

# North East Partnership

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Inspection Dates 11–14 November 2013

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This inspection was carried out by 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*

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

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## **The secondary phase**

### **Information about the secondary partnership**

- The North East Partnership provides a school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) programme for graduates. Trainees who successfully complete the programme are recommended for qualified teacher status (QTS) and gain either a professional or postgraduate certificate in education.
- The partnership consists of 29 secondary schools in eight local authorities in the North East. The lead school is Ashington High Sports College and the managing agent for the SCITT is the University of Northumbria. At the time of the inspection there were 30 trainees on an 11 to 16 physical education (PE) training programme.

### **Information about the secondary ITE inspection**

- Inspectors observed seven lessons taught by trainees and five by newly qualified teachers (NQTs). They also met with trainee programme representatives and six former trainees. Inspectors took into account responses to the trainee online questionnaire which almost all trainees had recently completed.
- Inspectors held discussions with: individual and groups of trainees and NQTs; leaders and managers; professional and school-based tutors; headteachers; and members of the SCITT Management Committee.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentary evidence including information on recruitment and selection, statutory safeguarding and compliance with the initial teacher training (ITT) criteria, tracking and assessment, trainees' teaching evidence, analysis of outcomes for trainees, evaluations and improvement plans, external examiner reports and the partnership's and lead school's websites.

### **Inspection Team**

Angela Milner HMI Lead inspector  
Susan Wareing HMI Assistant lead inspector

## **Overall Effectiveness**

**Grade: 1**

### **The key strengths of the secondary partnership are:**

- The consistently high outcomes for trainees including their high levels of attainment and exceptional completion and employment rates over time.
- The rigorous recruitment and selection of high calibre trainees with strong pre-entry qualifications, good prior experience and a passion for sport and PE.
- The professional and reflective trainees who aspire to become good or better teachers and respond readily to advice to improve their teaching and students' learning.
- The high expectations and commitment of the close-knit partnership of good and outstanding PE departments, schools and the university which delivers consistently high-quality individualised training.
- The effective blend of trainers' expertise, honest and helpful feedback and precise developmental targets which nurtures trainees' rapid development and enables them to become good or outstanding teachers by the end of their training.
- Exceptional support from programme leaders, effective communications and high-quality documentation which enables trainees to take responsibility for their own professional development.
- Rigorous quality assurance procedures which underpin the partnership's consistency of approach and the accuracy of assessment judgements.

### **What does the secondary partnership need to do to improve further?**

#### **The partnership should:**

- Increase the proportion of trainees whose teaching is outstanding.
- Enhance the engagement of partnership schools in steering the strategic direction of this high quality partnership.

## Inspection Judgements

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

1. Trainees have an excellent understanding of the Teachers' Standards, are eager to learn and ambitious to become good or outstanding teachers. They respond readily to well-targeted advice to improve their teaching and students' learning. As a result all trainees exceed the minimum level of practice for their teaching and demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. Trainees willingly take on wider professional responsibilities in schools, including acting as form tutors and for running sports-related clubs.
2. The proportions of trainees judged to be good and outstanding by the end of their training have remained high since the last inspection. This is because of the partnership's rigorous expectations, consistently outstanding training, exceptional support from programme leaders, effective communications and excellent documentation, which enable trainees to take responsibility for their own professional development. Trainees are extremely professional and highly-reflective. They seek to refine and develop their own teaching and enhance their knowledge and skills through the acquisition of additional coaching qualifications before and during their training.
3. Although good or better attainment rates have been high for the last four years, the proportion of trainees reaching outstanding levels of attainment has remained relatively static over time. The partnership's current improvement plan includes a realistic target for the proportion of outstanding attainment to be achieved by this cohort at the end of this academic year. Guidance on 'Challenging the more-able trainee' is being used well to ensure trainees excel in their teaching.
4. In schools, trainees quickly become an integral part of departmental teaching teams and adopt the high expectations of the partnership. They are well organised, familiar with health and safety routines and able to establish positive relationships with staff and students. Trainees are confident in their practical teaching and make effective use of a range of appropriate behaviour strategies. They draw on their in-depth subject knowledge and their understanding of teaching and learning to plan well-structured lessons, which engage students and ensure they generally make good progress in their learning. This includes those with disabilities or who have special educational needs, or who are gifted and talented in PE.
5. Trainees instil in their students the key concepts of competition, fitness and participation, as well as wider skills such as evaluation and analysis

of their own and others' performance by making good use of well-designed resources, such as tablet computers. They make frequent and varied checks on learning, including good observational and questioning strategies and provide opportunities for students to take on specific sporting roles and responsibilities as trainers, coaches and managers.

