

# North East Essex Coastal Confederation

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

---

Provider address	Clacton Coastal Academy Jaywick Lane Clacton on Sea Essex CO16 8BE
------------------	--

---

Unique reference number	70015
Inspection number	346117
Inspection dates	21–25 June 2010
Lead inspector	Elaine Taylor HMI

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Reference no. 080190

© Crown Copyright 2010

## 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 North East Essex Coastal Confederation, a school-centred initial teacher training partnership (SCITT), comprises of five schools in the Tendring area of North East Essex and is based in the Clacton Coastal Academy. The schools are for pupils aged 11-18 and all have specialist status covering a range of subjects. The partnership was established in 1993 to provide courses leading to the post-graduate certificate of education (PGCE) in English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT), science and history. At the time of the inspection there were 15 trainees. Since 1999 the partnership has also offered an employment-based route to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) through the graduate teacher programme (GTP) in a range of subjects including those subjects provided by the SCITT but also in some other subjects, for example media, physical education, design technology and dance. At the

time of the inspection, a further 16 trainees were on this programme. In both routes new leaders have recently taken up their posts.

## A commentary on the provision

6. The following are particular features of the partnership and its initial teacher education programmes:
  - the close working relationships that sustain a strong and cohesive partnership and which are central to the good progress trainees make
  - the recruitment and development of trainees with high expectations and who make a very good contribution to the local workforce
  - the strong support for the well-being of trainees in order to ensure they meet their targets.

## Provision in the secondary phase

### Key strengths

7. The key strengths are:

- the close working relationships and the family ethos, coupled with excellent personal support which ensure that the retention of trainees is high
- the recruitment and development of trainees with high expectations for their pupils and who are highly committed to their training and to the local area
- training that is highly personalised and built around a central system of target setting and tracking of the targets over time so that trainees make good or better progress
- training that is strongly focused on teaching and learning and results in trainees who are strong classroom practitioners
- the strong commitment of course leaders and headteachers to the further development of the partnership.

### Recommendations

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

- raise the quality of all subject training to that of the best
- monitor and evaluate the quality of the feedback trainees receive in order to improve further the consistency of mentoring.

9. In order to strengthen strategic leadership, the partnership should:

- refine the systems for tracking trainees' progress and use the information on the outcomes for different groups of trainees to support self-evaluation.

## Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

10. Trainees' attainment has risen significantly and is securely good. When the inspection took place, trainees had completed their final assessment and inspectors agreed with the provider's grades. The small numbers involved make year-on-year comparison difficult, but attainment has been good in two out of three years. The majority of trainees make good or better progress, improving by one or more grades between the middle of term one and their final assessment.
11. Trainees have high expectations of their pupils and of themselves. They develop high levels of resilience and determination and are committed to their choice of profession. They are competent classroom practitioners with good

behaviour management strategies and are able to produce thorough and appropriate lesson plans which demonstrate a good understanding of how to provide pupils with work that is matched well to their individual needs. Trainees have good knowledge of their subjects, although this is slightly weaker in English where there have been changes in subject leadership. Trainees demonstrate a good understanding of assessment techniques and the most able trainees focus very strongly on the progress pupils are making in their lessons.

12. The rationale for the course is understood exceptionally well across the partnership. Recruitment is a significant challenge for schools and is one of the reasons for the provision being established. The provider successfully recruits high quality trainees and meets its targets, including those for recruiting from under-represented groups in an area with little ethnic diversity. A very proactive approach to recruitment has increased the numbers applying for the course. The partnership has recruited several trainees as a result of direct approaches such as headteachers phoning final year undergraduates and suggesting teaching as a career. Completion rates are excellent and no trainees fail to gain a qualification. The vast majority go into employment in one of the partnership schools. It has been estimated that as many as 55% of the staff in schools locally have been trained by this provider and many make strong progress in their careers, moving quickly on to promoted posts. A significant strength of the recruitment process is in the strategic linking of the planned recruitment to the staff development needs in schools.
13. The provider makes exceptionally good use of information from the rigorous selection process to draw up training plans and place the trainees in suitable schools. Where there are issues regarding an applicant's experience in a school or with their subject knowledge, they are given additional requirements before being finally accepted onto the course. Subject specialist advice is always on hand at interview. Applicants are required to undertake a self-audit of their subject knowledge and submit it before interview. The programme leader and subject leaders scrutinise the audits in order to test any gaps thoroughly through their interview questions. The process also includes questions designed to test the motivation of trainees. Before the course starts the audits and results of interview are further studied in order to write a subject training programme that will meet the common needs of the incoming cohort.
14. The outstanding characteristics of the training are responsible for the development of teachers who stay in the profession through their resilience and commitment to education. The small size of the provider allows the establishment of a family ethos built on personalised and individual provision and support. Recent improvements are resulting in a growing proportion of trainees attaining the Standards at a good or outstanding level. Secure assessment procedures, verified as accurate by external examiners, support a system of target setting and tracking through individual development plans that underpins the training process. Each term, triangulated reviews feed into the plans and these are adjusted as required by programme leaders or by the

