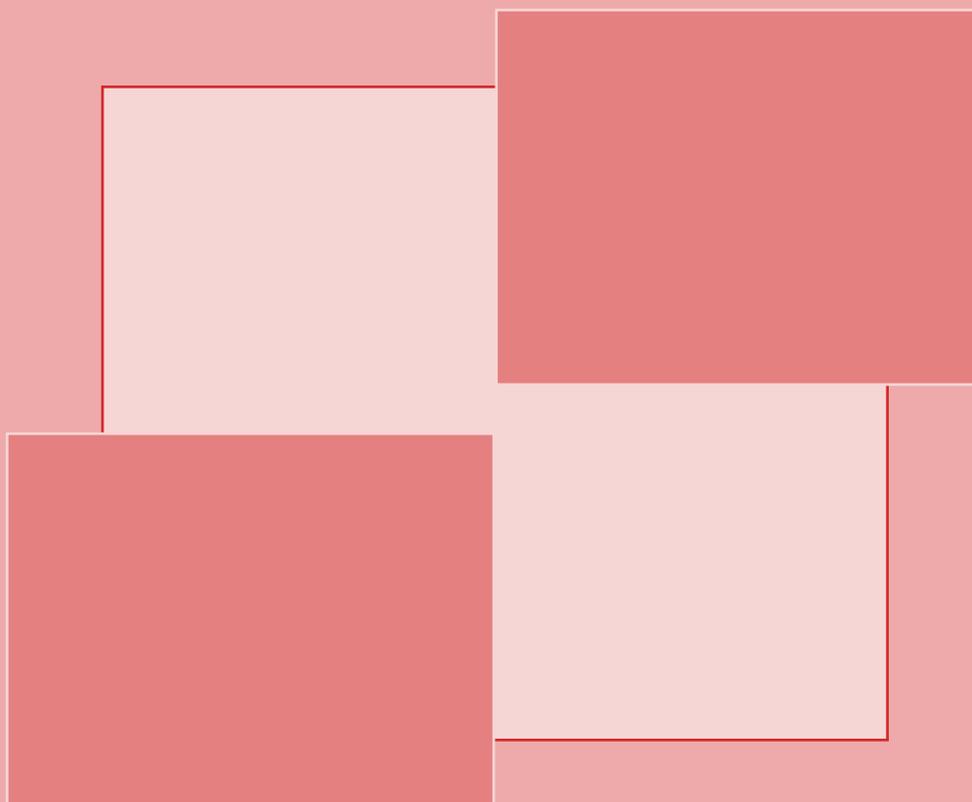




OFFICE FOR STANDARDS  
IN EDUCATION

# The Graduate Teacher Programme



**Inspected Autumn 2000–Spring 2001**

HMI 346

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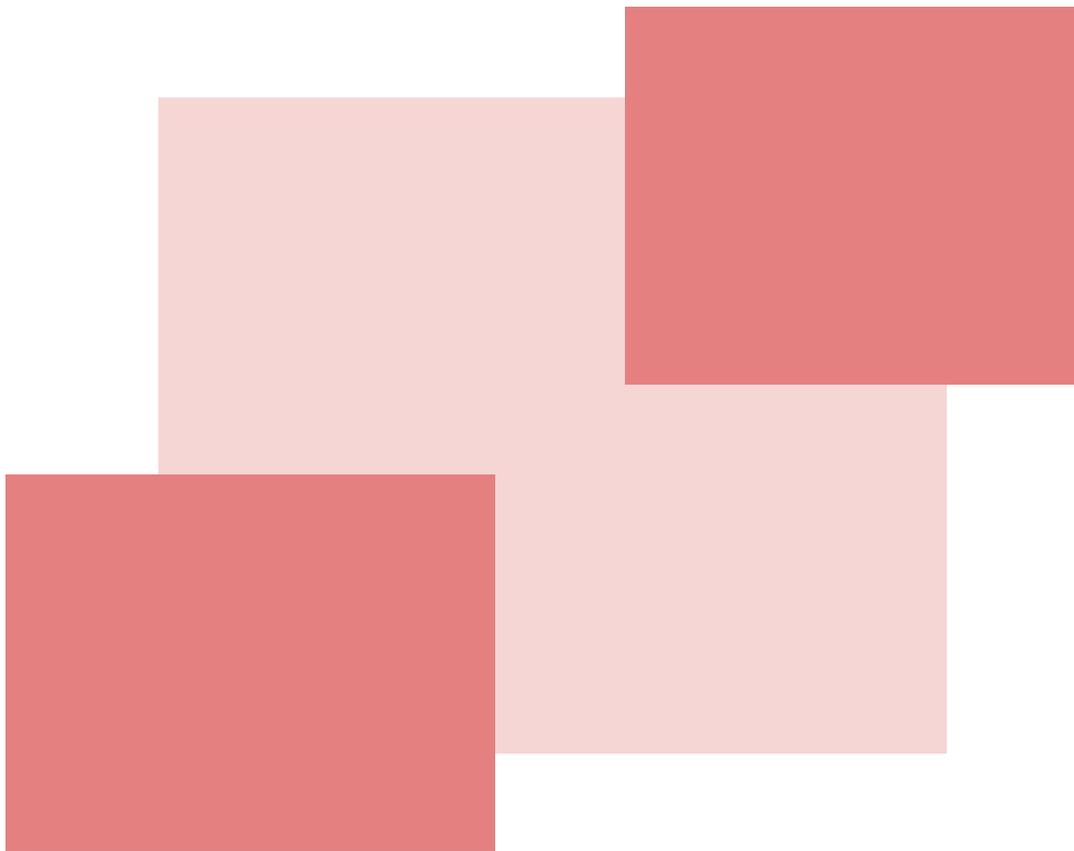
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## Introduction

