

Bromley Schools' Collegiate

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Provider address	Beaverwood School Beaverwood Rd Chislehurst Kent BR7 6HE
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Inspection dates	08-12 June 2009
Lead inspector	Nick Green HMI

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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

The provider

3. Bromley Schools' Collegiate is a partnership of eight schools located in Bromley local authority; it provides secondary school centred initial teacher training (SCITT) in the 11-18 age range. It offers training in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, modern foreign languages, information and communication technology and religious education. The course is allocated 30 places by the Training and Development Agency (TDA). At the time of the inspection, there were 26 trainees on the course. The Collegiate also offers routes to qualified status through employment-based initial teacher education and this graduate training programme was inspected at the same time as the SCITT provision. Beaverwood School for Girls in Chislehurst is the lead school. Many features of the two training routes are similar and they share the same leadership and management.
4. Central training consists of weekly training sessions running throughout the year; this includes general professional studies and subject-specific sessions. In their placement schools, trainees have a weekly programme of professional studies led by a senior mentor and weekly meetings with a subject mentor. The central subject training is led by a subject leader for each subject.

Provision in the secondary phase

Key strengths

5. The key strengths are:
- the quality and consistency of training and assessment across the partnership that enable trainees to make outstanding progress
 - trainees' competence in planning lessons for progression across the secondary age and ability range to meet the needs of all learners
 - trainees' knowledge and understanding of teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies
 - the quality of training, support and guidance provided by senior mentors
 - the very high level of commitment and involvement of all partner schools in all aspects of provision
 - the partnership's capacity to anticipate change and respond to new developments to ensure trainees receive high quality training
 - the quality of self-evaluation and improvement planning and their focus on trainees' outcomes.

Recommendations

6. In order to improve the progress made by all trainees even further, the partnership should:
- seek ways of extending trainees' experience of working in a culturally and linguistically diverse society
 - enhance the ability of all subject leaders to help trainees develop a full understanding of the rationale for teaching their subject and of contemporary subject initiatives.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

7. Trainees' attainment by the end of the course is good. Most trainees have particularly strong professional attributes. They establish a cordial rapport with students and have high expectations of them. Using the excellent advice provided by their collegiate mentors, they are able to reflect on and improve their practice effectively. They show a strong commitment to collaborative and co-operative working with school colleagues. Trainees have a good knowledge and understanding of their subject and of the secondary curriculum. A small minority trainees, the

subject content of whose degrees is not closely matched to the subject they have trained to teach, has not developed as strong subject expertise in all three of the key stages. The training has enabled most trainees to develop a real depth of knowledge and understanding of teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies. They know how to personalise students' learning and a particular strength is their ability to plan lessons for progression across the secondary age and ability range to meet the needs of all learners. However, their understanding of how ethnic, cultural and linguistic influences affect students' development and of working in a culturally diverse society is more limited.

8. Trainees' have secure professional skills. They provide clear explanations and instructions and generally use questioning and discussion effectively to develop and consolidate students' learning. Most trainees can manage the learning of individual students, groups and whole classes successfully, adapting their teaching in response to students' progress. Trainees make very good use of learning resources including websites, periodicals and interactive white boards. They establish a purposeful and safe learning environment through effective behaviour management. Trainees have a good knowledge of a range of assessment strategies and apply these well to identify students' learning needs and to provide them with guidance on what they need to do to improve. However, on occasions assessment is not used sufficiently by a minority of trainees to inform lesson planning and provide feedback to students.

9. Selection arrangements are good and result in the recruitment of trainees who are committed and of a suitable calibre. Recruitment levels and retention and employment rates have been consistently high over several years and are notably better than national benchmarks. Selection reflects the course rationale extremely well, recruiting local trainees who stay and teach in the area. A high proportion is employed by the Collegiate's schools each year. Interview procedures and pre-course tasks enable trainees' individual and subject needs to be accurately identified; this ensures that the large majority of trainees make rapid progress from the start of the course. However, in a minority of cases candidates' entry competencies are not identified precisely. A useful new scoring system for judging prospective trainees' entry competencies is being introduced this year. High numbers of minority ethnic candidates apply for the course though relatively few have been recruited over the last three years. The Collegiate is aware that its recruitment of minority groups is below national norms and has identified this as a development priority.