trainees themselves, if they feel they would relish an additional challenge. Discussion with trainees is a key part of the training and leads to highly accurate target setting. Well-chosen professional development tasks build successfully on general professional studies sessions and allow for an emphasis on subject specialism to be built in. There is very strong personal support for trainees by all partners in the training, enhanced by the huge commitment of the programme leader. Secure plans are in place to extend the pastoral support next year with twilight drop-in sessions for ex-trainees. This strong support, coupled with high expectations, ensures completion rates are high and there are several examples where a trainee has been encouraged to continue with no dip in attainment in the face of considerable personal difficulties.

15. Second school placements are arranged in contrasting schools. Trainees have raised one or two issues regarding the pattern of placements and alternatives are being investigated. Links are being forged with another local provider to widen the range of placements. Sometimes the second school is chosen to stimulate a trainee with the potential to be outstanding and sometimes a third placement is arranged where the necessary breadth of experience has not been met. An innovative and exceptionally popular aspect of the training that makes an outstanding contribution to the progress of trainees is the collaborative project undertaken towards the end of the course. This produces some excellent resources for cross-curricular projects which bring together all the elements of the training and focuses the trainees on how all subjects contribute to the wider aspects of pupils' development.
16. Trainees benefit from good resources in the training centre. The premises contribute to the collegiate feel of the provision. There is a well-stocked library and good access to ICT and study spaces. The trainees also benefit from the ease with which they can meet others and communicate with the programme leaders. Resources are used well and flexibly to meet individual needs. Heads are very generous by allowing time for attendance at meetings. A weaker aspect of resourcing concerns the absence of funding for a visit in the first term to existing mentors. This sometimes leads to the slow identification of issues with trainees. The virtual learning environment (VLE) is still being developed.
17. There is good consistency across the partnership. Trainees make consistently good progress, including those from identifiable groups, and achieve challenging targets. There has been a system in place to support succession planning for subject leadership which involved the identification of major and minor subjects. Despite this there have been some difficulties in ensuring full consistency across all subjects. A move to identify major and minor departments is being instigated next year in order to strengthen the process. Attendance at training meetings for mentors is variable and the provider makes every effort to ensure all receive the training by taking some of the sessions out into schools.
18. The support for the well-being of individuals and groups of trainees means that most achieve their challenging targets. Excellent communication ensures issues

are generally picked up quickly and resolved. Trainees feel confident about teaching in a range of contexts and suitable experiences are provided to compensate for the lack of cultural diversity in the local area. Recruits from minority ethnic groups feel completely comfortable with the provision and make the same good progress. A significant strength of the training is that the trainees often actively support the development of community cohesion within their employing schools.

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

Grade: 2

19. The programme is well managed at all levels. There are well established groups and systems to support management and quality assurance. Succession planning is good and regularly reviewed and refined. The small size of the partnership facilitates communication and a shared understanding of practice. Partnership stability is fostered by the year-by-year use of the same schools and the detailed knowledge all leaders have of the provision and the trainees. Trainees are very happy with the quality of the training and support they receive.
20. The provider uses a range of evidence to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision and the analysis correctly identifies the main strengths and areas for development. Meetings each term for all stakeholders, including trainees, feed into the evaluation process. The programme director produces evaluative and detailed reports for the steering group on a regular basis and the small size of the provision contributes to the sharing of information on individual trainees. There is a system of regular visits to monitor the quality of the work in schools. This involves joint observations and uses a range of external partners. However, not all mentors receive joint observations as these concentrate on new mentors.
21. A good start has been made to tracking the progress being made by individual trainees. This is enabling the course leader to intervene where there are worries about an individual trainee's progress. The provider is not tracking outcomes for groups and is aware that this would allow for a deeper analysis and evaluation of the improvements to provision currently being undertaken.
22. The provider is good at anticipating change and responds well to national and local initiatives. The effective working relationships and good communications ensure there is constant dialogue about change prompted by developments in the schools and by national and local requirements. The programme of general professional studies has been adapted to include sessions on 14–19 Diplomas and trainees are made fully aware of the recommendations of the Rose Review related to the primary curriculum that support the development of literacy skills in secondary schools.



