

Poole SCITT

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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Lead inspector

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Introduction

1. This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty's 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

Explanation of terms used in this report

Attainment is defined as the standard reached by a trainee at the end of their training.

Progress is judged in terms of how well a trainee has developed professionally from their starting point to the standard reached at the time of the inspection or at a suitable review point.

Achievement is judged in terms of the progress made and the standard reached by a trainee at the time of the inspection or at a recent assessment review point.

The provider

3. Poole School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT), which is located in the rural setting of a country park, works in close partnership with 24 primary schools to provide initial teacher education (ITE) across the 5 to 11 age range. Most partnership schools are situated in or near Poole. They range in size and serve both urban and rural settings. The SCITT has strong links with Poole local authority. Trainees who successfully complete the one-year course are awarded qualified teacher status (QTS) and a post-graduate certificate in education (PGCE) by Kingston University. At the time of the inspection there were 27 trainees on the course and most live in the locality.

Key strengths

4. The key strengths are:
 - the very rigorous recruitment and selection systems that lead to the successful recruitment of high quality trainees, almost all of whom gain teaching posts immediately after qualifying

- the imaginative and efficient use of resources to support training and secure the best possible outcomes for trainees
- the strong professional attributes of the trainees, particularly in their development as reflective teachers
- the good quality of leadership and management which is rapidly bringing about change and improvement
- the assessment, feedback and support for trainees well-being and professional development which is helping to raise standards and improve rates of progress
- the cohesive and effective way in which all members of the partnership work together to bring about good outcomes and the commitment of the partnership to improve this further.

Required actions

5. In order to improve the quality of how the provision is evaluated, the partnership must:
 - improve the impact of the external examiner reports by ensuring that they are evaluative and focus on specific areas where improvements can be made, thus making a more significant contribution to improvement planning.

Recommendations

6. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the partnership should:
 - embed existing plans to ensure consistently high quality training in teaching pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL)
 - further develop trainees' experience and confidence to teach in a culturally diverse society

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

7. The overall effectiveness of the SCITT in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good. There are some outstanding features in recruitment and selection and the use of resources. Over the past three years the grade profile of trainees' attainment outcomes has improved with an increasing number achieving good or better grades and fewer achieving a satisfactory grade. The SCITT's progress records, confirmed by inspection evidence, indicate that the current cohort is on track to continue this improving trend.
8. Systems to recruit and select trainees are very robust and lead to highly suitable trainees being selected. Previous strengths in selection activities have been further developed, for example the use of the lead school as the venue for all

interviews and the detailed guidance to interviewers are ensuring high levels of consistency in applying the selection criteria. As a result, the cohort recruited for the current year is of a higher standard than in the past because the attainment profile at the half-way point in their training is higher than previous cohorts. Recruitment for the 2010–11 cohort, which is almost complete, indicates that qualifications and potential to teach are also of a high standard. The SCITT is extremely successful in attracting suitable male candidates into primary education, the number being significantly and consistently above the national average. In spite of their best efforts, the number of applications received from trainees of minority ethnic origin is below the national average. However, applications reflect the ethnic demography of the area and are similar to other local providers. Excellent information is provided for potential candidates and the accurate data that are collected at interview are used extremely well to identify suitable pre-course targets to prepare the successful candidates for their training. Detailed and helpful written feedback is given to all candidates, including those who were unsuccessful, following the interview day. Over a number of years, almost all trainees have been successful in gaining teaching posts commencing the term after they complete the course, and this illustrates further the impact of the high-quality selection procedures and good training. Very few trainees withdraw from the course, usually for unforeseeable personal reasons. Those that do are very well supported, for example by being offered deferment of their training to a subsequent year.

9. The quality of training in school placements and centrally is good. The content and structure of the training are very well planned to ensure an effective cohesion between school and centrally-provided training and between theory and practice. For example, training in science teaching is effectively provided in one of the partnership schools. Here trainees are observed by tutors putting into practice ideas to enhance pupils' learning immediately following their training session. Good use is made of trainees' own expertise, such as in mathematics, to enhance the subject knowledge of other trainees. A number of recent developments have been introduced into the training programme, such as the best use of pupil assessment data. Although it is too soon to judge the impact on improving outcomes for trainees, they have the potential for this.
10. Whilst there are considerable strengths in subject and pedagogic training, the SCITT recognises that more needs to be done to develop trainees' understanding and skills in teaching pupils with EAL. A number of new training initiatives are planned, such as linking to a school in Wandsworth and working with a local school with relatively high numbers of EAL pupils. However, it is too soon to judge their impact on outcomes for trainees.
11. Trainees demonstrate very good professional attributes, having developed excellent relationships with both adults and pupils. Their ability to critically reflect on their own practice is a strength. Their lessons are well planned and organised with clear learning objectives. Trainees show a good understanding of the importance of accurately matching the teaching to pupils' learning needs by using questioning well to assess pupils' ongoing understanding. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used to enhance both teaching and learning and management of pupils' behaviour is good overall.