10. High quality training meets the needs of trainees extremely well, promotes equality of opportunity and values diversity to ensure trainees make outstanding progress. Trainees praise the attention paid to their welfare and the support they receive from their school-based trainers and the training manager. The central training is devised very well and trainees rate it highly. It examines relevant contemporary educational topics and its effectiveness is shown by trainees' grasp of these topics and the way they inform their lesson planning. The central subject strand of the course, organised and sometimes delivered by the subject leaders, covers a range of key subject issues and includes valuable 'expert seminars' by leading practitioners. The extent to which most subject leaders help trainees develop a full understanding of the rationale for teaching their subject and of contemporary

subject initiatives is more limited. Currently, opportunities for them to access professional development beyond the partnership are restricted. However, the central training provides a strong foundation on which school-based training builds very effectively.

11. An outstanding feature of the training is the work of senior mentors. The quality of the training, support and guidance provided by them is exemplary. The school-based programmes they provide ensure trainees experience a range of relevant training activities and professional studies; this makes a major contribution to supporting their progress. Careful selection and quality assurance of subject mentors by senior mentors result in high quality subject mentoring throughout the partnership. As a result, general professional studies and subject provision across partner schools are of consistently very high quality. Mentors develop trainees' knowledge and understanding of how to teach and assess their subject very effectively. Trainees receive excellent feedback on their lessons and are set clear and relevant targets, which steer their practice and contribute to the considerable progress most trainees make. Second school placements are of equally high quality as trainees' first placements, which they complement well. However, not all trainees have extensive experience of teaching in a culturally diverse context or of teaching students for whom English is an additional language.

12. All trainers and headteachers are highly committed and involved in all aspects of the partnership. The preparation and training of mentors for their roles is excellent, especially the provision of differentiated training for those new to this work. As a result, mentors are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. Communication with schools by the central collegiate team is highly efficient and schools are kept well informed of current developments and priorities. Issues and concerns raised by schools are identified at an early stage and dealt with promptly and effectively by the training manager. Trainees' placements are changed in response to emerging needs and trainees are provided with valuable additional support if their progress is faltering.

13. The collegiate makes highly effective and efficient use of resources. They are utilised very well to enhance both central and partner schools' facilities. The devolvement of capital funds to two partner schools to establish high quality training bases for trainees is an excellent example of this. The governing consortium board, consisting of the headteachers of the partner schools, is fully involved in determining the rationale for the allocation of resources. The process is responsive to need, for example by providing extra support or training at the request of trainees or mentors. The establishment of teaching and learning resources in all partner schools and centrally at a local library supports trainees' progress very well. The provider's virtual learning environment (VLE) is used effectively by the trainees. In addition to providing easy access to a wide range of high quality resources to support trainees' progress, it enables valuable discussions to take place between trainees, and between trainees and trainers.

14. Comprehensive assessment systems provide accurate assessments of trainees' progress in meeting the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The judgements about the performance of trainees at the pass/fail boundary are very

secure. All mentors monitor trainees' progress and achievement carefully. The outcomes are used well to inform training and to ensure that it meets the individual needs of trainees so they make further progress. The final assessment of trainees is conducted proficiently and trainees are guided very well to provide convincing evidence to demonstrate their attainment of the Standards. Rigorous internal and external moderation procedures are used to assure the reliability, accuracy and consistency of assessments.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality Grade: 1