6. At this stage of their training some trainees' practical skills are inevitably less well developed. Although trainees have a good knowledge and understanding of their students' individual learning needs and the principles of how to cater for them, their actions are not yet sophisticated enough to always fully meet them. Discussions with headteachers confirmed that trainees are very well-prepared with the skills they need and contribute well to raising standards in schools. The NQTs observed during the inspection were teaching consistently good and often outstanding lessons.
7. The proportion of trainees who complete their training and gain QTS is exceptionally high and there are no significant differences between the outcomes of different groups of trainees over time. The exceptionally high completion and employment rates reflect the rigorous selection process of trainees who are driven to achieve their potential and high levels of attainment against the Teachers' Standards. The partnership has a strong reputation locally. Most trainees gain employment within partnership schools or within the region and approximately one fifth of trainees gain first posts in neighbouring regions. Employers indicate high levels of satisfaction with NQTs. Many NQTs gain responsibility and leadership posts early in their careers and remain members of the SCITT partnership through their roles as school-based trainers and link tutors.

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

8. The quality of training is outstanding and results in trainees' high levels of attainment. The training is very carefully planned and structured. It provides excellent continuity and cohesion in a seamless approach covering subject specific issues and how general educational issues relate to subject training. A shared understanding of approaches and procedures ensures a remarkable degree of consistency and high-quality training across schools within the partnership.
9. Trainees indicated that all elements of the training complement each other very well and are used flexibly to meet their needs. They were particularly effusive about the range of enhancement courses they were able to access to boost their knowledge, understanding and skills, and the induction and preparation they received for their first placement. The combination of well-planned induction, Tuesday training sessions at the university, Friday training sessions in the lead and other schools, and

a two-day serial attachment in the school in which they are based for their first placement helps them 'hit the ground running' and cope with the demands of a 60% teaching timetable. NQTs express very high-levels of satisfaction with their training and indicate how well they are prepared with the knowledge, practical and evaluative skills to teach effectively by the end of their training.

10. The quality of the training reflects the strengths of the partnership and how the expertise of schools, departments and trainers is skilfully deployed. Trainees benefit enormously from this expertise and gain practical experience of teaching in 13 different schools. The two main school placements are complementary and give trainees a very good breadth of experience of different types of students, effective approaches to teaching PE theory as well as practical lessons and provide a valuable post-16 experience. Trainees' timetables are carefully constructed to provide teaching experiences across the whole age and ability range from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 5.
11. The high expectations and commitment of this close-knit partnership of good and outstanding PE departments, schools and the university, delivers consistently high-quality individualised training. School-based trainers use their accurate understanding of trainees' needs to shape the school-based programme, fill gaps in age and ability range, and extend their learning. Effective assignments enable trainees to reflect on their observations, draw on research and apply what they have learned to their teaching. For example, trainees are involved in classroom research to assess the impact of tablet technology on evaluating learning in PE.
12. The effective blend of trainers' expertise, honest and helpful feedback and precise developmental targets nurtures trainees' rapid development right from the start of their training and enables them to become good or outstanding teachers by the end of their training. The development of trainees' subject knowledge is regularly checked through lesson observations, weekly tutorials and discussions of evidence in their well-maintained files and records of professional development. Stringent reviews of trainees' planning, lesson observations and progress in relation to targets at weekly tutorials provide extremely effective challenge and support.
13. Inspectors judged the assessment of trainees by the partnership to be extremely accurate. School-based colleagues reported that the remarkable level of consistency, observed by inspectors, had been achieved because of the high quality training they receive and the joint observations they undertake with link tutors and the programme leader. Very effective systems are in place to ensure the final assessment against the Teachers' Standards is accurate.

14. Trainees are very well prepared for managing students' behaviour and understand how to tackle bullying. They stated that they felt confident in applying behaviour-management strategies and demonstrated in their teaching that the best form of behaviour management is engaging all students in purposeful learning. Training in teaching disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is very good and ensures that all trainees understand the importance of adapting their teaching to meet the needs of different students.
15. Excellent practical experience in a special school and a school where many students speak English as an additional language ensures trainees have sufficient experience in working with the full range of pupils they are likely to encounter in their future careers. Effective introductory training, supported strongly by work in schools, ensures trainees know how to promote the development of students' literacy and communication skills in their planning and teaching, and make appropriate links to students' mathematical skills during PE sessions.
16. The training prepares trainees from the point of interview, through tasks, assignments and professional studies lectures and workshops to compare and evaluate the current national curriculum and the implications for PE of proposed changes to it from 2014. All trainees have substantial experience of teaching post-16 classes on at least one placement. They are well prepared for teaching at Key Stage 5 by central and school-based training that provides trainees with a good understanding and knowledge of different PE examination specifications and future developments.

