

Cumbria Primary Teacher Training

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Inspection Dates 10–13 March 2014

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors in accordance with the *ITE Inspection Handbook*. This handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from January 2013.

The inspection draws upon evidence from within 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

	Primary QTS
Overall effectiveness How well does the partnership secure consistently high quality outcomes for trainees?	2
The outcomes for trainees	2
The quality of training across the partnership	2
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	2

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The primary phase

Information about the primary partnership

- Cumbria Primary Teacher Training (CPTT) provides school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) for a maximum of 30 trainees. It offers a one year, full time, Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and covers the 5–11 primary age range. Trainees, on successful completion, gain qualified teacher status (QTS). The course is currently validated by the University of Cumbria. At the time of the inspection there were 28 trainees on the course.
- There are 28 schools in the partnership. This includes two Teaching Alliances: West Coast and Western Lakes. The lead school in the partnership is Victoria Infant School.
- Trainees gain experience in schools through five placements, known as phases, across the academic year. Trainees were in their first week of their first solo teaching practice at the time of the inspection.
- Centre-based training is held in schools or at the CPTT base, situated in the grounds of Ashfield Junior School. The Course Director took up post in February 2013.

Information about the primary ITE inspection

- The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) who visited six schools. They held discussions with 12 trainees and observed them teach small groups or whole-class lessons. Ten of these observations were carried out jointly with school mentors. Inspectors also observed and talked to two newly qualified teachers (NQTs) employed at the schools visited.
- Discussions were held with a further eight trainees, two NQTs and two former trainees.
- Meetings were held with the Course Director, members of the Partnership Board, headteachers and school mentors.
- Inspectors considered the 28 responses to the trainee online survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation including: trainees' files; evidence of trainees' teaching and assignments; tracking data on trainees' progress and outcomes for former trainees; training materials; the improvement plan; evaluation evidence, including the feedback from stakeholders, documentation relating to recruitment and selection, and compliance with the initial teacher training criteria.

Inspection team

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Lead inspector
Assistant lead inspector

Overall Effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the primary partnership are:

- Employment and completion rates are consistently high over time.
- Trainees are reflective, immerse themselves in school life, seize every opportunity to hone their teaching skills and listen to, and act upon, advice to improve their teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- A coherent training programme of 'School Integrated Learning' seamlessly blends centre-based training, school experiences and placements.
- Trainees receive good quality mentoring and ample opportunity to practise their teaching skills across the primary age range and in a wide range of different types of schools.
- The positive views of trainees and former trainees express high levels of satisfaction with their training.
- There are high levels of pastoral care and support for trainees.
- All schools in the partnership are committed, involved and fully engaged in shaping the design and delivery of the training and the strategic leadership and management of the SCITT.

What does the primary partnership need to do to improve further?

The partnership should:

- increase the proportion of trainees gaining outstanding attainment against the Teachers' Standards by:
 - ensuring trainees' targets are precise, identify the small steps they need to take to improve and link to any gaps in subject knowledge
 - setting clear targets at the outset of their training, checking progress and implementing timely interventions when required

- improving trainees' subject knowledge across the primary curriculum by auditing their proficiency, setting targets and checking on progress as they move throughout their training
- refining the training so that trainees have greater understanding of how to help disabled pupils, pupils with special educational needs, pupils from culturally diverse backgrounds and pupils who speak English as an additional language to make the best possible progress
- developing trainees' understanding and skill in preventing and tackling prejudice-based bullying, particularly related to homophobia
- reviewing the tracking system to ensure the evidence which supports trainees' achievement of the different Teachers' Standards is sufficiently broad and reliable.

Inspection Judgements

The outcomes for trainees are good

1. The proportion of trainees demonstrating good attainment by the end of their training is rising steadily. This positive trend is set to continue this year. In contrast, the number of trainees with outstanding attainment is declining over time. Although a small number of trainees were graded less than good in 2013, they exceeded many of the Teachers' Standards by the time they completed their training.
2. There are no gaps in achievement between different groups of trainees. This is due to excellent pastoral support, the close tracking of trainees' progress and school experiences to meet individual needs. Completion and employment rates are consistently high. In recent years, all trainees gained employment; almost half are teaching in local schools.
3. Trainees have a good grasp of the Teachers' Standards. They use the standards effectively to set their own targets and to seek experiences in schools to help them tackle gaps in their skills and knowledge. All trainees are reflective practitioners who are willing to listen to, and act on, advice.
4. Trainees and NQTs teach well across all areas of the primary curriculum. They are effective at forming positive relationships with adults; they plan for, and deploy, teaching assistants effectively. They are competent in planning for progression across a series of lessons and most are successful in designing activities to meet the needs of different ability groups. They are particularly skilled at stretching and challenging more able pupils. All trainees and NQTs use resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), creatively to capture pupils' enthusiasm for learning.

