

# The Wakefield Partnership for Initial Teacher Training

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Inspection Dates 10–13 June 2013

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This inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty’s Inspectors in accordance with the *ITE Inspection Handbook*. This handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from January 2013.

The inspection draws upon evidence from within the ITE partnership to make judgements against all parts of the evaluation schedule. Inspectors focused on the overall effectiveness of the ITE partnership in securing high-quality outcomes for trainees.

## Inspection judgements

*Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is requires improvement; grade 4 is inadequate*

	<b>Employment -based routes</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b> How well does the partnership secure consistently high quality outcomes for trainees?	<b>1</b>
The outcomes for trainees	1
The quality of training across the partnership	1
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	1

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## **The employment-based route**

### **Information about this ITE partnership**

1. This employment-based initial teacher training partnership is coordinated by Wakefield local authority's school improvement and transformation service. It works primarily to serve the training and teacher recruitment needs of primary and secondary schools within the Wakefield district, although it has drawn in some schools from outside the area. Currently, 12 secondary and 26 primary schools provide first or second placements for the trainees.
2. At the time of this inspection 17 trainees, including three who are self-funded, were following a full-time secondary graduate teacher programme. There were 24 trainees in the primary phase, more than treble that at the time of the last inspection. Training for the secondary phase is currently offered in mathematics, English, science, modern languages, design and technology, geography, history and music.

### **Information about the employment-based ITE inspection**

3. In the secondary phase, inspectors observed six lessons taught by trainees and one by a newly qualified teacher (NQT) in four schools. They observed five lessons taught by trainees in five schools in the primary phase. All of these observations were undertaken jointly with mentors or partnership consultants.
4. Inspectors also held discussions with: individual trainees, NQTs and former trainees working in partnership schools; partnership consultants; leaders, managers and headteachers; and school-based staff including mentors, subject specialists and graduate teacher programme leaders.
5. Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentary evidence including information related to recruitment and selection, statutory compliance with the initial teacher training criteria, tracking and assessment, trainees' teaching evidence and assignments, analysis of outcomes for trainees, evaluations and improvement plans, external moderator reports, surveys of the views of trainees and NQTs, and the university's virtual learning environment website.

### **Inspection team**

Ian Hodgkinson HMI: lead inspector  
Angela Milner HMI: assistant lead inspector  
Trevor Riddiough HMI: team inspector

## **Overall Effectiveness**

**Grade: 1**

### **The key strengths of the employment-based partnership are:**

- The outstanding commitment of all members of the partnership to its aim of producing high quality teachers and school leaders of the future, reflected in the high degree of collaboration between schools and the local authority who continually refine and improve the programme.
- The exceptionally high completion rates and attainment of trainees, which lead to their consistently very high rates of employment as successful teachers.
- Trainees who have high expectations of themselves and their pupils, plan activities which meet precisely the learning needs of pupils, including those who have disabilities or special educational needs, and who continually reflect about ways of improving their own performance.
- Exceptionally thorough arrangements to assure the quality of all aspects of provision, and to ensure that the assessment of trainees is accurate and consistent across the partnership.
- The very strong focus on the development of trainees' subject knowledge and skills, which ensures that they are very confident and well prepared to teach at a consistently good or better standard.
- A recruitment and selection process which comprehensively tests the skills and readiness of applicants to join the programme, and which ensures the selection of trainees of a high calibre.
- Strong support for the role of school-based trainers and school programme leaders, and systems which ensure rapid interventions where placements are not securing sufficient progress for trainees.
- Meaningful, high-quality second- and cross-phase placements which significantly develop the skills and experience of trainees.
- A very effective programme of central training, which ensures that trainees are particularly well-equipped with skills of classroom- and behaviour-management.
- Excellent leadership of the partnership, which is highly responsive to the views of trainees and partner institutions and ensures that the partnership adapts quickly to national changes in ITE.

## **What does the employment-based partnership need to do to improve further?**

### **The partnership should:**

- Extend opportunities for trainees to apply their training in managing aspects of cultural diversity and teaching students for whom English is an additional language, through more practical experiences in schools.
- Further develop systems for using performance data to evaluate all aspects of partnership performance and to assess the impact of the partnership on schools and the local authority.

