

London South Bank University

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Inspection Dates 16–19 June 2014

This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors, and additional 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 June 2014.

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

The primary phase

Information about the primary partnership

- The university works in partnership with over 150 schools and educational settings within several local authorities in and around London. There are currently 163 trainees following a one-year, postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) course. This course counts as 60 credits towards a masters degree. There are 28 trainees following the early years course for the 3–7 age group, 108 on the primary course for the 5–11 age group, and 27 on the upper-primary course for the 7–11 age group. All these trainees began their courses in September 2013.
- The university is working with 11 schools as part of the School Direct programme. There are currently 12 trainees following the School Direct salaried route leading to a PGCE and 60 credits towards a masters degree.

Information about the primary ITE inspection

- This is a re-inspection following the previous inspection in 2013 when the provider was graded as requiring improvement.
- There were four inspectors in the inspection team. Nine schools were visited; each inspector visited at least one. During these visits, eight trainees were observed teaching. Most of these observations were carried out jointly with school-based mentors. The teaching of five newly qualified teachers (NQTs) was also observed.
- While in school, inspectors looked at a range of evidence including work in pupils' books and trainees' files. Discussions were held with the trainees and NQTs, and also with headteachers and school-based mentors.
- Further discussions were held with trainees and NQTs representing the School Direct route. Discussions were also held with university- and school-based leaders in meetings both in schools and at the university.
- A wide range of documentary evidence was also looked at by inspectors. They also considered the findings from recent NQT surveys and 96 responses from trainees to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Lead inspector
Assistant lead inspector
Team inspector
Team inspector

The key strengths of the primary partnership are:

- Trainees respond well to a wide range of school experiences, visits and alternative education placements which enhance their understanding of teaching and learning. Trainees are highly reflective about their own practice. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of equality and inclusion, and are very well prepared to teach in culturally and linguistically diverse urban schools.
- Trainees and NQTs use a wide range of teaching strategies, including information and communication technology (ICT), to promote good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. This ensures pupils achieve well in lessons.
- University-based training systematically links theory to practice. The use of school-based trainers' expertise makes training practical, relevant and inspiring. Improvements in specific aspects of training, such as early reading, mathematics, and the teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, have resulted in a significant rise in trainees' confidence and the attainment of pupils in the schools where they teach.
- The quality of feedback and target setting during school placements is consistently evaluative and helpful. As a result trainees know exactly what they need to do to improve.
- The tracking of trainees' competence, as well as confidence, in aspects of teaching and subject knowledge over time is systematic. The information gathered is used very effectively to identify the strengths and weaknesses in trainees' outcomes, identify where further support is required and improve training.
- Leaders have tackled the key issues for improvement from the previous inspection with determination to ensure good outcomes for trainees. Teamwork is a significant strength and the capacity for the further improvement of teacher education across the partnership is good.

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

The partnership should:

- improve outcomes for trainees further by training mentors in the use of questions in feedback sessions that encourage trainees to think deeply about how they can improve their teaching
- embed and sustain the systems for high-quality training that enable all NQTs and former trainees to continue to develop as confident and competent professionals for the benefit of pupils across the partnership.

Inspection Judgements

1. The key issues from the last inspection have been tackled by the new senior leadership team with determination and considerable success. Leaders demonstrate a clear vision, and the necessary capability and commitment, to sustain these improvements during a period of change in ITE provision within the city and local region. As a result of this good leadership, a trend of improving outcomes confirms that all trainees exceed the minimum expected level of performance by the end of the course. There are no significant differences in the performance of different groups of trainees in both the PGCE and School Direct routes. Completion and employment rates are both above the sector norms.
2. Current trainees are very positive about the quality of training they receive and how well it prepares them to become good or better teachers. Trainees feel that they receive plenty of pastoral and academic support. School Direct trainees following the salaried route value the training provided in the two-week summer school. It quickly gets them ready for teaching at the start of the academic year in their placement school. Trainees following both routes demonstrate a good understanding of the Teachers' Standards and they have a desire to become good and outstanding teachers. They achieve well because the training effectively meets their individual needs from the start of the course. Clear lines of communication mean that any issues related to the progress of trainees are dealt with quickly and effectively.
3. Observations of NQTs and discussions with them during the inspection confirmed that their teaching is at least good, and sometimes outstanding. They demonstrate secure subject knowledge in their teaching that inspires pupils to learn well. Resources, including extra adults and ICT, are used well and this contributes effectively to the progress made by their pupils. Discussions with senior staff in partnership schools confirm that these NQTs are making a positive contribution to the schools in which they work.