5. Trainees' competence in teaching reading, writing and phonics is developing well because of quality training and ample opportunity to practise their skills with different age groups of pupils. Trainees confidently teach mathematics, modelling new concepts clearly and using a range of appropriate models and apparatus to support pupils' learning. Some trainees are adept at developing pupils' problem-solving skills. However, a few trainees do not use precise mathematical vocabulary because their subject knowledge is not fully secure.
6. Trainees and NQTs form trusting and respectful relationships with pupils. Despite being in the earliest stages of their first solo school placement, almost all trainees demonstrated effective strategies to manage pupils' behaviour. They are calm but authoritative and have a convincing presence in the classroom. Their preparation for teaching pupils with English as an additional language and pupils from culturally diverse backgrounds is in the early stages of development.

The quality of training across the partnership is good

7. The partnership listens and acts on the feedback it receives from schools and trainees. As a result, the training programme, under the careful management of the Course Director, has been completely overhauled. These changes are bearing fruit. Current trainees express high levels of satisfaction with their training; every trainee is confident their training will help them to become good teachers.
8. Training is cohesive, consistent and of good quality. The School Integrated Learning programme is effective because it seamlessly blends extended school placements with training opportunities in schools for pairs and groups of trainees with a range of cohort training events. Trainees have good opportunities to hone their teaching skills across different age groups and in different types of school. The programme is shaped well so it builds progressively on trainees' skills and knowledge as they move through varied school placements. Trainees benefit from up-to-date and relevant training led by the Course Director and school practitioners from the partnership with a proven record of success in different areas.
9. Accurate assessment of trainees' teaching skills is underpinned by a thorough tracking system closely linked to the Teachers' Standards. Schools report few concerns with the validity of the trainees' assessment as they move from placement to placement. The external mentor role, carried out by headteachers from partnership schools, brings rigour to the system through joint lesson observations which moderate school judgements. The tracking system is serving a useful purpose. It means any gaps in experience can be swiftly tackled so that all trainees have

equal access to a broad and balanced training programme. There is scope to refine the system further to ensure the evidence which supports trainees' achievement of the different Teachers' Standards is sufficiently broad and reliable.

10. All trainees have access to good quality mentoring. The partner schools are good places to train in. Staff willingly share their expertise because they have a genuine desire to help trainees succeed. A particularly strong feature of school-based training is the opportunity for trainees to observe mentors and other staff, including subject leaders, model teaching strategies across different subjects. Mentors provide good quality oral feedback which prompts trainees to reflect on their own practice and pinpoint the main areas that require further development. External mentors are equally skilled in providing good quality written feedback. Nonetheless, trainees' written targets are not precise enough to help them maximise their progress. They are often too broad and set out the areas for development across the whole of a school experience rather than focusing on the small steps trainees need to take to improve their teaching day by day. Although subject specific issues are raised during oral feedback, this is not captured sufficiently well to inform trainees' future learning needs.
11. Effective training in phonics capitalises on experts who work in school and leads to competent and confident trainees who have a secure grasp of teaching phonics across different ability groups. In the past, NQTs were less positive about the impact of mathematics training in helping them to teach the subject. This is no longer the case. All trainees agree the quality training they receive in mathematics is helping them understand progression through concepts, problem solving and the importance of models and images to support pupils' learning.
12. Trainees know how to plan for different ability groups in their class due to the training they receive on meeting the varying needs of pupils. They have a good understanding of the mechanisms in place to identify and support disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs. However, the training has not gone far enough in supporting trainees gain the necessary skills to help this group of pupils make greater gains in their learning.
13. Trainees have a good understanding of how to manage behaviour and create a positive climate for learning because training in this area is effective and timely. Similarly, trainees know how to keep pupils safe and how to deal with bullying in the broadest sense because training on safeguarding at the start of the course is thorough. They are alert to the signs which may indicate a pupil is suffering from bullying and harassment. However, they are in the earliest stages of knowing how to

prevent and tackle prejudice-based bullying, particularly related to homophobia.

