

# Matthew Moss Initial Teacher Training Partnership

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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Matthew Moss High School  
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Inspection dates

29<sup>th</sup> June - 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2009

Lead inspector

Angela Milner 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. Matthew Moss Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Partnership provides employment-based initial teacher education (ITE) leading to the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) across a range of secondary priority and non-priority subjects. The training partnership consists of a core group of six partner schools, including two training schools, in three small neighbouring local authorities: Rochdale, Tameside and Bolton.

4. The partnership aims to recruit, train and retain effective practitioners to secondary teaching and to help meet the requirements of schools in the local area.

5. The partnership is a small provider with 13 places allocated annually by the Training and Development Agency (TDA), nine in priority subjects and four in non-priority subjects for the 11-16 age phase. At the time of the inspection there were 11 trainees on the one year course.

## Employment-based routes to qualified teacher status

### Key strengths

6. The key strengths are:

- the very good leadership and management of the partnership which ensures available resources are deployed extremely effectively to support high quality outcomes for trainees
- the rigorous recruitment, selection and induction arrangements which ensure trainees are well-matched to placement schools and make early progress in their personalised training programmes
- the high levels of commitment, enthusiasm and shared sense of ownership demonstrated across the partnership
- the effective monitoring, review and improvement planning processes which support continuous improvements to the quality of provision and outcomes for trainees
- the partnership's good capacity to anticipate change and respond to new developments
- the professionalism and high level of reflection exhibited by the trainees.

### Recommendations

7. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment the partnership should:

- sharpen the quality and consistency of documented feedback to trainees to ensure they know precisely how well they are progressing in relation to their identified needs and the QTS Standards.

8. In order to improve the quality of training the partnership should:

- strengthen the quality of subject pedagogy training to ensure all trainees reach their potential.

## Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

9. The overall effectiveness of the Matthew Moss ITT Partnership in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good. Many aspects of the partnership's work are judged to be good and some aspects including recruitment and selection arrangements and the way resources are used effectively and efficiently are outstanding. There are, however, some inconsistencies in the quality of documented feedback provided to trainees and in the quality of subject pedagogy training, which limits the progress and attainment of a few trainees.

10. The overall attainment of trainees is good. Inspection evidence confirms that the majority of trainees make good progress and attain high quality outcomes given their ability and starting points. The large majority of trainees achieve their potential because of the high levels of personalised support they receive, the partnership's high expectations and the commitment and enthusiasm of everyone involved in providing high quality initial teacher education. The partnership is particularly successful in providing sufficient challenge to enable trainees with the potential to become outstanding teachers to succeed. This means that the best trainees have the confidence to take risks and become highly evaluative of their own practice and its impact on pupils' learning. There has been a steady trend of improvement over the last three years in outcomes for trainees and more trainees completing the course successfully. The provider enjoys an excellent reputation locally and the vast majority of trainees gain employment either in partnership schools or within the locality.

11. All trainees demonstrate high levels of professionalism and critical reflection. They show a commitment to teaching and learning and the large majority have a good understanding of effective learning in their subjects. Trainees develop high quality relationships in schools and are particularly skilled in planning and designing high quality resources to support learning. Trainees have a good understanding of their pastoral role in schools and have gained useful experience in teaching personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship.

12. Very rigorous and effective recruitment and selection arrangements promote equality and diversity well and ensure the recruitment of high quality trainees. Detailed support, advice and guidance are provided at all stages of the application process. This ensures that applicants understand the rationale for and high expectations of the programme and that the most appropriate trainees are selected. The care taken by the provider to ensure applicants' suitability for teaching and to carefully assess their training needs ensures that trainees are well-matched to placement schools. A robust assessment of initial needs is carried out by subject specialists at the interview stage. Trainees are able to enhance their subject knowledge before starting the course through attendance at booster and enhancement courses and the completion of their initial 'subject knowledge for teaching' audit with subject mentors at the induction 'summer conference'. This detailed knowledge of the trainees' strengths and areas for development ensures that trainees make a rapid start to their personalised training programme. Individual needs then continue to be well supported throughout the programme. This ensures completion and employability rates are high. The provider recruits to its Training and

Development Agency (TDA) targets in both priority and non-priority subjects. The proportion of trainees from minority ethnic groups is above the national average.

