

# Havering Teacher Training Partnership

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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**Inspection dates**

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**Lead inspector**

David Hornbrook

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## Introduction

1. This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector 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. Havering Teacher Training Partnership (HTTP) is based in the London Borough of Havering and was established in 2001 to meet the demand for good quality secondary teachers in the local authority. All but two of Havering's secondary schools now participate.
4. HTTP provides a one year, secondary graduate teacher training course at Key Stages 3 and 4. Subjects offered are: mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), modern foreign languages, religious education, design and technology, English, geography, history, art, drama, music and physical education. At the time of the inspection there were 33 trainees on the course.

## Provision in the secondary phase

### Key strengths

5. The key strengths are:
- the robust selection procedures which lead to the recruitment of high quality trainees well-suited to a graduate training programme
  - the good response to local and regional demands which results in a large majority of trainees securing employment in local schools
  - the thorough audit of trainees' prior experience and its subsequent monitoring which enable training to respond effectively to trainees' individual needs so that they make outstanding progress
  - the strong, effective leadership given by the headteachers' strategic group which inspires rigour across the partnership
  - the very effective overall leadership and management of the partnership which give a principled focus to the training and encourage continuous improvement
  - the very thorough internal and external moderation procedures that ensure consistency of judgements and practice across the partnership
  - the very good use made of experienced external quality assurance consultants to identify areas of provision in need of attention.

### Recommendations

6. In order to raise attainment further at the higher levels the partnership should:
- extend the practical application of the trainees' knowledge of equal opportunities so that all are prepared fully for teaching in a culturally diverse society
  - strengthen the links between subject leaders and mentors and between subject training and the central programme to improve even further the consistency of the training overall.

### Overall effectiveness

**Grade: 1**

7. Trainees' attainment by the end of the programme was good overall in 2008 with a significant number gaining outstanding grades. The provider's detailed progress records, confirmed by inspection evidence, indicate that the current cohort is likely to achieve better results in 2009. Trainees are conscientious and impressively professional in their attitudes and they have high expectations of pupils. They have very well developed skills of classroom management and are highly

proficient in handling behaviour. Trainees are well-motivated and happy to take responsibility for their progress and professional development. They reflect thoughtfully on their school experience, listen carefully to advice and are keen to improve. Trainees make outstanding progress from when they begin the course, in large measure because the auditing and development of subject knowledge have an impressive impact on their confidence in teaching their subjects. Those who do not have degrees in their school subjects take full advantage of the extra subject booster training organised by the partnership. Partnership headteachers speak extremely highly of the quality of the trainees, most of whom gain employment within the local authority and many of whom subsequently move on to senior posts in Havering schools.

8. The partnership takes great care over the recruitment and selection of candidates with the potential to be good or better teachers and who they believe will flourish as graduate trainees based in schools. HTTP has a growing local reputation and is increasingly successful in attracting suitably qualified candidates in a wide range of secondary subjects. The demands placed on the partnership by the need to provide suitable trainees in areas of local shortage, such as English, offer challenges to which it rises with comprehensive, targeted support. The proportion of minority ethnic trainees recruited fluctuates considerably, although taken over a number of years recruitment from these groups is similar to the national average.

9. The selection process is extremely rigorous and is conducted within a framework that ensures equality and consistency. Detailed information is required from candidates about qualifications and prior experience before they attend interviews with a professional tutor and members of the senior management team. They are then interviewed by the appropriate subject leader. The information gained through this comprehensive process, which includes a writing test, is fully recorded against criteria and used not only to select suitable candidates but also to inform training. It also provides a baseline against which trainees' progress in each of the QTS Standards can be measured at a number of key assessment points during the course. An impressive feature of the selection process is its flexibility with additional, targeted tasks set for candidates who are judged to be on the borderline of suitability.

10. Thorough audits of trainees' skills and subject knowledge take place very early in the course, enabling training to focus extremely accurately on their individual needs. The subsequent tracking of trainees' progress is excellent. Trainees' progress files show how all the components of a robust tracking process, such as the trainees' journey towards the Standards, the development of subject knowledge and the various monitoring meetings, are conscientiously followed through and recorded. Trainees are offered a wide degree of flexibility within a secure framework. As a result, they make outstanding progress given their ability and starting points.

11. The central training programme provides very good coverage of key topics, such as assessment and behaviour management, and national priorities, such as 14 to 19 developments, and is well supplemented by programmes offered by professional tutors in schools. Trainees' subject knowledge development is supported by their subject mentors in schools and by partnership subject leaders who conduct

joint observations with mentors and run subject-focused training sessions. These four elements of training cohere well, although subject leaders and mentors do not always fully exploit how topics introduced in the central training programme or by professional tutors might be developed within their subjects.

12. The assessment process is very thorough. Very regular lesson observations provide detailed and graded evaluations of trainees' teaching against the Standards. Feedback to trainees on their lessons is perceptive, detailed and objective, although observation records suggest that more attention could be paid to the extent to which a few trainees use assessment to raise pupils' achievement. The quality of trainees' records of performance against the Standards is very high, with very clear justifications. Standards are written into the generic training plan for all trainees and lessons observed are always referenced to them.

13. As well as receiving continuous feedback on their teaching and subject knowledge development, trainees are graded at a number of points in the course and have two key review meetings with members of the senior management team. Arrangements for moderation are impressively comprehensive. There are regular joint observations involving subject mentors, subject leaders and professional tutors, assignments are all double marked and all trainees are interviewed and observed teaching by external verifiers before the final assessment.