- 4.** From the outset of the course trainees gain quickly a strong professional understanding of how schools work. They develop good professional relationships with the established staff they work with in schools. Resources are used well to support their teaching and engage pupils' imaginations. Trainees demonstrate good subject knowledge and use it well to inspire pupils. Lessons are well planned to ensure that all pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. Trainees know how to support pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- 5.** Trainees' evidence files are well organised and support their good achievement against the Teachers' Standards. They include good use of background reading and research undertaken throughout the course. Trainees demonstrate an ability to think critically and reflect accurately on their own practice. These reflections are recorded regularly in their learning journals. The knowledge gained is used effectively to plan well-structured lessons and improve their own teaching.
- 6.** Effective training ensures that the management of pupils' behaviour by all trainees and NQTs is good. All trainees quickly establish very positive relationships with pupils in lessons. They use a good range of strategies to promote good pupil behaviour. Furthermore, trainees and NQTs are able to apply these strategies in a wide range of culturally diverse schools because of the comprehensive training they receive in topics such as homophobic bullying, inclusion and citizenship.
- 7.** Trainees following both the PGCE and School Direct routes have the confidence and competence needed to teach systematic synthetic phonics (the sounds letters make that pupils need to know in order to read). This is because what trainees have learnt about the theory of teaching reading at the start of the course is fully consolidated by practical teaching on their first school experience. Trainees use assessment techniques to measure the impact of their teaching on pupils' reading skills. Close scrutiny of the data collated by the provider confirms that pupils' levels of achievement in reading within partnership schools have risen as a result of trainees' teaching.
- 8.** Effective training and the thorough auditing of the trainees' subject knowledge ensure that mathematics is taught well during school placements. As a result, trainees and NQTs enable pupils to make good progress in mathematics in all partnership schools. Training in the teaching of mathematics is further personalised to meet the needs of trainees based on the feedback learnt from teaching experiences. Furthermore, the PGCE and School Direct programme provide trainees with the opportunity to select a specialist Masters Level option module to develop further additional curriculum expertise and leadership skills and pedagogical knowledge. Two of these options are in mathematics. For those trainees with GCSE grade B or above, they study a module,

'Raising Achievement in Mathematics'. For trainees who identify themselves as much less confident in their mathematical knowledge, they study 'Exploring mathematics'. All trainees follow two additional modules which allow them to specialise in aspects of mathematics. The most recent NQT survey indicates that there has been a good improvement in the quality of mathematics training.

- 9.** The coherence between the taught course and school-based experiences is good. Centre-based training has been modified well to provide trainees with relevant, first-hand experience that benefits pupils in partnership schools. Tutors provide good academic support for trainees. Subject knowledge audits are regularly reviewed to consolidate trainees' competence and confidence. The reading activities based in the first school experience are good examples of this. Trainees rapidly develop their subject knowledge in the teaching of literacy and in the assessment of pupils' achievements.
- 10.** The professional studies programme for both routes is a strong element of the training. Partnership schools provide good and contrasting placements to extend trainees' teaching competencies and levels of experience. The alternative educational setting placement is particularly effective and has an impact on the outcomes of following placements. Schools within the partnership contribute to a range of training such as in the teaching of reading and the promotion of good behaviour in class.
- 11.** The equal opportunities, inclusion and citizenship element of the course is a very strong feature. It prepares trainees exceptionally well for working in an inner-city environment. The quality of this programme is rated very highly by trainees. It includes expert input for prevention of homophobic bullying and cultural diversity. This effective promotion of equality of opportunity is reflected in the absence of any discrimination. Highly effective levels of pastoral care are provided to all trainees by both academic and visiting tutors to ensure that all trainees make at least good, and often better, progress. For example, male, black, minority ethnic trainees are provided with extra support by a male, black headteacher to help them succeed.
- 12.** Trainees are effectively prepared to teach the new National Curriculum because the requirements are embedded in core and foundation subject training sessions. Discussions with trainees confirmed that they can identify and discuss significant changes to the National Curriculum, such as the increased emphasis on spoken English, vocabulary, grammar and spelling in English and the raised expectations for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in mathematics. As a result of discrete ICT sessions and the use of this technology to support all areas of the curriculum, trainees are particularly well prepared for the new computing curriculum. Following centre-based sessions, one trainee on final placement had the confidence to explain the requirements of the

