

Durham Secondary Applied SCITT

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Provider address	The Workplace Heighington Lane Aycliffe Business Park Newton Aycliffe DL5 6AH
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Inspection dates	20 – 24 April 2009
Lead inspector	Sonya Williamson HMI

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Introduction

1. This inspection was carried out by one of 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. Durham secondary applied school centred initial teacher training (SCITT) offers training leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) and the award of a post-graduate certificate in education (PGCE) in the following secondary applied subjects in the 14-19 age range: applied art and design, applied information and communication technology (ICT), applied science, leisure and tourism and health and social care. It also offers training leading to QTS and PGCE for the 11-16 age range in mathematics. The PGCE training is provided by Bradford College and validated by Leeds Metropolitan University. At the time of the inspection there were 30 trainees.
4. The partnership includes 35 secondary schools all within Durham local authority, to which the provider has strong links. The provider and the local authority are closely involved in developments in 14-19 education in the area and in teacher training for applied subjects at national and local levels. Just fewer than half the schools provide post-16 experience. Partnership provision is extended by joint working with two special schools and a college with sixth form, further education (FE) and higher education (HE) provision. The college is used predominantly for trainees on the 14-19 programmes to provide greater breadth of experience in this age range for trainees on the leisure and tourism course. The SCITT is housed in The Workplace which was opened in 2008, through the work of the Vocational Learning Trust, as a place where 'education and business could work together flexibly and in innovative ways to support applied learning and the new diplomas'.

Provision in the secondary phase

Key strengths

5. The key strengths are:
 - the outstanding dedication, commitment and professionalism of the leadership team
 - the rigour and quality of improvement planning leading to rapid improvement
 - the monitoring of all aspects of provision in terms of its impact on outcomes for trainees
 - trainers' modelling of how to be a reflective practitioners at the highest level
 - the effective use of the outstanding resources provided by the partnership and local authority to support training
 - the close involvement of all partners in highly effective quality assurance procedures to ensure provision across the partnership is of consistently outstanding quality.

Recommendations

6. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment the partnership should:
 - consider how to develop subject-specific training to promote additional intellectual debate
 - further strengthen marketing to promote the recruitment of under-represented groups.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

7. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good.

8. The provider recruits and selects trainees well and meets all legislative requirements. Recruitment procedures are very responsive to local needs. They reflect the local authority's desire to raise the focus of vocational provision and increase the proportion of mathematics teachers available in the local area. Recruitment is slightly below target overall this year. However the applied art and design course has a very strong and growing number of candidates from which to choose. Where recruitment is under target, as in leisure and tourism, it reflects the more limited provision of this subject in local schools. Enhanced funding for

recruitment and a range of strategies have helped to increase the trend in the number of applicants to courses. The proportion of trainees from under-represented groups applying for training varies widely from year to year and leaders and managers are actively seeking ways to ensure this aspect of recruitment shows a stable upward trend.

9. Selection procedures are effective. From the first point of contact individual needs are dealt with well and fairly, helping to ensure high quality outcomes for each trainee. Interview procedures have been continuously refined. Conditional offers and personalised pre-course tasks help ensure that trainees make a very strong start to training. Almost all trainees achieve their potential and secure local teaching employment. Rigorous analysis of records on selection, withdrawal and completion undertaken by the quality assurance committee ensures equality of opportunity for under-represented groups. Arrangements are in place to accommodate specific needs, especially with regard to disabilities and family circumstances. Trainees' initial needs are accurately assessed through a very comprehensive subject specific audit of key knowledge, skills and understanding. This leads to a training plan that ensures trainees' placements match their personal and professional needs and their subject related skills targets.

10. Trainees attain well and make good progress. There are no discrepancies in the achievement of different groups of trainees. In the academic year 2007/2008 more than three quarters of trainees achieved good or better outcomes. Inspectors agree that the providers' assessments of trainees' outcomes and progress this year are securely based and accurate. Current trainees are making the expected and, for the majority, good progress. They are on track to achieve even better results in 2008/2009, including a higher proportion of outstanding trainees. This is due to the increasingly good central and school-based training. Trainees have been set very challenging predicted grades this year. They are aware of their grades, are reflective, self-critical and want to do their very best, mirroring the qualities modelled by SCITT leaders, managers and trainers. Managers monitor trainees' progress in relation to the professional standards meticulously and make appropriate and specific interventions if any trainees are making slower progress than expected. Trainees are consistent in their praise of the support they receive from trainers and its direct and discernable impact on their progress and achievements. Interventions include increasing quality assurance checks and challenging and supporting trainers, for example if they have a less secure understanding of what characterises an outstanding trainee. Expectations of trainees and trainers are very high.

11. Trainees receive very high quality training in general professional studies, in subject pedagogy, in relation to vocational education and setting mathematics education in a context relevant to students. The intensive initial training and subsequent revisiting of topics to reinforce key teaching and learning issues enables trainees to be better informed and prepared to get the most from their well chosen placements. Subject specific training is good overall. The excellent coherence between professional studies and subject training means that trainees have an excellent pedagogical understanding of their subject areas. However, opportunities are sometimes lost for professional debate to encourage trainees to reflect on current national issues around their subjects to develop wider knowledge and

understanding. In applied art and design for example, trainees are not fully familiar with national research and debate currently active in art education. Trainees accept their responsibilities to develop their own subject knowledge. The best subject tutors regularly monitor and support trainees' progress so that any gaps in subject knowledge are addressed and areas of strength can be developed even further. The focus for other subject tutors is on providing support to ensure that trainees can deliver the curriculum in their placement schools. They do this well.

