

Stockton-on-Tees Teacher Training Partnership

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Inspection Dates 4–7 February 2013

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector in accordance with the *Handbook for inspecting initial teacher education from September 2012*.

The inspection draws upon evidence from the ITE partnership to make judgements against all parts of the evaluation schedule. Inspectors focused on the overall effectiveness of the ITE partnership in securing high-quality outcomes for trainees.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is requires improvement; grade 4 is inadequate

	Employment-based routes
Overall effectiveness How well does the partnership secure consistently high quality outcomes for trainees?	1
The outcomes for trainees	1
The quality of training across the partnership	1
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	1

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The employment-based route

Information about the employment-based partnership

1. The Stockton-on-Tees Teacher Training Partnership was set up in 2003, as a partnership between Stockton local authority and its schools, with the prime aim of training primary and secondary teachers who would go on to seek employment and continue their teaching profession within the authority. Currently 20 schools, including one independent and one special school, employ graduate trainees. The partnership is planning the transition to school-centred initial teacher training in September 2013.
2. At the time of the inspection, 18 secondary and 12 primary trainees were following a full-time programme. Seven trainees were self-funded. The primary trainees are being prepared to teach pupils aged five to 11. Secondary trainees, training to teach pupils aged 11 to 16, offer a range of specialist subjects: citizenship, English, drama, history, information and communication technology, mathematics, modern foreign languages (Spanish), physical education, and science.

Information about the employment-based ITE inspection

3. The three inspectors visited seven schools and observed the teaching of seven trainees and four newly qualified teachers (NQTs) who were former trainees. All observations were carried out jointly with school-based tutors and/or training coordinators and some with headteachers. Inspectors met with groups of current and former trainees and spoke with others on the telephone. An inspector conducted in-depth interviews with two former secondary science trainees and another spoke with three headteachers who had employed five former trainees.
4. Inspectors attended four training sessions held at the centre and briefly met specialist trainers, often from the local authority's advisory team. Inspectors also observed the training given by school-based tutors and mentors following their observations of teaching by trainees and NQTs.
5. Inspectors held discussions with the partnership manager and the Chair of the Executive Committee, a senior manager in the local authority. They also considered a wide range of documentary evidence including information related to: recruitment and selection; trainees' progress; statutory requirements including safeguarding; trainees' training records; minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee; and partnership development planning for the last three years. Inspectors took into account letters to the team from partnership schools and also written evaluations of the provision by trainees and trainers.

Inspection Team

Sonja Øyen HMI: lead inspector

Paul Chambers HMI: assistant lead inspector

David Mason, additional inspector: team inspector - science

Overall Effectiveness

Grade: 1

The key strengths of the employment-based partnership are:

- The high standing of the partnership within the local authority with its strong commitment to training 'their own' by schools that are predominantly excellent training venues.
- The rigour and challenge of procedures to select highly suitable trainees, which ensures consistently high completion and employment rates: most trainees find employment within the local authority, continue to improve as effective teachers and take on additional responsibilities.
- Trainees' and NQTs' exceptional personal qualities, particularly their enthusiasm for teaching, their drive to improve and a willingness to take responsibility for their own development, which contribute significantly to trainees' soaring confidence and teaching skills.
- The close alliance and collaborative approach within the partnership which lead to very close integration of centre- and school-based training, drawing on the expertise of specialists from the local authority and teachers from partner schools.
- Secondary trainees who are highly aware of their role as teachers of literacy.
- The open contact between trainees, schools and the partnership manager which ensures a quick response to and resolution of concerns and queries from trainees and school-based trainers.
- The typically high-quality coaching and mentoring of school-based trainers, especially in the feedback to trainees after observations of their teaching.

What does the employment-based partnership need to do to improve further?

The partnership should:

- Sharpen the analysis of the quality of provision and trainees' progress to pinpoint where immediate action will lead to higher outcomes for trainees and where best practice can be shared.
- Ensure that audits of trainees' knowledge in reading, writing, mathematics and science identify all the key concepts and knowledge that will ensure trainees' more rapid understanding of progression in these subjects.