12. Very effective and detailed assessment systems accurately track trainees' progress towards meeting the QTS Standards. Audits and weekly reviews help to ensure that training meets individual needs. The feedback on trainees' teaching provided by mentors and visiting tutors is of high quality because it is evaluative and clearly indicates strengths and areas to improve. Outcomes from lesson observations are consistently used to plan training and identify targets which meet the individual needs of trainees and the impact of these are monitored closely in subsequently observed lessons. Accurate records of progress against the Standards are used well to ensure continuous development, including from one school placement to the next. Assignments, which provide good links between theory and practice, are accurately marked. Tutors' detailed comments are evaluative and helpful, providing clear indications to trainees as to how they can improve.
13. The SCITT's effective and efficient use of the available resources to raise standards and achieve the best possible outcomes for trainees is outstanding. Changes to the administration and management of resources have meant a much greater transparency in how resources are allocated and used. As a result, needs are swiftly identified and responded to and limited resources are very wisely allocated. Trainees benefit from a small, but exceptionally well stocked and organised, library and resource base. The availability of individual laptop computers, access to specialist computer hardware and a wide range of software all effectively support their training.
14. Provision across the partnership is good and leads to positive outcomes for trainees. There is a high level of commitment and cohesion between all those involved in the partnership. Expertise is effectively shared and this is having a positive impact on the quality of the training. Communication across the partnership is excellent and trainers and trainees find it easy to share issues and ideas, seek advice and gain support. As a result, problems are swiftly identified and appropriately dealt with. All trainers, including mentors and visiting tutors, have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are diligent in carrying them out. They are well trained and regular meetings, combined with effective moderation and monitoring procedures, ensure that there is consistency in both the training and assessment of trainees. The planned expansion of training opportunities for class teachers in supporting their allocated trainees is a promising initiative which has yet to be fully embedded.
15. Equal opportunities and diversity are promoted well and all groups of trainees represented on the course make good progress. Trainees say that they feel very well supported and provision for their well-being and individual needs is a strength. There have been no recorded incidents of unlawful harassment or discrimination, and policies to address such issues are fully in place and comply with requirements. Although trainees welcome the development of initiatives, such as training in global awareness, the SCITT recognises that more needs to be done to develop their awareness about teaching in a culturally diverse society.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 2

16. The SCITT has a good capacity to respond well to the challenge of further improving what are already good outcomes. This is because recent changes in central organisation and management are starting to have a very positive impact on the effectiveness of the provision. As a result, trends of improvement in trainees' progress and attainment are good, leading to a picture of improving outcomes. The new professional coordinator, who is very effective and highly regarded across the partnership, has made a significant contribution to the recent development of the SCITT. The commitment and involvement of all partnership headteachers and the local authority in both management and training roles are very clear and have meant that there is a united vision with regard to how the SCITT can build upon previous strengths. The reorganised management committee structure has resulted in greater transparency and a clearer understanding by committee members of their roles. This has been of considerable benefit in further developing the cohesion of the partnership and improving the quality of training.
17. All partners in the SCITT contribute effectively to evaluating performance. Wide-ranging data and evaluations from schools, trainers and trainees are carefully analysed and used to help inform improvement planning. Through frequent school visits and a good knowledge of partnership schools, visiting tutors provide an effective vehicle for ensuring consistency of judgements regarding trainees' progress. They carefully moderate mentors' judgements, for example by undertaking joint observations of trainees' teaching. End-of-placement meetings ensure the accurate evaluation of trainees' attainment at key points in their training and the identification of clear targets for improvement. Moderation and assessment procedures are robust and ensure the security of the final assessments. This is confirmed by external moderation.
18. Well-organised course development days provide good opportunities for key members of the partnership to analyse evaluations, review progress and identify priorities for improvement. This contributes towards the self-evaluation document, which is a thorough and broadly accurate evaluation of the quality of the SCITT's provision. Trainee evaluations and trainee participation in the management board are used well to identify, and swiftly resolve, ongoing issues. Current trainees and newly qualified teachers from the previous cohort confirmed that their views were listened, and appropriately responded, to. For example, internet access at Upton House has been improved and additional tutorials and seminars have been arranged following requests from trainees.
19. The management of the SCITT is also rigorous in monitoring training, both centrally and in schools. There are a number of improvements that have resulted from this. For example, additional well-qualified and recently experienced trainers in ICT and physical education have been recruited to improve training in these areas.

20. External examiners' reports have developed since the last inspection when improving their consistency was identified as a point for consideration. However, there is scope for improving these further as they remain a weaker aspect of evaluation. Whilst they present a positive overall view of selected trainees, they do not provide a sufficiently clear evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision as a whole and so make a less effective contribution to the improvement planning process.
21. Under the effective leadership of the professional coordinator, the SCITT is developing a number of new initiatives which anticipate and respond to change. Because these are systematically prioritised and well planned, they are beginning to have a positive impact on outcomes for trainees. For example, a recent conference on the Byron Report raised trainees' awareness of e-safety issues in schools. The strong ethos of, and commitment to, improvement ensures that the structure of the training is sufficiently flexible to allow for creative responses to emerging local and national issues in a timely and appropriate manner. For example, training in the creative curriculum has ensured that trainees have a good understanding of the Rose Review and of curriculum development in the primary school. As a result, trainees are contributing well to their placement school's plans for reviewing the curriculum. The SCITT also works well with the local authority to help address local priorities. For example, well-planned training in developing pupils' skills in mental mathematics is contributing to the local authority's drive to raise standards in this area in Key Stage 2.
22. Improvement planning has been strengthened recently as a result of the extensive analysis of wide-ranging evaluations and data. Six clearly defined priorities are identified for the current year and for each priority the plan identifies actions, success criteria and resource implications. The timing and way in which progress is to be monitored is indicated and responsibility for completing actions and monitoring success is clearly explained. Although the actions to achieve some of the priorities were too vague when the plan was originally devised, the developmental nature of the improvement process means that these have become clearer as the cycle of development progresses. There is emerging evidence that the process of improvement planning is starting to have a very positive impact on outcomes for trainees.

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

		Primary
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?	1
	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?	1
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

		Primary
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 November 2009; Reference no: 080128.

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