## **Inspection Judgements**

### **The outcomes for trainees are outstanding**

6. The exceptionally high rates of employment of trainees who join the programme are testament both to the selection of highly committed prospective teachers, and to their very high attainment against the Teachers' Standards. The partnership has an excellent reputation locally for producing high quality teachers, and is attracting enquiries from schools well beyond the district. Since the last inspection, the proportion of trainees successfully completing their training has been very high. The proportions judged to be good and outstanding have also remained very high. There is little significant difference in attainment between groups over time.
7. Trainees have very high expectations, both of their own performance and that of their pupils. Although their own attainment on joining the programme, measured by degree classification, overall is below the national average, they make rapid progress in the development of their pure subject knowledge and in ways of teaching subjects that engage students and enliven learning. This is the case for both primary and secondary trainees. The development of their subject knowledge is reviewed continually through the training, and trainees thoroughly research and prepare well in advance to deliver aspects of subjects to their classes. This enables them to plan exciting lessons, supported by well-designed resources. It also provides the trainees with exceptional confidence, so that they are able to depart from planned activities whenever they judge that a lesson requires a change of pace or emphasis.
8. Trainees have a sophisticated understanding of the assessment and tracking of pupils' achievement. They use this to refine their planning to accelerate pupils' progress and meet precisely the needs of individual

pupils, so that expectations are high for all, including the more-able. Trainees are adept at planning sequences of lessons aimed at developing the skills of all pupils. They have an acute awareness of the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in their classes, and adapt teaching plans and learning resources very well to meet these. Trainees generally deploy teaching assistants and other adults effectively to support the learning of specific groups. While trainees have an awareness that they also need to plan to meet the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language, the practical experiences of delivering lessons with such children are limited for some.

9. All of the 29 trainees who responded to the ITE trainees' survey agreed with the statement that: 'I know how to promote good behaviour through my teaching and implement a range of behaviour management strategies.' Indeed, 83% strongly agreed with this statement. This strongly-held view is substantiated by inspection evidence, which showed that in all of the lessons observed by inspectors, pupils' behaviour was good or better. Behaviour is very well managed by trainees who are quietly assertive in insisting that students stay focused on learning and who deploy a range of strategies to keep students engaged.
10. In most cases, trainees settle seamlessly into their lead schools and quickly become part of the teaching team. Trainees are expected to be full members of their phase and subject teams and play a full part in sharing and developing good practice. In a number of cases, trainees use their specific expertise, sometimes developed from earlier professional roles, to play a leading role in the development of school initiatives, for example the development of a secondary literacy programme. Trainees willingly take on wider professional responsibilities, for example in running school clubs or sports teams, and engaging with parents. As a result, by the end of their training trainees have exceptionally well-developed professional attributes. They are highly reflective practitioners, continually seeking to refine and develop their own practice and play an influential role in the developments in their school. This prepares them well for future leadership, and inspectors met many former trainees who were not only effective teachers, but who had accelerated rapidly to middle leadership roles in their schools.

### **The quality of training across the partnership is outstanding**

11. The training programme is designed to equip trainees with well-developed knowledge, understanding and skills and to offer them rich opportunities to develop and apply these through high-quality placements. Its success is confirmed by the excellent outcomes for trainees and the strong endorsement it receives from trainees

themselves. Trainees who responded to the ITE survey unanimously agreed that they had been effectively trained by trainers and mentors. Similarly all of the 15 NQTs who responded to the Teaching Agency's NQT questionnaire agreed that the quality of training was good or better.

12. The new approach of 'front loading' centre-based training, whereby trainees spend most of their time in the first two weeks of term following courses in the partnership training base at the Chesney's Centre, appears to have been successful. It ensures that trainees are given detailed and high-quality training in key areas such as behaviour management, child protection, special educational needs, literacy, numeracy and planning before taking classroom responsibilities in school. It also allows trainees more time in school towards the end of their programme to complete essential items of practice and ensure their portfolios are ready for assessment. Trainees praise the quality of centre-based training, which is delivered by specialist skills teachers and expert practitioners within the partnership.
13. Behaviour management is a strong feature of centre-based training, and is widely praised by trainees for giving them a suite of strategies from which they select very effectively to suit different scenarios. Trainees value the support they receive from colleagues in school in managing the behaviour of their pupils. Similarly, provision to develop trainees' capabilities in teaching disabled students and those with special educational needs is a strong feature from the start, where centre-based training is supported by a key assignment supported by online materials. The involvement of special schools in the partnership has enhanced trainees' opportunities to gain practical experience in this field. Trainees' assignment work generally has a strong practical focus linked to the teaching standards and national training priorities. Portfolios are substantial and very well organised, with helpful tracking documents to demonstrate progress.
14. Trainees are very well-equipped to teach literacy with confidence and competence in primary and secondary phases. In the primary phase, this is because of the very effective phonics training delivered by local authority staff and the opportunities provided to teach phonics on a regular basis in schools. In addition, as part of their training, every trainee visits a partner school where they have the opportunity to observe best practice. Trainees use a very well designed phonics evaluation sheet to record the impact of teaching phonics on pupils' learning and progress and then have the opportunity to discuss strategies used with skilled teachers of phonics. Trainees are very complimentary about the training in phonics they receive. As a result of this high-quality training, trainees' pupils make at least good progress in their reading and develop useful writing and spelling strategies. For