12. Trainees consistently demonstrate a number of key strengths. In particular, they have very good awareness of the learning needs of their students and the importance of focusing their planning on how best to achieve the desired learning outcomes for all groups of students in their classes. Their planning illustrates their good understanding of national strategies, curriculum innovation and awareness of students' individual needs. They use a wide range of teaching and learning strategies and are increasingly effective in assessing students' learning to inform their planning for the next steps.

13. Provision across the partnership is consistently of outstanding quality. The training quality is greatly enhanced by partnership working with the local authority and the use of outstanding resources. There is increasing use of a wide range of educational partners from special schools, training schools, a college and the local authority's Beyond Expectations and Transformations team. Trainees therefore have ready access to staff expertise and develop their skills in appropriate environments. This creates real strengths in trainees' understanding of how to meet the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, how to promote economic well-being and how to ensure their students are appropriately challenged. The availability of The Workplace contributes to trainees' very good understanding of changes in 14-19 education.

14. The effective deployment of staffing resources has had a direct impact on quality assurance and, therefore, on training and assessment and trainee outcomes. Key factors have been the establishment of paired director roles and succession planning for subject specialist support. The high quality of the documentation has been repeatedly confirmed by school trainers and trainees. It ensures consistency across the partnership, guides the training process, encourages reflection and ensures all aspects of the professional standards are addressed. The deployment of resources is responsive, very well informed and fully transparent across the partnership. There is first class access to electronic materials and cutting edge technological innovations. SCITT based resources, such as portable interactive whiteboards, are available for trainees to use in schools. Access to such resources and the range of learning environments gives trainees' confidence. They use up-to-date teaching and learning strategies which give consideration to students' preferred learning styles and many are very adept users of ICT in the classroom.

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

15. The provider has outstanding capacity to build upon its existing high quality and so continue to increase the proportions of trainees whose progress and outcomes are outstanding.

16. The provider's evaluation of its performance in order to improve is outstanding. Internal and external moderation procedures are comprehensive and secure. The key strengths and recommendations for further development identified by the inspection are largely as the SCITT had already identified. These are widely understood across the partnership because there is open access to committees and working groups and the outcomes of their work are fully shared. Expertise is used very effectively to facilitate improvement. Innovative monitoring and moderation systems validate the impact of changes and developments. The culture of assessment, monitoring, evaluation and subsequent target setting permeates the partnership. It reflects an ethos of close cooperation, high levels of commitment and incisive evaluation that collectively promote improvement through quick, responsive and well chosen actions.

17. Actions and resources are very clearly prioritised but at the same time there is flexibility of resourcing to enable quick action as needed. Self-evaluation is very closely referenced to the analysis of trends in trainees' outcomes overall and within different strands of the Professional Standards. Excellent use is made of feedback from initial teacher training professionals, school leaders, providers, trainers and trainees to support the process and identify areas for further improvement. For example, the course directors are setting up systems to further develop improvement planning at subject level even though numbers are small. Furthermore, feedback from trainees in 2007/2008 showed that they felt less well prepared to support students whose first language was not English than they did to support other groups. This was immediately addressed in training for 2008/2009 and is being built on further for next year. Trainees report confidence in these aspects.

18. Improvement planning is outstanding in both quality and rigour. It is very coherent and consistently focussed on improving outcomes and provision identified by internal and external evaluation. Priorities are clear. Actions, including those that stem from the most recent monitoring, are mapped within these priorities. Such planning has ensured that all issues from the last inspection have been appropriately addressed and improvement evidenced in trainee outcomes. Trainees' standards have improved from satisfactory at the last inspection to being good or better now. In particular they have improved their emphasis on learning as well as teaching and have a much stronger understanding of assessment strategies. The improvement plan itself is very comprehensive and rigorously monitored; matching that seen in the very best practice.

19. Training and support provided for trainers is effective and increasingly personalised to meet needs in particular partnership schools. There is clear evidence

that SCITT training and liaison with partners has ensured that the rationale for change and the acceptance of new responsibilities at every level are owned and understood. School staff rightly celebrate how improvements to their training, impact on the quality of provision and trainees' outcomes. Like the directors, they are becoming more critically reflective, recognising quickly when the support and challenge they provide to trainees does not reflect the very highest standards expected.

20. Leaders and managers are well informed, consistently look ahead and anticipate key changes. Changes made are rapid and beneficial. The SCITT is preparing for further changes such as a migration of its courses to reflect preparation for new diploma courses. For example, the new mathematics course for 2008/2009 was planned well by local specialists from the partnership schools and the local authority in response to local recruitment issues whilst retaining high expectations of recruiting trainees with the potential to succeed. Trainees on this course make equally good progress. However the SCITT managers through feedback, are already aware of how to improve this course further.

21. The SCITT itself was created as a result of innovative thinking by the lead school to improve results at Key Stage 4 and to anticipate the changes to 14-19 provision. Subsequently there has been innovative and proactive action by the local authority to support the SCITT in meeting its aims. Currently leaders are contributing to change at a national level and have been involved in Training and Development Agency initiatives to further enhance local provision. This level of strategic awareness and engagement with national initiatives and agencies is particularly impressive.

22. Leaders and managers model best practice in every aspect of their work, particularly in respect to being critically reflective practitioners. It is their outstanding dedication, commitment and professionalism that have rapidly improved the quality of provision over a short period of time. Close contacts across the partnership have helped to secure quality assurance systems and create the feel of a family of schools, partners and trainers within the local authority. Consequently the local authority shows continued support and commitment to the SCITT because it achieves successful outcomes, delivers its objectives and provides value for money.

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?		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?	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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