Inspection Judgements

The outcomes for trainees are outstanding

6. The overall profile of trainees' performance by the end of their training has been rising steadily with an increasing majority of trainees judged to be outstanding. There is no marked difference between primary and secondary trainees or between male and female trainees. Completion rates are consistently high: all trainees have been referred for qualified teacher status in the years since the last inspection. Similarly, employment rates are consistently high with all trainees gaining employment, mainly in the local authority and often in partnership schools. For a good number of trainees this is the culmination of the move, supported by their employing school, from being a teaching assistant to a qualified teacher. Trainees continue to thrive as NQTs, remain in teaching within the local authority and often gain management responsibilities quickly. A former trainee, for example, is teaching at a science development centre and influencing provision across the local authority. A good number have taken on the role of school-based tutor, mentor and central trainer. The successful nurturing of 'home grown talent' is the pre-eminent feature accounting for the high reputation of the partnership.
7. One third of the way through their training, trainees show soaring confidence in their ability to teach. Records from their first assessment show they have made good progress with many teaching consistently good lessons in English, mathematics and science, and all showing potential and drive to meet their targets on the next placement and improve the quality of their teaching.
8. In lessons observed, trainees structured their teaching skilfully, had prepared resources thoroughly and often carefully considered pupils'

differing needs. They made the purpose of the lesson clear to pupils, modelled new learning, and helped pupils to see relevant success criteria. All trainees used a good range of effective strategies to manage pupils' behaviour and to assess pupils' learning. Strong professional attributes in common were trainees' mature attitudes, a readiness to evaluate critically their own teaching and a willingness to act on advice.

9. Such positive features and key skills also typified the good teaching of NQTs who knew their classes well and managed behaviour smoothly and competently. Several lessons observed had outstanding features, most particularly in the use of imaginative ideas and strategies to keep pupils actively involved in learning, as in applying and using new mathematical knowledge. NQTs showed a clear determination to ensure that pupils' learning was secure.
10. Secondary trainees have already acquired considerable knowledge about how to teach their own subject, as have primary trainees in the core subjects. In science, all trainees know the importance of investigative work and the development of enquiry skills. Their thorough knowledge of technical terms, concepts and thematic content is more variable as is their awareness of progression in pupils' learning in different subjects. NQTs were confident in their delivery and knowledge.
11. All trainees have knowledge of synthetic phonics and early reading skills. Secondary trainees have visited a primary school and primary trainees have planned and delivered phonics sessions to pupils in Year 1. Some trainees, working in Key Stage 1, have skilfully taught phonics over a prolonged period and led guided reading and writing sessions. By the end of the training year, all primary trainees will have done so and profiles of former trainees' progress and satisfaction ratings indicate that this is an area of secure competence. Secondary trainees showed in their teaching an informed understanding of the need to promote literacy through their subject, reflecting a national and local curricular priority.
12. Trainees make good progress in their academic assignments which gain them credits towards a Master's degree. In 2012, four trainees were commended by the ratifying university for the high quality of their work.

The quality of training across the partnership is outstanding

13. In past and current evaluations, trainees express high satisfaction with the quality of training. Several trainers indicated that the training programme is now, 'the best it has ever been' because refinements have reflected trainers' and trainees' views and led to even closer knitting together of centre- and school-based training. As a result there is very

strong coherence in the overall programme. One trainee commented, 'It all comes at the right time and makes sense.'

14. The high-quality central training by experts from schools and specialists within the local authority ensures trainees have up-to-date and thorough knowledge of key elements and of local authority policies related to safeguarding, child protection, bullying, including cyber-bullying, managing behaviour, working with pupils who speak English as an additional language, and special educational needs. Trainees readily prepare and follow up these sessions in school: for example, one primary trainee had observed the support for an autistic pupil and had met with the special educational needs coordinator to look at individual education plans and the map of the provision being made for pupils with differing needs. A secondary trainee is looking at the impact of autistic spectrum disorder on learning in music as the focus for a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) assignment. These challenging assignments lead to trainees developing substantial pedagogical knowledge about particular educational issues.
15. Trainees work in at least good training venues, with many schools being excellent venues given their good/outstanding overall effectiveness, as judged in Ofsted inspections, and the consistently high quality of their training and support for trainees and NQTs. Trainees benefit highly from seeing the positive management of pupils' behaviour with an emphasis on good relationships, good classroom organisation, consistency of approach and high expectations. In a very effective central training session, primary trainees shared experiences of what was successful in their schools and how best to deal with challenging behaviours.
16. Training coordinators and school-based tutors carry out their role assiduously; many give considerable time to supporting trainees and have an accurate view of their progress and performance against the Teachers' Standards. All observe trainees teach with close attention to what will help them improve. Several of the observed oral feedbacks to trainees and NQTs were excellent examples of coaching that fully reflected the stage in training. Success in meeting targets was thoroughly discussed and new ones were agreed. As a result trainees and NQTs reflect maturely on their teaching and make really good progress. However, the written records of such sessions do not always echo the detail, range or thoroughness of the professional dialogue.
17. Headteachers have a very good knowledge of other schools in the partnership and have formed strong links to give trainees placements in different types of school with varying social/cultural attributes. Secondary trainees gain experience of working in schools with sixth forms and primary trainees observe work in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