14. Training has sufficient emphasis on developing trainees' ability to teach across the curriculum. School mentors and trainees are effective in identifying gaps and adapting the training programme to ensure all trainees have a rich and broad experience. Themed weeks, outdoor learning and experience in schools who have adopted a creative approach to the curriculum are helping trainees to see the links between subjects. This is providing a firm foundation to help trainees develop their implementation of curriculum. Trainees have a good grasp of the planned changes to the National Curriculum from September 2014 because they use the updated guidance in their planning.
15. There are opportunities to check trainees' subject knowledge in English, mathematics and science through online tests. However, not enough is known about gaps in trainees' subject knowledge across the curriculum because there is insufficient opportunity to audit their proficiency, set targets and check on progress as they move through their training.

The quality of leadership and management across the partnership is good

16. Recent and radical changes to the organisation of the training are testament to the drive and ambition of all leaders to fulfil their vision and grow good or better teachers for local schools. Difficult, and sometimes brave, decisions have not been shirked. The partnership has been reinvigorated and the strengths identified at the last inspection have been maintained and enhanced. More trainees are demonstrating good attainment against the Teachers' Standards and levels of satisfaction among trainees and NQTs are high. The course structure has been overhauled and expertise within partnership schools is systematically harnessed. Consequently, the capacity for further improvement is good.
17. Schools have true ownership of the course because they are involved fully in shaping the design and delivery of the programme. Policies and procedures are followed consistently well and classroom practitioners deliver many aspects of centre-based training. Equality of opportunity is good because all trainees benefit from placements in good training schools with experienced, expert and respected mentors.
18. The partnership is well led and managed so that resources are used effectively. Headteachers are generous with their time and commitment. They play a key role in identifying future priorities and monitoring the impact of their work because they are all members of the Partnership Board and they take an active role in the well-organised committees.

19. Self-evaluation is accurate and draws fully on the views of schools and trainees to shape appropriate priorities to tackle any weaknesses. The action plan sets a clear route to improvement although it does not always make explicit links to the impact on trainees' outcomes. Quality assurance systems are rigorous with external mentors visiting schools to moderate judgements. As a result, the assessment of trainees is accurate.
20. Trainees' progress across the Teachers' Standards is tracked thoroughly. This information is shared with schools so that trainees' progress does not falter as they move between placements. This also triggers additional intervention for any trainees who are struggling. Nonetheless, data are not used well enough to ensure more trainees gain the highest level of attainment. Information from selection is not utilised to identify the potential of trainees and interim progress checks do not go far enough in picking out which trainees need extra support to become outstanding by the time they complete their training.
21. The work of the partnership is effectively cementing school-to-school support through the sharing of expertise. Leaders know and use the strengths identified in different schools to provide training for the whole cohort or to match school placements to the needs of individual trainees. Many training events, often involving national speakers, are aimed at school staff as well as trainees and NQTs. This means schools and trainers benefit from up-to-date and relevant professional development.
22. The arrangements for the recruitment and selection of trainees are good. A broad range of activities, including working with pupils in school, test potential trainees' aptitudes to teach. The involvement of headteachers and school-based staff brings rigour to the process. Nevertheless, not enough account is taken of trainees' subject knowledge as they enter the programme to help them plug any gaps across different subjects. The number of male and mature trainees recruited compares favourably with the national norm. The proportions of trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds are typically lower than average. However, recent improvements are beginning to bear fruit. The number of candidates from minority ethnic groups applying for, and being offered, a place on the training programme is beginning to rise.
23. All statutory requirements are met and the provider is fully compliant with all ITT requirements.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe teaching:

Hensingham Primary School
Derwent Vale Primary and Nursery School
Eaglesfield Paddle Primary School
Dearham Primary School
Jericho Primary School
Bransty Primary School

ITE partnership details

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Phases provided	Primary
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Previous inspection report	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/70017
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