

Doncaster GTP Partnership

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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Lead inspector	Garry Jones 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. The Doncaster graduate teacher programme (GTP) partnership consists of the metropolitan borough of Doncaster local authority and schools within the borough. There are 125 primary, secondary and special schools in the area serving the largest metropolitan borough in the country. The borough contains significant areas with social and economic deprivation and this is reflected in the challenges faced by some schools in raising attainment. The initial cohort of trainees commenced training in September 2003 in response to considerable local difficulties with recruitment.

4. Since 2003, all bar one of Doncaster's secondary schools have become partnership schools, including an academy and a training school. A significant number (37 out of 103) of the primary schools, including infants, juniors and one independent school, have been partnership schools. There are currently 33 trainees including nine primary trainees and 24 secondary trainees. There is a single self funded primary trainee and five self funded secondary trainees. Two secondary trainees are in receipt of the training grant only. The secondary trainees are recruited to shortage and non-shortage subjects including art and design, design technology, drama and performing arts, English, history, information and communication technology (ICT)/business studies, mathematics, music, physical education, psychology and science.

Employment-based routes to qualified teacher status

Key strengths

4. The key strengths are:
 - the strong focus on meeting trainees' individual needs that ensures trainees make good progress
 - the coherent programme of training and support for the trainees' development, within schools and centrally
 - well developed moderation procedures to ensure the accuracy of assessment
 - the rigorous selection procedures leading to the recruitment of trainees with good potential
 - the strong shared commitment to the partnership's role in improving the quality of recruits to the profession.

Recommendations

5. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the partnership should:
 - ensure that there are greater opportunities for trainees to gain experience of the wider issues of cultural diversity
 - extend the programme of training for school based mentors and coordinators to include the skills of observation and feedback to ensure greater consistency in the development of these generic skills across the partnership.
6. In order to improve its capacity to improve the partnership should:
 - include within their action plan more success criteria that measure the impact of actions on trainees' outcomes.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

7. The overall effectiveness of the partnership is good. The attainment of most trainees is good and given their starting points this represents good progress. Trainees in both primary and secondary schools display a number of common strengths; not least of these is their high level of commitment to their training. Trainees are well motivated and willingly take initiative to contribute to their development through personal research and seeking out opportunities to work with other trainees. They have well established skills as reflective practitioners. They plan well structured lessons, use questioning well to develop learning and display good skills in classroom and behaviour management.

8. The partnership is effective in recruiting trainees with the potential to become good teachers. The course is heavily oversubscribed and the number of applicants is increasing steadily. The three stage recruitment process works well; with a rigorous methodology to ensure that selection is carried out objectively. This is reinforced by the partnership management board reviewing all applicants who are successful in gaining school support and ensuring that only the very best receive funding. The success of the process is evident in the facts that most trainees gain employment in Doncaster and the levels of withdrawal from the course are very low and declining. The partnership has targeted applicants from under represented groups. While it has been successful in attracting men into primary education and applicants with disabilities it has been less successful in recruiting trainees from minority ethnic groups. The low numbers of minority ethnic trainees reflects the demographic characteristics of the community. The reasons for applicants from this group being rejected are reviewed carefully and there are plans to continue to target potential recruits in the coming year.

9. Although the self evaluation of the provider graded the quality of training and assessment as satisfactory, inspectors judge it to be good. There is a strong focus on identifying the trainees' individual needs before the course commences. In the summer term mentors work with trainees to develop a personalised training plan to reflect their prior experience and knowledge. These plans are then amended conscientiously during the year as new areas for development are identified. Trainees confirm that this document provides them with a clear view of their training programme and supports its delivery effectively. Overall the quality of plans is good, but in a small number of cases the extent to which the generic plan has been personalised is limited. In addition there is a clear focus on identifying gaps in subject knowledge. An initial audit identifies needs and this document is then used to plan and record how these gaps are addressed. The very best of these plans are outstanding, but there are a few examples which are satisfactory. Interviews with trainees and reviews of their records of evidence illustrate how individual research, school based training and external courses have been used to effectively address their needs.

10. Training within schools is greatly valued by almost all trainees. In particular they stress the quality of feedback and support received from their mentors. In addition to their own specific course trainees are able to access their school's professional development opportunities as well as training offered to trainees on other routes within the school. This training together with the central workshops provides a coherent range of experiences that ensure good progress against the standards. The central training has been strengthened over recent years by drawing upon the expertise of consultants from the National Strategies and other staff with recent and relevant experience. Trainees' recent evaluations of the quality of their training are very good and show an improvement over previous evaluations.

11. Assessment is rigorous and reliable. Progress is monitored through regular meetings with mentors and school co-ordinators and through frequent lesson observations. These activities encourage trainees to reflect on their progress and set helpful targets for improvement, although there are examples where targets relate to task completion rather than outcomes. The role of the co-ordinator is not fully

developed in a very small number of schools. Trainees record their progress against the standards in their training log and keep exceptionally well organised files of evidence to illustrate their achievements. Interim reports at the end of each term and at the end of their second placement provide a clear view of progress and set improvement targets. Trainees' achievement against the Ofsted grades is recorded regularly and these judgements are moderated through discussion with the liaison tutor. The final assessment of each trainee is further moderated through the assessment of another tutor who does not have previous knowledge of the trainee. The training manager collates the emerging judgements on trainees centrally and maintains a helpful overview of their progress. A relative weakness in these monitoring arrangements is that while progress towards the standards is documented in detail the discussions on the grading of trainees are not.