15. The leadership and management of the Collegiate demonstrate outstanding capacity to sustain high quality outcomes for trainees. A wide range of well designed questionnaires is used to evaluate all aspects of provision and a large amount of valuable evaluative data is gathered about the performance of the partnership. The Collegiate has made significant improvement in its self-evaluation procedures since the previous inspection of the SCITT course. A detailed analysis of trainees' outcomes over time and of the views of trainees, trainers, assessors and external examiners is undertaken. This is used effectively to identify the strengths of the provision and areas for further improvement. Recently, additional valuable evaluations have been done to seek the views of headteachers employing previous trainees and current trainees' use of the VLE. The effectiveness of the way resources are allocated and their impact on trainees' progress and attainment are also reviewed regularly and suitable action is taken promptly in response to these findings.

16. The training manager and a senior mentor responsible for quality assurance regularly evaluate the quality of central training through the observation of a sample of sessions. Senior mentors are closely involved in evaluating the quality of school-based provision, which includes observing subject mentor and trainee meetings. While subject leaders do not systematically assure the quality of subject mentors work, they can be requested to do this by the training manager or a senior mentor when needed. Planning days for senior mentors and subject leaders enable cross partnership evaluation and identification of good practice. Recruitment and selection procedures and their outcomes are monitored well and this has identified pertinent areas for improvement. The management group and consortium board are able to respond quickly to evaluations and take good account of external examiners' recommendations. The partnership is over generous in its judgements on the quality of a minority of provision. It does, however, make an accurate self-evaluation of its overall effectiveness and its capacity to improve further and sustain high quality outcomes.

17. The leaders and managers of the Collegiate have a strong grasp of the demands of national and local initiatives and priorities in schools and initial teacher education; these are responded to in a timely and effective manner. The Collegiate shows clear capacity to anticipate change and respond to new developments to ensure trainees receive high quality training. This is reflected in the changes made to

the content of central training to include consideration of new initiatives. As a result, trainees are able to speak with understanding and confidence about, for example, new developments in the teaching of reading and the 14-19 curriculum. The relatively recently produced TDA subject knowledge for teaching materials are also used well to enhance trainees' subject practice. This has contributed to the improved quality of school-based subject training since the previous inspection. The successful move to a new lead school is another example of how well the Collegiate responds to change. This has been very well managed with no detrimental impact on provision. The move has resulted in the establishment of high quality training and administrative accommodation. The Collegiate has benefited from the highly effective management of the new lead school headteacher and scheme manager.

18. The leaders and managers of the partnership are effective in identifying and securing the necessary development of staff involved in delivering training. The work of the senior mentor team is particularly impressive in implementing the training requirements. Experienced and effective subject teachers are chosen to be subject mentors. Resources are targeted very well to support the deployment of staff and training facilities. Systematic and effective solutions have been used to resolve problems and potential barriers to improvement. This is demonstrated by the flexible and personalised way training is organised and managed. Any shortcomings identified are quickly rectified.

19. The wealth of evaluative data gained by the partnership is used effectively to produce a well-considered whole course development plan. This focuses on key priorities such as improving recruitment strategies, the development of trainees' e-portfolios, improving facilities in each partner school and establishing Masters degree credits. On-going developments such as enhancing the trainees' subject knowledge for teaching feature on the plan each year. Useful individual subject plans are produced, though some current plans are limited in their link with trainees' outcomes and the whole course development plan. However, new plans for 2009-10 do this more effectively. While the plans contain measures of impact, success criteria are not always precisely detailed. The Collegiate is also aware that it needs to consider longer term strategic planning.

20. The action taken to implement improvement plans is assessed well against its impact on trainees' progress and achievements. This shows that it has contributed significantly to the outstanding progress they have made as shown by their improved attainment and the sustained high levels of completion and employment over recent years. While there are areas for development in the way improvement planning is documented, the effectiveness of the planning and action taken for improvement is outstanding.

Summary of inspection grades¹

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is satisfactory; grade 4 is inadequate.

Overall effectiveness

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

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

		Secondary
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?		1
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		1
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		1
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		1

¹ 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.

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