example, in one lesson, delivered by a trainee to children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children were encouraged to write words containing 'ee' and 'ai' sounds and then construct sentences using these words and some 'tricky words' they had previously learned. Reception children wrote accurate and well-punctuated sentences. They were highly motivated by an animated character, 'Pirate Pete', to search for clues and write lists of words containing these newly learned sounds. Children were encouraged to read out their lists and made effective use of their phonics knowledge to tackle unfamiliar words well.

15. The training in primary mathematics is excellent. Trainers are knowledgeable, have recent first-hand experience of teaching in schools, and model good practice in their sessions. They encourage trainees to reflect on their practice and make appropriate use of relevant reading and research. There is a good focus on developing trainee's conceptual understanding of mathematics. This enhances trainees' subject knowledge and enables them to promote using and applying mathematics and problem solving in their teaching. All trainees speak positively about the quality of central training and the opportunities to learn more about mathematics through training organised in local schools. Training has a good focus on making mathematics enjoyable and practical. Trainees accurately assess how well pupils are learning in mathematics. They carefully identify any misconceptions and plan realistic and engaging activities to help pupils move on in their learning.
16. School-based training very coherently links with centre-based provision, as a result of the excellent communications across the partnership. Meetings of school-based trainers (class/subject mentors) and graduate teacher programme leaders (professional mentors) with centre-based programme leaders are regular and well-attended; they ensure that all schools understand how to follow up centre-based training in schools and how to shape additional training around central provision. The quality of mentoring across the partnership is consistently high. Such consistency is secured by a frequent and high level of interaction between school-based trainers, graduate teacher programme leaders, subject specialists, external consultants, and centre-based course leaders. Through joint lesson observations and feedback to trainees with these other experts, school-based trainers quickly hone their skills, develop accuracy in their assessments, and set short-, medium- and long-term targets for improvement which underpin the rapid progress trainees make.
17. Second-school placements, of standard five-week duration, are long enough to allow the trainee to settle and gain meaningful experiences of teaching in a different context to their lead school. Second schools are managed by partnership leaders who endeavour to ensure that, in most cases, these placements significantly broaden the trainees' teaching



experience. Trainees' knowledge and understanding is also significantly enhanced by a short cross-phase placement, which enables them to look in detail at aspects of the phases of education prior or subsequent to those which they are being trained to teach. Not all secondary trainees, however, have opportunities to experience teaching in a sixth form. The programme overall offers some trainees too few experiences of cultural diversity in schools and of teaching pupils for whom English is an additional language.

18. Provision to develop trainees' subject knowledge is exceptionally strong. Trainees' initial needs analysis features an audit of subject knowledge, and the trainees' development of subject knowledge is regularly and rigorously appraised against clear criteria throughout the programme. On the secondary programme, trainees receive visits throughout the year from subject specialists in the partnership school specifically to assess the development of their subject knowledge. Subject knowledge audits are updated throughout the course, and targets for improvement are set which ensure that trainees are well-prepared to teach the schemes of work for the term ahead. Where possible, teaching programmes are designed specifically to allow trainees to develop in areas of weakness. Trainees receive significant support in accessing resources which help to develop their subject knowledge and pedagogy. Trainees share information electronically, make use of the virtual learning environment, and are encouraged to draw down information from specialist associations and organisations. In science, for example, trainees utilise the National STEM (Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics) Centre in York to supplement their own resources, together with the national subject institutes, national subject associations and educational websites to update their knowledge and look at different ways of introducing and teaching scientific concepts. As a result, by the end of the course, there are no subject knowledge gaps remaining.
19. Trainees' preparation to teach science was a particular focus on this inspection as part of an annual thematic survey. The quality of science training is outstanding. Outcomes in science are outstanding and have improved since the last inspection. The highly productive relationships between the external consultant, the school-based trainer, the subject mentor and the trainee is at the heart of what makes this partnership so successful. Science subject development is delivered by the school-based trainers complemented by input from a subject mentor from another school. Science subject mentors carry out regular observations to accurately assess trainees' progress towards meeting the teachers' standards in addition to those carried out by the school-based trainer. Subject-specific developmental targets are logged alongside generic teaching targets. Scientific enquiry is regularly used as the basis for teaching students about how science works, to make predictions and