12. The resources available to the partnership are used effectively to support the development of the trainees. The local authority subsidises the work of the partnership by contributing to the cost of the training manager and that of the consultants who provide training. There is a clear rationale for the allocation of funding that is understood by all partners. Trainees are well provided for with all receiving a large pack of textbooks and resources to support their training together with a laptop computer. In addition trainees are able to access central resources and the expertise of staff within specialist teams in the authority such as those that support Traveller pupils and those with English as an additional language. Trainees are also encouraged to access additional training and resources purchased through their training grant.

13. There is a strong commitment from schools, the local authority and individual coordinators and mentors to the partnership. This is linked to a clear rationale for the partnership that focuses on easing recruitment difficulties within the borough and providing access to training for those who are barred from other routes by their family circumstances or economic limitations. There is very good communication within the partnership; documentation is clear and roles and responsibilities are well defined. Appropriate attention is paid to ensuring that second placements are in a contrasting school. Central workshops are held for mentors and coordinators to standardise the requirements for monitoring and recording the progress of trainees. However, although there is a requirement that mentors must be trained a central programme of skill development is not provided. This is a weakness in that the partnership is relying on training by other providers that it does not quality assure other than through the work of the liaison tutors. Despite this weakness the work of mentors is of good quality.

14. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. There are clear policies in place for ensuring equality of opportunity and for dealing with issues of harassment or racism. Trainees confirm that there are no issues in these areas and no claims of racism or harassment have ever been made. The strong support for individual trainees ensures that all can make good progress. Where trainees face difficulties additional support is provided through the liaison tutor and in rare cases trainees have been transferred to another placement. The ready access to support from the liaison tutors is a real strength and is greatly appreciated by trainees. The partnership graded this area as outstanding, but although it has some very good features inspectors judged it to be good. A key reason for this is that all trainees,

although meeting the relevant standards, are yet to be prepared fully for teaching in a culturally diverse society.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality Grade: 2

15. The capacity of the partnership to continue to improve is good. This reflects the fact that the partnership is well aware of its strengths and areas for development and that these are clearly identified in the self evaluation document. It helpfully draws on a range of internal and external data including the views of trainees and mentors which are systematically collected through surveys. A particular strength is the collection of the views of trainees mid way through the course as well as on completion. This allows prompt action to be taken to address weaknesses if required. The views of trainees are taken seriously, inform evaluation and result in timely action, for example, concern over an ICT workshop led to it being revised and delivered again. In addition, the views of primary trainees and schools on the depth of training in foundation subjects led to an increased focus on this area and in particular on modern foreign languages and physical education. Although the views of former trainees and schools are not collected systematically both of these groups are represented on the board. This allows them to express any concerns from these groups and to ensure they contribute to evaluation. Appropriate attention is paid to external views and this has been recently strengthened through a redefinition of the role of the external examiner.

16. The ongoing evaluation of provision within the partnership is well developed. The quality of placement schools is monitored carefully through the close links between the partnership managers and the school improvement service. The quality of training and assessment is reviewed through the regular visits of the liaison tutors. In addition to carrying out joint observations of lessons they review the progress of trainees and the quality of provision on each of their five visits. There is clear evidence in their reports of their willingness to identify and highlight any shortcomings in training. The board oversees recruitment and ensures the accuracy of the process. It also reviews all attainment data and the grades of all trainees and thus evaluates the effectiveness of assessment. The use of attainment data is developing as there is limited historical data to review, however analysis has already resulted in improvement to provision.

17. There is clear evidence that the partnership has the ability to identify and respond to national developments. It has responded effectively to national initiatives acting promptly to include coverage of the Rose Review, the Williams report, early reading initiatives and the 14-19 curriculum developments in the central training.

18. There is a strong record of taking action to address emerging local issues and bring about improvement. The process of evaluating the monitoring role of liaison tutors led to an appropriate decision to increase the resource allocation in order to further tutors' effectiveness in reviewing the development of subject knowledge. In addition, the refinement of the initial needs analysis and training plan together with

the secondary subject knowledge audit and plan has resulted in more targeted and effective training. Other examples that illustrate the drive for improvement include the systematic review of assessment data to identify trainees that require additional support. This process identified that self funded trainees were doing slightly less well than others. As a result the board has taken action with schools to ensure that trainees who are self funded are not disadvantaged and are able to access training equitably. Similarly concerns around the quality of child protection in the authority have resulted in an addition to central training to stress these requirements.

19. The ability to respond to initiatives and the findings of self evaluation is also evident in the planning for improvement. The response to issues raised in the previous accreditation report has been good. There is an embedded philosophy of responding rapidly to emerging issues. However, this reactive drive is not at the expense of proactive planning. There is a three year strategic plan which ends in 2010 which addresses improvements in all areas of provision. This has been developed into a more specific one year plan to bring about a clearer focus on immediate issues identified through evaluation. The plan has strengths in that it identifies required resources and stipulates timescales, but there is insufficient focus in the success criteria on the impact of actions on trainees' outcomes.

20. The combination of effective processes of self evaluation to identify areas for development and a willingness to respond rapidly to emerging issues ensures that the partnership is well placed to plan for improvement. This, combined with a readiness to take action and a commitment to improvement from all partners, ensures that there is good capacity to bring about further improvement.

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

		Employment-based routes
How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?		2
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?	2
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	2
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	2
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

		Employment-based routes
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?		2
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		2
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		2
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		2

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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