18. The three-day training in early reading, led by an English coordinator from a partnership school, comes early in the training programme and ensures all primary and secondary trainees see skilled, very effective teaching of reading and are aware of local and national policy. Primary trainees go on to collect support materials, such as glossaries of technical terms and charts to show progression in reading. In mathematics, primary trainees have also often gained a very good overview of key aspects such as the importance of problem solving and progression in teaching calculation, but this focus is less evident for secondary trainees who were also less aware of numeracy across the curriculum. Primary trainees rated highly the input from a practitioner in science. Seeing him teach in school enabled them to appreciate the value of practical science. Secondary science specialists were benefiting from support from staff within the department, especially in widening their awareness of science outside their personal specialism. For all, training highlighted the importance of ongoing assessment, especially self-assessment by pupils.
19. The induction week in the late summer term is used very effectively to assess trainees' previous experience, to audit their knowledge and skills, and to inform their training plan and decisions about the best year group/key stage for trainees' initial placement. For some, their experience and level of knowledge precludes attendance at some centre-based training.

The quality of leadership and management across the partnership is outstanding

20. Refinements and modifications since the last inspection have led to improved outcomes for trainees, especially in the development of subject knowledge. The improvements reflect the strong commitment of all to ensuring that, by the end of their training, trainees are highly effective teachers and very employable.
21. The very effective management by the partnership manager ensures quick responses to concerns and queries and actions to support trainees and trainers if issues arise. The manager's involvement in regional and national groups ensures the partnership is kept fully updated on government priorities related to initial teacher education. In addition, his work with NQTs within the local authority ensures the close tracking of former trainees which has led to the involvement of some outstanding practitioners in the programme.
22. The Executive Committee, which represents all schools in the partnership, has taken the sensible decision to minimise development

priorities for this last year of the programme. The key priority, to enrich trainees' subject and pedagogical knowledge, is evident in all training sessions when trainees are being challenged to consider how they can do even better. Current statutory requirements are met. Much consideration is rightly being given to how school-centred initial teacher training can form an essential part of the local authority's vision for career progression without diluting the many strengths and high quality of the current partnership.

23. The partnership is very popular, with over 300 applications in the last year. An increasing number of male candidates is applying and being selected for secondary and primary places. The majority of candidates are over 25, from the local area, well qualified and with a wide range of experience in working with young people. Although a number from ethnic minorities apply, often from outside the local area, they rarely meet the rigorous selection criteria. Trainees and trainers agree that the selection procedures are taxing. The test in mathematics, for example, is a useful way of assessing candidates' ability to spot pupils' misconceptions and to explain how they would tackle them. Headteachers value being able to select candidates for interview; they comment that trainees must be worthy of employment and have something to contribute to the school. Trainees feel proud to have been selected. Their prime suitability shows in the many offers of permanent employment and high retention rates within the teaching profession.
24. Outstanding features of the management are the constant evaluation of aspects of training and subsequent quick action to deal with issues. For example, the partnership manager has brought in new trainers and partnership representatives when trainees expressed dissatisfaction with the ways of working. The Executive Committee has an accurate view of the effectiveness of the partnership. It gains a very strong overview of the quality and impact of training from data concerning trainees' achievements, satisfaction ratings and reports, including those from external moderators. The Chair recognises that there is scope to sharpen further the detail and critical analysis of this information, including that from the partnership representatives who quality assure the work of school-based tutors. In some cases, chances are missed for centre- and school-based trainers to take additional action as the training progresses to lift the bar even higher for trainees or to share truly effective practice.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe teaching:

Abbey Hill School and Technology College

All Saints CE Primary School

Egglescliffe School

Fairfield Primary School

Hartburn Primary School

Holy Trinity Rosehill CE Primary School

Northfield School and Sports College

ITE partnership details

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