tracking progress and intervening, particularly with regard to increasing the proportion of outstanding trainees, are still embedding. The partnership has been successful, in the secondary phase, in focusing the external examiner on reviewing the quality of provision against the inspection framework. The external examiner's report is of high quality and offers useful recommendations for improvement. In primary, the external examiner's report has not yet been focused in the same way.
22. The partnership shows outstanding capacity in responding to and preparing for change. Judicious interaction with other educational providers, such as entering trust agreements with schools and the research work of course leaders, keeps the partnership at the 'cutting edge'. Timely responses to national and local initiatives through central professional preparation, subject pathway and cluster training give trainees effective exposure to working with professionals from across the teaching workforce. Input from leading consultants and school leaders deepen trainees' understanding of national initiatives, including reviews by Rose and Williams and 14 to 19 pathways. Trainees have a very good understanding of how schools operate and are judicious in seeking out specialist school staff for one-to-one interviews to further their understanding of roles, such as those of the child protection officer and special educational needs coordinator. Many mentors are former trainees and have a very good understanding of the working of the partnership. Many schools have several trained mentors and, therefore, have very good capacity to deal with sudden change, such as mentor illness. Close integration, through working closely together, between primary and secondary leaders and their counterparts on other GITEP programmes means that a broad support network has developed across provision. The partnership is also careful to implement change identified through analyses of its own work; for example, involvement in an initiative across many south-west teacher training providers to increase the recruitment of trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds.

23. A very good feature of the partnership's self-evaluation and improvement planning cycle is its receptivity to ideas from school partners. The training managers are an integral part of employment-based provision and have helped course leaders improve provision. Regular highly attended meetings take place between training managers and course leaders. Training managers are very aware of the strategic priorities for improvement that they will be involved in delivering and make informed contributions to shaping their formation and implementation.
24. Improvement plans in secondary have clear targets focused on outcomes and some success criteria are quantified to facilitate easier monitoring. However, the detail of how targets will be met is limited in some areas and it is difficult to establish why one target has been met and another has not. For example, the target for 85% good or better attainment is on track to be reached this year, but the target for outstanding attainment is not. Primary plans identify clear issues for improvement, but it is not always easy to establish their genesis. Success criteria for monitoring are included with personnel responsible, but are not always sharply focused on trainee outcomes or easily measurable. However, all involved in the partnership agree that the provision is responsive and improving. The partnership's track record of improving attainment, high employability and good retention shows that action planning for improvement has been effective over time.

Summary of inspection grades¹

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

Overall effectiveness

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

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

		Employment-based routes
To what extent do the leadership and management at all levels have the capacity to secure further improvements and/or to sustain high quality outcomes?		2
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		2
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		1
How effectively does the partnership plan and take action for improvement?		2

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

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