14. The organisation of trainees' experience on both placements is good and much work has been done by HTTP to ease the transition between placements. The partnership's devolved staffing structure is highly effective. The development of the subject leader role is a particularly strong feature. Very good use is made of consultants, particularly for moderation and quality assurance, and of local authority expertise in the central training programme to help accelerate the trainees' learning. Every trainee is allocated a lap top with a range of suitable software and a core text book. Although there is a website and a library facility at the partnership's lead school, trainees say they make little use of them because everything they need is provided in their own schools. Nevertheless, while communications between schools are good, managers and trainers recognise that a virtual learning environment would help trainees and trainers keep in touch, enable them to share information and ideas and help the development of subject support.

15. As a result of the high standard of training and the strong sense of community engendered by HTTP, the former trainees of which are now themselves often mentors and subject leaders, the provision across the partnership is of very high quality. There is an effective schools' liaison manager who visits schools to support trainers and encourage consistency, a regular partnership newsletter and frequent meetings between groups of trainers. Documentation is of a high quality and trainers and trainees say that when problems arise, the response is rapid and effective.

16. There are central training sessions on inclusion and the teaching of English as an additional language and equal opportunities matters are followed up by professional tutors in schools. Equality issues are a fixed agenda item at the headteachers' strategic group meetings and past and present trainees say they cannot recall any issues of racial discrimination within the partnership. However,

while it is true that the demography of Havering is changing, it is still quite difficult for the partnership to provide enough opportunities for all trainees to get sufficient practical classroom experience in multicultural settings to ensure they are all prepared fully for teaching in a culturally diverse society. Trainees say they are highly valued as individuals and appreciate the way the course is able to adapt to their individual needs. Struggling trainees are given all possible support and, where practicable, any trainee who feels unable to complete the course is offered deferment. Despite this, retention over the past three years is lower than average.

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

17. There are numerous examples of how exposure to the partnership's own rigorous monitoring and evaluation has led to improved outcomes for trainees. Trainees' end of course evaluations are very positive. In 2008, 92% gave the provision the highest possible grade with particular praise awarded to subject mentors. Trainees interviewed during the inspection were overwhelmingly positive. Past trainees cited a number of examples of action being taken as a result of trainees' evaluations, such as the greater emphasis now placed on individual training plans and the introduction of joint observations by subject mentors and subject leaders. The quality of mentoring and the monitoring of trainees' progress were areas particularly highly rated by external verifiers.

18. The partnership accurately and comprehensively reviews its own practice. There are rigorous and effective formal self-evaluation systems and processes and a regular programme of updating and revision. Central to the success of this process are the high quality reports produced by the independent quality assurance team contracted by the local authority. Each year, having negotiated a focus with the senior managers of HTTP, the two experienced consultants on this team conduct a series of visits to sample training and to assess its impact on trainees' progress. They observe teaching, meet trainees and trainers and scrutinise paperwork. Recommended improvements are then taken forward by the management team into the development plan and may lead to further, targeted quality assurance visits. Other evaluations of the work of the partnership are equally thorough. They include feedback from external verifiers, course evaluations by trainees and professional tutors and feedback from the schools liaison manager.

19. Partnership headteachers take responsibility for establishing the strategic direction, reviewing policy and ensuring that HTTP is meeting the needs of schools. The headteachers' strategic group is a highly effective governing body with very good attendance. The involvement of all partnership school headteachers on the group and the interest they share in training the best possible teachers for Havering mean that the partnership is highly responsive to local needs. The local authority believes that the recent discontinuation of the annual teachers' recruitment fair was because headteachers were content with HTTP as the primary source of high quality new staff. One headteacher was clear that it was the injection of highly motivated graduate teachers from HTTP that helped pull her school out of an Ofsted category of concern. The partnership is also responsive to national and regional initiatives.

Trainees are fully conversant with Every Child Matters, for example, and the implications of the Rose review for secondary teachers are covered in the central training programme.

20. Leadership at all levels anticipates change extremely well. The reflective approach and commitment to high standards exhibited by the management team, all four of whom hold or have held senior posts in partnership schools, give a principled focus to the training; this is reflected in the good, professional attitudes of trainees. The members of the team, who have been in post since the inception of the partnership, know each other well and work together very effectively. This is a significant strength, lying behind the impressive progress made by HTTP since 2003 and contributing to the strong sense of community commented on by trainees. The partnership is aware of the need to think carefully now about arrangements for succession planning.

21. Development planning is of high quality and focuses on priorities that have been identified as the result of rigorous evaluation and monitoring. As part of this process, for example, selection is kept continuously under review and changes are made following the scrutiny of the records of trainees who leave the course early. This thorough process has contributed to a significant rise in retention in 2008/09. Senior managers consider the outcomes of evaluation and monitoring on an annual basis and use them to update the three year plan. Although the plan is a clearly laid out, practical document, the connection is not always made between evaluations, action and impact and occasionally issues brought up in evaluation, such as concerns about trainees' experience of ICT in their subjects, are missed. The provider's self evaluation document also draws upon the numerous quality assurance processes embedded in the structure of the provision and is largely accurate in its identification of strengths and weaknesses. From autumn 2009, these parallel processes will be brought together.

## Summary of inspection grades<sup>1</sup>

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

### Overall effectiveness

		Employment-based routes
<b>How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?</b>		<b>1</b>
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?	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

		Employment-based routes
<b>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?</b>		<b>1</b>
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

<sup>1</sup> 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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