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Borough of Poole SCITT

**Better
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A primary initial teacher training
short inspection report
2006/07

Managing inspector
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Introduction

The Borough of Poole SCITT works in partnership with 18 schools to provide primary initial teacher training courses. It offers a 5 to 11 primary PGCE course for 25 trainees. At the time of the inspection there were 24 trainees.

Context

The inspection was carried out by a team of inspectors in accordance with the *Ofsted Handbook for the Inspection of Initial Teacher Training (2005-2011)*.

This report draws on evidence from a short inspection of the provision and an inspection of the management and quality assurance arrangements.

Grades are awarded in accordance with the following scale

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Main inspection judgements

Management and quality assurance: Grade 1

The overall quality of training is at least good.
The provider will receive a short inspection in three years.

Key strengths

- the excellent leadership and management of the consortium which result in very effective communication across the partnership
- the outstanding systems by which the consortium assures the quality of provision
- the very strong, collegiate partnership across the consortium and high level of commitment to the trainees' progress
- the excellent links between centre-based and school-based training, resulting in high quality training
- the highly focused, individualised support for trainees, which fosters their commitment, enthusiasm and professional approach to teaching.

Points for consideration

- improving the consistency of quality of external examiners' reports

The quality of training

1. The very good quality training identified at the last inspection has been maintained and further developed and it now has many outstanding features. The content of both the professional studies, curriculum and subject training modules ensures that all trainees are well equipped to teach any primary year group and that they have a very good understanding of the National Curriculum and the Primary National Strategy. There is particularly good training in the Every Child Matters agenda. The training is very well structured to ensure a suitable balance between central and school-based training. A particular strength is the induction process which results in high levels of trainee confidence early on in the training.

2. The use of partnership first and middle schools to ensure that trainees have a good understanding of the key stages before and after those for which they are training is very effective. Cohesion between all aspects of the training is outstanding. There are close links between central and school-based training and between subjects. In mathematics, for example, trainees are given very good guidance on how to develop problem solving skills in the classroom. Tasks link well with assignments, because they provide much of the action research trainees need to complete them. For example, the broader curriculum assignment requires trainees to develop a cross-curricular resource pack for teachers following a field trip.

3. The quality of the training is excellent because the partnership makes full use of highly committed, skilled and enthusiastic trainers, many of whom are advanced skills teachers, leading teachers or local authority advisers. Sessions are very well prepared and model good practice. For example, an English session on speaking and listening had clear objectives and used a range of teaching strategies to model how pupils' oral and communication skills can be developed.

4. Support for trainees' individual needs is outstanding and is a key strength. Very thorough audits of subject knowledge are carried out throughout the training. The resulting action plans are of good quality and are well supported by individual twilight sessions, for example in science, and with tutorials. Effective use is made of peer mentoring using trainees' strengths, with good examples in information and communication technology (ICT) and music. The very detailed mid-point review enables trainees and their mentors to plan individualised tasks during their final placement, effectively addressing any weaknesses in their progress towards the Standards.

5. Monitoring is multi-layered and rigorous. Communications within the partnership are excellent, and lead to very good parity of judgement on trainees' progress. A recent strength of the provision is the introduction of the trainees' record of initial assessment and development (TRIAD). Trainees are encouraged to keep this under constant review from the start of their training and the guidance that they receive in completing the TRIAD is excellent.

6. Assessment systems are rigorous in ensuring that robust judgements are made. Assignments are well marked and the involvement of school-based trainers in second marking is a very positive feature because it adds to cohesion. Feedback on trainees' teaching is very detailed and helpful, with commentary making clear links between cause and effect. For example, one observation noted that behaviour was excellent because the pupils understood the class routines and had a good relationship with the trainee.

Management and quality assurance

7. The procedures for the selection of trainees meet Requirements fully and the provider has consistently recruited good quality candidates. All trainees in 2005/06 successfully completed the course at a good or very good level; 22 of the 23 trainees graduating from this group gained teaching posts, most of them in local schools. The information given to all candidates is well presented and appropriately detailed. Applications are monitored carefully to ensure equal opportunities for all. Selection criteria are applied consistently. The interviews are very well managed so that the potential of prospective trainees is assessed thoroughly. Partnership school staff are fully involved in hosting the interview days in their schools. Selection tasks are challenging and focus on assessing the range of the trainees' academic and interpersonal skills. The outcomes of each interview are comprehensively recorded.

8. The leadership and management of the partnership by the professional co-ordinator are excellent. She is supported effectively by highly committed colleagues from partnership schools. Committees have clear remits and there are well defined lines of accountability. Attendance at committee meetings is good. Communications and relationships throughout the partnership are excellent; as a result the training across the course is coherent and relevant. Resources are well organised, readily available and regularly used to enhance training. For example, trainees can use a wide range of books and ICT equipment in the centre.

9. All partners are fully involved in planning and delivering the training programme. There is greater involvement of school-based staff in leading training sessions, for example, in behaviour management, assessment and lesson planning. The local authority is involved in leading some training modules. The very strong team approach is evident in the way the programmes are planned, delivered and reviewed in the light of evaluations. This demonstrates excellent improvement since the previous inspection.

10. The provider has involved school-based staff in reviewing roles and responsibilities, in line with changes to the structure of the management board and committees. Most committees are chaired by partnership head teachers. Roles and responsibilities of the various institutions and personnel within the partnership are clear to all involved and included in the revised partnership agreement. The management systems ensure strong, consistent and open management throughout the partnership.

11. Quality assurance procedures are outstanding and a key strength of the provision; all aspects are monitored, checked and evaluated regularly. The wide range of strategies for evaluating provision gives the management board robust information about how well the trainees are supported and guided. Trainees have a very strong role in this process; their views are sought at several points and prompt action is taken to address any concerns raised. The provider ensures that training is of high quality through very well organised and highly effective training for central and school-based tutors and mentors. The provider hosts an informative and useful annual development day for all partners.

12. The moderation processes are very effective; school-based tutors, head teachers, class teachers and visiting tutors undertake joint observations of trainees' teaching at different times. Moderation meetings with school-based staff are very well organised, robust, and ensure consistency in judgements. A significant strength is the way the appropriate staff meet at a number of points to assess the trainees' progress and agree an action plan of further training experiences required. This ensures the trainees have a varied range of experience across the key stages and subjects for which they are being trained. The management board takes a key role in assessing the trainees against the Standards near the end of the course, and is involved in scrutinising the trainees' evidence; this is very good practice.

13. The reports from the external examiners are positive and points for development are acted upon promptly; however, the quality of these reports is mixed. The provider's self-review feeds into strategic planning; all data clearly inform the decision-making process and there are excellent improvement plans for subjects and a well-written and informative overall strategic action plan. Good use is made of benchmarking with data from comparable local providers.