23. Development plans are well constructed and identify appropriate priorities for improvement, which are shared and understood across the partnership. These address a range of local and national issues. The need to extend the range of subjects on offer has led to partnership to forge new ties with another local provider. This will not only increase the capacity to offer a wider range of subjects but will also allow the provider to offer second school placements in a wider variety of school contexts. While the plans identify suitable priorities, they do not always identify success criteria based on trainee outcomes.
24. The pace of change and improvement is accelerating. For example, attendance at coordinator meetings has risen and trainees have demonstrated an increased ability as reflective practitioners. The attainment of all trainees is rising and the partnership has good capacity to improve further.

## Employment-based routes to qualified teacher status

### Key strengths

25. The key strengths are:

- the close working relationships and the family ethos coupled with excellent personal support
- the recruitment and development of trainees with high expectations for their pupils and who are highly committed to their training and to the local area
- training that is highly personalised and built around a central system of target setting and tracking of the target over time
- training that is strongly focussed on teaching and learning
- the strong commitment of course leaders and headteachers to the further development of partnership.

### Recommendations

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

- raise the quality of all subject training to that of the best
- increase the opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of the feedback trainees receive in order to improve further the consistency of mentoring.

27. In order to strengthen strategic leadership, the partnership should:

- refine the systems for tracking trainees' progress in order to use the information on outcomes for different groups to support self evaluation.

### Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

28. Trainees' attainment is rising. In the previous two years it was good but the attainment of the current cohort has edged into outstanding. When the inspection took place towards the end of the training programme, there was sufficient evidence to confirm the provider's grades for the current year. The small numbers involved make year-on-year comparison difficult. The majority of trainees make good or better progress.

29. Trainees have high expectations of their pupils and of themselves. They develop high levels of resilience and determination and are committed to their choice of profession. They are competent classroom practitioners with good behaviour management strategies and are able to produce thorough and appropriate lesson plans which demonstrate a good understanding of how to provide pupils with work that is well-matched to their individual needs. They have good knowledge of their subjects, although this is slightly weaker in

English where there have been changes in subject leadership. Trainees demonstrate a good understanding of assessment techniques and the most able trainees focus very strongly on the progress pupils are making in their lessons. Many trainees bring with them considerable skills acquired through previous experience and show an ability to use these effectively to enhance their practice in the classroom.

30. The rationale for the course is understood exceptionally well across the partnership. Recruitment is a significant challenge for local schools and is one of the reasons for the provision being established. The provider successfully recruits high quality trainees and meets its targets, including those for recruiting from under-represented groups. A very proactive approach to recruitment has increased the numbers applying for the course. The partnership has recruited several trainees as a result of direct approaches such as headteachers phoning final year undergraduates and suggesting teaching as a career. Completion rates are high and no trainees fail to gain a qualification. The vast majority go into employment in one of the partnership schools. It has been estimated that as many as 55% of the staff in schools locally come from this provider and many make strong progress in their careers, going quickly on to promoted posts. A significant strength of the recruitment process is in the strategic linking of the planned recruitment to the staff development needs in schools. In one example this resulted in a significant rise in achievement in a department, which could be directly linked to the involvement in teacher training.
31. The provider makes exceptionally good use of the information gleaned from the rigorous selection process to draw up training plans. The information is also used to place the trainees in suitable schools. Where there are issues regarding an applicant's experience or with their subject knowledge, they are given additional requirements before being finally accepted onto the course. Applicants are required to undertake a self-audit of their subject knowledge and submit it before interview. The programme leader and subject leaders scrutinise the audits and test any gaps thoroughly through their interview questions. The process also includes questions designed to test the motivation of trainees. Before the course starts the audits and results of interview are further studied in order to write a subject training programme that will meet the common needs of the incoming cohort.
32. The outstanding characteristics of the training are responsible for the development of teachers who stay in the profession through their commitment to education. The small size of the provider allows the establishment of a family ethos built on personalised and individual provision and support. Recent improvements are resulting in trainees' higher attainment. Secure assessment procedures, verified as accurate by external examiners, support a system of target setting and tracking through individual development plans that underpin the training process. Each term, reviews of trainees feed into the plans. These are then adjusted as required by programme leaders or by the trainees themselves. Discussion with trainees is a key part of the training and leads to

highly accurate target setting. Well-chosen professional development tasks build successfully on general professional studies sessions and allow for an emphasis on the subject specialisms to be built in. There is very strong personal support for trainees by all partners in the training, enhanced by the strong commitment of the programme leader. The pastoral support, coupled with high expectations, results in trainees who are resilient. There are several examples where a trainee has been encouraged to continue with no dip in attainment in the face of considerable personal difficulties.