new computing curriculum to colleagues in a staff meeting. Furthermore, trainees know how to develop pupils' religious literacy and have insight into present curricular arrangements based on the history of religious education in schools.

- 13.** Inconsistencies in mentoring have been remedied successfully. School-based mentors observe trainees regularly and meet with them weekly to review their progress against targets set. Observations of teaching are evaluative and make good reference to the impact of the trainees' teaching on the progress of different groups of pupils in their class. Half-termly joint observations with university tutors ensure greater levels of consistency in the quality and rigour of mentors' observations. Extra training and support are provided to mentors in schools by these university tutors as and when required. During feedback sessions the most experienced mentors use probing questions well. Questions encourage trainees to be more reflective in their practice and assess their own progress and that of their pupils. This is not, however, the case in all feedback sessions observed during the inspection and is an area for further development.
- 14.** The weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection linked to the assessment of trainees' performance have been turned into strengths. Target setting is clearly linked to the Teachers' Standards and consistently good across the partnership. These targets are closely monitored by tutors and mentors, and used well to accelerate trainees' progress. Prompt action is taken to help trainees with targets arising from observations that require further intervention to ensure they exceed the minimum level required. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
- 15.** Improvement planning is comprehensive and fully addresses the key areas requiring improvement from the last inspection. Consequently, the quality of training across the partnership is now good and improving rapidly. Actions are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are completed on time and with good impact. Subject leaders for English and mathematics provide good leadership, are clear about what they need to do and are planning for the future development of the provision.
- 16.** Innovative approaches are followed by the new senior leadership team to improve teacher education for the benefit of pupils across the partnership. To fulfil London's specific cultural and linguistic needs in building up a local teaching force with expert skills, the partnership has designed work based under-graduate courses for teaching assistants for September 2014. Programmes and courses for NQTs were started in September 2013, but the impact of these is yet to be fully embedded.
- 17.** Self-evaluation is thorough and based on the rigorous analysis of data. Key stakeholders, such as headteachers and local authority officers, are

actively involved in both monitoring improvement and in the strategic development of teacher education across the partnership. The tracking of trainees' progress has significantly improved since the last inspection. It is systematic and used extensively to monitor both the progress of trainees and the effectiveness of training.

- 18.** Quality assurance procedures are robust and used well to ensure greater levels of consistency in school-based training and mentoring across the partnership. The impact of this is clearly evident in both the overall quality of feedback to trainees and their achievement. A high level of expectation has been set for the university-based tutors and each placement is monitored by senior leaders to ensure compliance with these expectations.
- 19.** The provider has been unable to recruit trainees for the PGCE route for the academic year 2014/15 because overall effectiveness was judged to require improvement at the last inspection. Despite this, the existing recruitment and selection procedures have been reviewed and modified to support partnership schools in the selection of future trainees following the salaried School Direct route. Selection processes are rigorous and ensure that candidates' needs are identified prior to starting their course. Candidates' qualifications are fully vetted and all safeguarding and compliance checks are met.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe trainees' and NQTs' teaching:

Chatsworth Primary
Elm Wood Primary,
St James CE Primary
Canary Wharf College Free School
Ilderton Primary
Vauxhall Primary
Walnut Tree Walk Primary
Bellenden Primary
Grange Primary

ITE partnership details

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Provider address	K2 Building Keyworth St London SE1 6NG

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