test out ideas. Pupils are well versed in how to introduce variables and how to test fairly. The culmination of good science training was seen when a science trainee was observed. She demonstrated good subject knowledge of food chains and energy transfer within a food chain. She involved the students in a variety of activities to exemplify this, including news clips, card sorts, class discussion, questioning, practical challenges, demonstrations, and peer- and self-assessment. These enhanced Year 8 students' understanding of the subject and contributed greatly to their interest, enjoyment and engagement.

### **The quality of leadership and management across the partnership is outstanding**

20. The partnership features a very high degree of collaboration between Wakefield local authority and partner schools around the very clear vision of ensuring that local schools can recruit high quality teachers and potential future leaders. Partners are highly committed to this vision, and devote significant time and resources to ensuring that training meets exacting quality standards. Expectations on schools and key staff are set out with exceptional clarity in key documentation, including the partnership agreement and handbook.
21. Excellent recruitment procedures ensure that only candidates of the highest calibre, and those most committed to a future in teaching, are selected for the programme. Candidates are observed teaching pupils, and the pupils' detailed feedback is set alongside information from a thorough interview and written skills tests before selection is made. Schools and partnership leaders collaborate closely in the recruitment and selection process. Recruitment of trainees from minority ethnic groups has been lower than sector averages over time. This reflects the ethnic composition of the local community from where most trainees are recruited, but indicates a need to understand why candidates from minority groups are less successful in getting through the recruitment process and onto the programme.
22. Quality assurance of the programme is outstanding. It is coordinated by the partnership strategic leader, partnership manager, and three specialist skills teachers seconded from their schools to work for the partnership for a day a week. It ensures a high degree of consistency of provision across all placements, and is directly linked to the very low rate of non-completion among trainees over time. Consultants, who are educators with a senior background in schools and initial teacher education, act as external monitors of placement quality and of trainees' progress. Consultants use this monitoring information to act as advocates and external mentors for the trainees, so that in the rare cases where, for any reason, a placement does not prove suitable, rapid

intervention is triggered. This may, in exceptional cases, lead to trainees moving swiftly to a new placement within the partnership. Case studies show that trainees' progress often accelerates rapidly following such interventions.

23. Consultants work with school-based trainers and graduate teacher programme leaders to establish consistency in the quality of monitoring and feedback to trainees. Assessments of trainees' performance are very accurate. They are moderated comprehensively by a team of external moderators, led by a Lead Moderator who reports regularly and accurately on the overall quality of the programme, and who conducts detailed reviews of aspects of the programme and areas for development.
24. Development planning is sharply focused on key priorities identified through the rigorous quality assurance and moderation processes, and through extensive engagement with schools, trainees and other stakeholders. Communications across the partnership are excellent, and the responsiveness of the central administration is widely and highly praised. The views of all partners are sought through regular surveys, meetings, and a governing board comprised of representatives of all groups, except NQTs. These views inform the partnership's self-evaluation, and ensure that aspects of provision are continually refined and improved. Partnership leaders have, however, not drawn enough on data on outcomes for trainees to ensure that this self-evaluation is sharply supported by evidence. Leaders also recognise that data which demonstrates the impact of the training on the quality of teaching in local schools would also be helpful in informing the future direction of the partnership.
25. The significant transition from an employment-based provider to a school-centred initial teacher training organisation has been very well led and managed to keep partners well-informed and keen to move forward together. This demonstrates the partnership's strong strategic leadership and excellent capacity to improve further. The partnership is fully compliant with the criteria for ITE.

## **Annex: Partnership schools**

The following schools were visited to observe teaching:

Highfield School

Stanley St Peters Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Ossett Academy and Sixth Form College

The King's School Specialising in Mathematics and Computing

St Giles CofE (VA) J&I Pontefract

The Vale Primary Academy

Normanton Altofts Junior School  
Minsthorpe Community College, A Specialist Science College  
Ackworth Mill Dam Junior and Infant School

## ITE partnership details

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<b>Lead inspector</b>	Ian Hodgkinson HMI
<b>Type of ITE partnership</b>	Employment-based initial teacher training (EBITT)
<b>Phases provided</b>	Primary and secondary
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8–12 June 2009
<b>Previous inspection report</b>	<a href="http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/70188">http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/70188</a>
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