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

17. The strengths of this long-standing cohesive partnership are considerable and focus on a clear vision of outstanding partnership working, high expectations and raising achievement. Programme leaders, professional tutors, school-based trainers, link tutors and headteachers share in this vision and the partnership's ambition to continually improve the quality of the training and how well trainees' teach.
18. The rigorous recruitment and selection of high calibre trainees with strong pre-entry qualifications, good prior experience and a passion for sport and PE are central to the partnership's success. The entry criteria for the programme are exacting and include, in addition to the requirements in the ITT criteria, experience in a secondary PE department, educational experience or qualifications in science,



competence in information and communication technology and the ability to swim 400 metres in two continuous strokes. Ninety one per cent of current trainees have either an upper-second or first-class honours degree. The partnership easily meets its recruitment allocations and attracts a high volume of applications because of its strong, local reputation for producing good and outstanding teachers.

19. Interviews, held in John Spence Community High School, one of the partnership schools, thoroughly test applicants' aptitude for teaching as well as their practical teaching skills. Applicants are required to teach and evaluate a lesson and are involved in a range of tests and activities. These include individual and group interviews to assess subject knowledge, a written task on educational policy and changes to the PE national curriculum, and the testing of candidates' literacy and numeracy skills. All of these activities are extremely well designed and documented to ensure the partnership has an excellent understanding of trainees' starting points and can identify areas for trainees to start to work on before their training commences.
20. The partnership uses a variety of strategies to evaluate the effectiveness of its provision and the impact on trainees' outcomes. This includes listening to trainees' and trainers' views and comparing their outcomes with those of similar and other regional ITE partnerships and national data provided by the National College for Teaching and Leadership. Improvement planning is thorough. It makes effective use of a range of data including detailed tracking of trainees' progress and outcomes to identify what is working well and what needs to be improved. This leads to sharply defined priorities for improvement which focus on moving trainees from good to outstanding and strategic partnership developments including greater links with external agencies and local teaching schools.
21. Rigorous quality assurance procedures underpin the partnership's consistency of approach and the accuracy of assessment judgements. This process ensures the accountability and responsibility of all those involved in the partnership. The leadership team work extremely well together with one member taking specific responsibility for quality assurance, collaboration and the sharing of good practice and another for recruitment and selection. They are readily available and offer advice, guidance and exceptional support to trainees and trainers through their effective communications and high-quality, easy to use documentation. All of the 29 trainees who responded to Ofsted's trainee online questionnaire strongly agreed with the statement that, 'I am confident that my training programme is well led and managed.'
22. The management committee plays a key role in managing and monitoring the quality of provision, the outcomes for trainees and the

impact of improvements. It is being used increasingly well to support initiatives and developments but not, as yet, to enhance the engagement of partnership schools in steering the strategic direction of this high-quality SCITT partnership.

23. Partners are well-informed, appreciative of the dissemination of new ideas and keen to strengthen the partnership further. There are very good systems in place to build capacity within the partnership. This includes opportunities for schools to use their strengths and expertise, to become more involved in different aspects of partnership working and for departmental colleagues to work alongside existing school-based trainers before taking on new roles. The strengths identified in the previous inspection have been maintained and enhanced, and the one recommendation for improvement is being addressed effectively.
24. The partnership is fully compliant with the ITT criteria. It meets all relevant safeguarding and other statutory requirements for promoting equality and diversity, and eliminating discrimination. It demonstrates a strong capacity to continue to improve.

## **Annex: Partnership schools**

The following schools were visited to observe teaching:

Ashington High Sports College  
Bedlingtonshire Community High School  
Kenton School  
St Cuthbert's RC Secondary School  
Walker Technology College  
Whitley Bay High School

## **ITE partnership details**

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<b>Lead inspector</b>	Angela Milner HMI
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<b>Phases provided</b>	Secondary QTS
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	April 2009
<b>Previous inspection report</b>	<a href="http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/xxxxx">http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/xxxxx</a>
<b>Provider address</b>	<b>Department of Education and Life Long Learning Faculty of Health and Life Sciences Northumbria University Coach Lane Campus Coach Lane Newcastle upon Tyne NE7 7XA</b>