33. Second school placements are arranged in contrasting schools. Trainees have raised one or two issues regarding the pattern of placements and alternatives are being investigated. Links are being forged with another local provider to widen the range of placements. Sometimes a second school is chosen to challenge a trainee with the potential to be outstanding and sometimes a third placement is arranged where a trainee has not had the necessary breadth of experience. An innovative and exceptionally popular aspect of the training that makes an outstanding contribution to the progress of trainees is the collaborative project undertaken towards the end of the course. This produces some outstanding resources for cross-curricular projects which bring together all the elements of the training and focus the trainees on how all subjects contribute to aspects of pupils' development.
34. Trainees benefit from good resources in the training centre. The premises contribute to the collegiate feel of the provision. There is a well-stocked library and good access to ICT and study spaces. The trainees also benefit from the ease with which they can meet others and communicate with the programme leaders. Resources are used well and flexibly to meet individual needs. Heads are very generous by allowing time for attendance at meetings. A weaker aspect of resourcing concerns the absence of funding for a visit in the first term. This sometimes leads to the slow identification of issues with trainees. The virtual learning environment (VLE) is still being developed.
35. There is good consistency across the partnership. Trainees make consistently good progress, including those from identifiable groups and achieve challenging targets. There has been a system in place to support succession planning for subject leadership which involved the identification of major and minor subject leaders. Despite this there have been some difficulties in ensuring full consistency across all subjects. A move to identify major and minor departments is being instigated next year in order to strengthen the process. Attendance at training meetings for mentors is variable and the provider makes every effort to ensure all receive the training by taking some of the sessions out into schools. The trainees on employment-based routes take advantage of the subject sessions provided for SCITT trainees. Some trainees expressed concern that this led to a conflict where the sessions overlapped with their professional studies input.
36. The support for the well-being of individuals and groups of trainees means that most achieve their challenging targets. Excellent communication ensures issues

are generally picked up quickly and resolved. Trainees feel confident about teaching in a range of contexts and suitable experiences are provided to compensate for the lack of cultural diversity in the local area. Recruits from minority ethnic groups feel completely comfortable with the provision and make the same good progress. A significant strength of the training is that the trainees often actively support the development of community cohesion within their employing schools.

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

Grade: 2

37. The programme is well managed at all levels. There are well established groups and systems to support management and quality assurance. Succession planning is good and regularly reviewed and refined. The small size of the partnership facilitates communication and a shared understanding of practice. Partnership stability is fostered by the close working relationships of the five schools and the detailed knowledge all leaders have of the provision and the trainees. Trainees are very happy with the quality of the training and support they receive.
38. The provider uses a range of evidence to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision and the analysis correctly identifies the main strengths and areas for development. Meetings each term for all stakeholders, including trainees, feed into the evaluation process. The programme director produces evaluative and detailed reports for the steering group on a regular basis and the small size of the provision contributes to the sharing of information on individual trainees. There is a system of regular visits to monitor the quality of the work in schools. This involves joint observations and uses a range of external partners. However, not all mentors receive joint observations as these concentrate on new mentors.
39. A good start has been made to tracking the progress being made by individual trainees. This is enabling the course leader to intervene where there are worries about an individual trainee's progress. The provider is not tracking outcomes for groups and is aware that this would allow for a deeper analysis and evaluation of the improvements to provision currently being undertaken.
40. The provider is good at anticipating change and responds well to national and local initiatives. The effective working relationships and good communications ensure there is constant dialogue about change prompted by developments in the schools and by national and local requirements. The programme of general professional studies has been adapted to include sessions on 14–19 Diplomas and trainees are made fully aware of the recommendations of the Rose Review related to the primary curriculum that support the development of literacy skills in secondary schools.

41. Development plans are well constructed and identify appropriate priorities for improvement, which are shared and understood across the partnership. These address a range of local and national issues. The need to extend the range of subjects on offer has led to partnership to forge new ties with another local provider. This will not only increase the capacity to offer a wider range of subjects but will also allow the provider to offer second school placements in a wider variety of school contexts. While the plans identify suitable priorities, they do not always identify success criteria based on trainee outcomes.
42. As the new course director becomes more established, the pace of change and improvement is accelerating. For example, attendance at coordinator meetings has risen and trainees have demonstrated an increased ability as reflective practitioners. The attainment of all trainees is rising and the partnership has good capacity to improve further.

## 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

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

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

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

<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.

Any complaints about the inspection or the reports should be made following the procedure set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)