13. Overall the quality of training, assessment and progress are good. The partnership provides a progressive programme of training and moderated assessment which is very responsive to individual needs. Effective procedures ensure that the assessment of trainees' achievement of the QTS Standards is accurate and decisions about the pass/fail boundary are secure. The training programme includes an enhancement phase at the end, which allows trainees to either consolidate their achievements or progress beyond the Standards in a particular negotiated area. High quality documentation is provided to guide training and assessment and to monitor trainees' attainment against the QTS Standards, but some school-based trainers do not always provide sufficiently detailed documented feedback to trainees. This limits the progress and attainment made by a few trainees as they do not always know precisely how well they are progressing in relation to their identified needs and the QTS Standards. The provider is aware of this issue and is working to address variations in the quality of documented feedback trainees receive.

14. Trainees' intellectual capacity and skills are well developed through the use of assignments and opportunities to share practice during the weekly core programme. These opportunities allow trainees to reflect on their own and others practice and to link what they do and observe to a range of up to date reading and theoretical frameworks. As a result, they become evaluative and reflective practitioners who listen and respond positively to criticism and advice. The impressive core programme provides a rich, current and diverse experience strongly focused on learning and reflection. It is highly responsive to local and national developments and enables trainees to access best practice guidance materials and relevant academic articles. The quality of these sessions reflects the strengths of the partnership and demonstrates how available expertise is skilfully deployed to develop genuine understanding of important educational issues. The contributors are very well briefed and debriefed by the partnership co-ordinator to maximise the amount of learning which occurs in these sessions. Trainees particularly value this aspect of their training and the way trainers effectively model best practice.

15. Training in schools builds on well from the strong core programme. Trainees are regularly observed by a variety of school-based colleagues who provide fair and balanced feedback on trainees' teaching. Training is less effective in schools where subject mentors provide good mentoring support, through regular weekly meetings, but insufficiently challenging subject training. There is some variation in the quality of trainees' knowledge and understanding of subject teaching across the partnership, which means that a few trainees do not achieve their potential. Again, the provider is aware of this issue and already has good plans in place to further enhance the quality and consistency of subject pedagogy training through further refinement of the 'subject knowledge for teaching' record and the use of subject networks. Subject mentors are well supported by professional mentors. Good links between first and second placement schools, including some use of joint observations and clear target setting ensures a smooth transition between placements and adds to the coherence of the provision.

16. The quality, deployment and use of resources across the partnership are excellent and impact positively on trainees' progress and high quality outcomes. The allocation of resources is transparent and clearly understood by partners. Trainees have good access to electronic recording equipment and to professional development libraries in schools. Resources are used extremely effectively to support trainees' needs. For example, to provide additional specialist professional development courses for trainees in design and technology and physical education, to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to match the breadth of National Curriculum requirements.

17. The quality of the provision across the partnership is good. Initial teacher education is firmly embedded in partner school priorities. Strong relationships, high levels of commitment and involvement and excellent communications across the partnership enable the vast majority of trainees to receive a coherent training experience. High quality documentation and good quality mentor training is used to establish clear and consistent expectations. Twice yearly meetings with subject and professional mentors are used well to review provision and enable the partnership to plan ahead. Rigorous quality assurance visits undertaken by the partnership co-ordinator are used to check on trainees' entitlement and to ensure assessment is accurate and consistent. Roles and responsibilities are clearly delineated and well understood. Careful attention is paid to the selection of new schools to the partnership and differentiated support is provided by the partnership co-ordinator for new subject and professional mentors.