1. The Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) is an employment-based route into teaching that started in October 1997, replacing the Licensed Teacher and Articled Teacher schemes. It is one of a number of more flexible forms of initial teacher training (ITT) designed to widen access to teaching. A Teacher Training Agency (TTA) information sheet (May 2000) describes it succinctly:

‘The Graduate Teacher Programme enables schools to employ teachers who are not yet qualified and train them on the job. Trainees, who must be over 24, follow an individual training programme designed to enable them to meet the Secretary of State's Standards for the Award of Qualified Teacher Status. Schools can design and deliver the programmes themselves or seek help from another body – for example an accredited ITT provider or local education authority with GTP experience. Whoever takes responsibility for the training becomes the “Recommending Body” for the trainee.’

2. Training for the GTP, which can be for one term (13 weeks), two terms or one year, is designed to match individual needs and circumstances. The training process is determined by the initial assessment of the GTP applicant's training needs, which is undertaken by the Recommending Body. Recommending Bodies include: higher education institutions (HEIs), most of which are accredited ITT providers; school-centred ITT consortia (SCITTs); local education authorities (LEAs); individual schools or groups of schools; teacher employment agencies; charitable institutions; and consortia of these organisations. The Recommending Body has to assess which of the Standards for the Award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) the trainee already meets and then constructs an individual training plan designed to enable the trainee to achieve those standards that remain. The needs assessment and the training plan form part of the application form for each candidate submitted by the Recommending Body to the TTA. Once accepted, the Recommending Body is responsible for the subsequent training programme and for monitoring the trainee's progress. Where the Recommending Body is not an accredited ITT provider, the final assessment is verified by a TTA-appointed external assessor.

3. This report summarises the findings of a survey of the GTP, undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), which focused on the following:

- the effectiveness of recruitment strategies and the thoroughness of the selection process;
- whether the GTP provides training of a comparable quality with other forms of ITT;
- the appropriateness of the trainee's initial needs assessment, the subsequent training plan and the training programme;

- the effectiveness of the monitoring of the trainee's progress towards achieving the Standards for the Award of QTS;
- the reliability of the Recommending Body's recommendation that the trainee meets the Standards for the Award of QTS;
- the effectiveness of the ways in which the Recommending Bodies manage the GTP and their processes for assuring quality.

4. Between October 2000 and April 2001, HMI visited 72 GTP trainees towards the end of their training, usually immediately prior to their final assessment. Inspectors observed the trainee teaching, examined the documentary evidence that made up the trainee's assessment portfolio, interviewed the trainee's mentor and, where relevant, the school's GTP co-ordinator. A Recommending Body representative was also invited to meet the inspector. Separate visits were made to 16 Recommending Bodies in order to focus on the ways in which they undertook recruitment and selection as well as their training, assessment and management responsibilities. In addition, inspectors observed the training of external assessors and attended moderation meetings where decisions were made about which candidates, with their training plans, should be recommended as suitable for the GTP.

5. The timing of the inspection coincided with a significant change to national GTP arrangements. Until September 2000, GTP trainees had to fill a teacher vacancy in the school and were paid a salary by that school. From September 2000, the TTA began to pay schools a grant of up to £13,000, towards the employment costs of GTP trainees who are to be supernumerary to the normal staffing of the school. This policy change was designed to boost recruitment, especially in the shortage subjects and from groups not adequately represented within the teaching force (men in primary schools and both men and women from minority ethnic groups). The new arrangements made it possible to replace a trainee's full time teaching duties with an integrated teaching and training programme. Also, whereas the GTP had previously recruited a substantial number of overseas trained teachers, the introduction of separate provision for this group has made it possible for the revised GTP to make a more significant contribution to teacher supply by recruiting trainees whose career is likely to be spent in English schools.

6. The sample of GTP trainees in the survey included 42 trainees recruited under the 'old' rules and 30 under the 'new'. The main findings in relation to the quality of the training and standards achieved apply to both groups of trainees.