18. The partnership values and respects diversity and shows a good commitment to promoting equal opportunities and ensuring equality of access to high quality training for all trainees. This ethos underpins the provider's personalised approach to training, documentation and practice. A number of 'professional issues' sessions cover a range of equality and diversity topics well. The trainees' second assignment usefully focuses on equality and diversity policies and case study issues in schools. Most trainees gain experience of diverse school communities. The provider is working hard to encourage more schools with diverse populations to join the partnership. As a result, trainees are prepared well to teach pupils from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and differentiate their planning well to cater for the learning needs of pupils of differing abilities. Trainees feel confident to report rare incidents of inequality, in the secure knowledge they will be efficiently and professionally dealt with by the partnership co-ordinator.

## The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality Grade: 2

19. The provider has good capacity to sustain high quality outcomes for trainees and to secure further improvements. Rigorous review and evaluation procedures ensure the provider is fully aware of its own strengths and areas for development. The provider not only anticipates, but also drives change and responds extremely effectively to new developments. It successfully plans for and takes the necessary actions to secure further improvements.

20. Leadership and management at all levels are good. High quality documentation and a useful website create high expectations, support trainees' progress and ensure school-based trainers have a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The small size of the provision and excellent communications add to its strengths. As a result, all members of the partnership are extremely responsive to trainees' needs. Excellent relationships between small numbers of experienced partners, with a shared vision for high quality initial teacher education, ensure rigorous, open and accurate evaluation of provision takes place.

21. Good systems are in place to quality assure trainees' experiences and to ensure their training entitlement. Internal and external moderation procedures have proved particularly effective in promoting greater consistency and securing better outcomes for trainees. These include joint observations of lessons and weekly mentor meetings undertaken by the partnership co-ordinator. Visits by the external moderator are used to confirm the accuracy of the provider's assessments and help monitor the impact of improvements made to the quality of provision. Trainees and ex-trainees are delighted with the quality of the programme and the support they receive and are keen to take on future roles within this highly regarded partnership. Any concerns raised by trainees are acted upon immediately. They particularly value the support, communication and ease of contact with the partnership co-ordinator who is held in high-esteem across the partnership.

22. Effective monitoring, review and improvement planning processes are robust and support improvement to the quality of provision and outcomes for trainees. Action planning for improvement is detailed and regularly monitored by the steering committee. Improvement planning is clearly referenced to internal and external evaluation evidence and five clear priority actions. Action planning details how these improvements will be implemented, the timescales involved, the resources required, how actions will be monitored and the factors that will evidence success in relation to trainee outcomes. Improvement plans are communicated to all involved as part of the 'summer conference' and opportunities are taken to involve the whole partnership in the development of new documentation and refinements to the provision. These plans, together with improvements to provision and outcomes for trainees demonstrate a good capacity for further improvement. All of the Government's requirements for initial teacher education are fully met.

23. The partnership is very well managed at an operational level by the partnership co-ordinator and at a strategic level by the steering committee. There is a real sense of ownership and a clear commitment to continually building capacity across the partnership. Ex-trainees are involved in recruitment and selection and induction events and some have become subject mentors. Effective leadership from committed steering committee members provides challenge and support for the partnership co-ordinator. The partnership steering committee determines the rationale for the allocation of resources and regularly monitors the impact of resource decisions on trainee outcomes. There is a continuing trend of improvement in employability and the number of trainees who complete the course successfully. The provider has worked hard to improve recruitment from under-represented groups by providing taster courses at one of the training schools and undertaking outreach activities at local community centres.

24. The partnership demonstrates a good capacity to anticipate and respond to new developments. The partnership co-ordinator is constantly looking to improve provision further and skilfully anticipates change to ensure that the programme remains up to date and drives further improvements in trainees' outcomes. The partnership is very well informed about current initial teacher training and educational priorities. It benefits greatly from the direct involvement of training schools within the partnership. As a result, the provider is highly responsive to new initiatives and to internal and external benchmarking activities.

## 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.
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### Overall effectiveness

		Employment-based routes
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

		Employment-based routes
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

<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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