## **Main findings**

- Recruitment to the GTP in shortage subjects and from groups not adequately represented in the teaching force fell below expectations in 2000/01. Recruitment at the start of the academic year 2001/02 shows substantial improvement.
- The GTP trainees are appropriately selected and many have the potential to become good teachers.
- Almost all trainees meet the QTS standards. However, too often they do so at an adequate level, rather than achieving the high levels of which they should be capable.
- GTP trainees in secondary schools generally achieve the QTS standards at a higher level of competence than do trainees in primary schools. Even so, a significant minority of secondary trainees achieved the standards at only an adequate level.
- The majority of secondary trainees' demonstrate good subject knowledge and understanding but over half of primary trainees have significant weaknesses in their English and mathematics subject knowledge.
- The majority of secondary trainees' planning, teaching and classroom management are good. Of the primary trainees, half are good or better but half reached the standard at only an adequate level.
- The majority of trainees are good or better at the monitoring, assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' progress and attainment, but nearly half of primary trainees reached the standard at only an adequate level.
- The moderation process for the approval of a candidate's application is essentially a paper exercise that takes too much on trust, is not able to insist on training plans of sufficient relevance and rigour and cannot provide reasonable assurances about the quality of the training being proposed.
- The trainee's needs assessment, upon which subsequent training is based, often employs informal, even casual, methods that are of limited effectiveness in revealing the full range of the individual's training needs.
- Training plans are often too general, do not indicate what training is designed to achieve and have serious omissions, including the auditing and development of subject knowledge and the provision of teaching experience across key stages.

- School-based trainers are often not adequately prepared for their role in implementing wide ranging training programmes for trainee teachers.
- There is inconsistent practice in reviewing trainees' progress. Ongoing assessment sometimes rests on incomplete evidence; this applies, for example, to audits of subject knowledge and of information and communications technology (ICT) competence.
- In a few cases, where trainees have serious weaknesses, assessment is not secure at the pass/fail borderline.
- The management and quality assurance procedures exercised by Recommending Bodies have not kept pace with the rapid expansion of this route into teaching. There are few examples where Graduate Teacher Programmes are subject to critical scrutiny through formal evaluations and little or no evidence exists that identifies strengths and weaknesses upon which to base improvement strategies.
- The weaknesses outlined in this report are found more often in provision for primary trainees than secondary trainees.
- The minority of cases of good practice in the training programmes and of high quality teaching by trainees indicate that the GTP can be an effective alternative route for training teachers.

## Recommendations

7. In order that further improvements are made towards the aim that the GTP is a consistently high quality route into teaching, those with responsibilities need to ensure that:

- i. individual trainees' development needs are systematically assessed;
  - ii. training plans are carefully matched to the full range of the individual trainees' needs and the necessary resources are available to implement these plans;
  - iii. school-based trainers have the necessary time and training to carry out their role effectively;
  - iv. rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures are in place to make certain that all aspects of the programme, including the assessment of trainees, are carried out to a high standard.
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## Recruitment to the GTP

8. Since the start of the programme, 3,447 graduate trainees have been recruited, 1,480 of whom have completed and been awarded qualified teacher status (figures to April 2001). Until September 2000, when the TTA paid only a training grant and the school was responsible for the trainee's salary, numbers were not capped, so that questions of over and under recruitment did not arise. Numbers that can now be recruited to the GTP are determined by the money that the TTA has available for GTP trainees' salaries and for their training. For 2000/01 1,680 places were available, including 360 ring-fenced for London Excellence in Cities areas.

9. In the academic year 2000/01 the GTP came close to recruiting to its overall target. However, the TTA hoped to allocate most places to applicants for shortage ('golden hello') subjects and to those who would make the teaching force more representative of society.<sup>1</sup> Over the period covered by this survey, recruitment to these shortage areas was disappointing. The failure of the scheme to attract applicants who would make the teaching force more representative of society was particularly marked.

10. Recruitment for September 2001 showed a marked improvement, with significant increases in each of the categories. The number of candidates accepted to start the programme in September 2001, 1,258, was over three times more than in September 2000 and more than double the previous highest single intake, the 510 candidates accepted to start the programme in January 2001.

11. Prior to September 2000, overall recruitment to the GTP depended upon whether enough schools had vacancies that they were willing to fill in this way and whether there were sufficient applicants suitable to go directly into teaching. In these circumstances, it is understandable that one in three GTP trainees were overseas-trained teachers, some of whom had been teaching in English schools as unqualified teachers for some years. Teaching and learning support assistants, usually already known to the school, were another important source of trainees. This recruitment pattern provided little incentive for Recommending Bodies to pursue an active recruitment strategy. Most responded to enquiries rather than trying to create a demand for places. Many Recommending Bodies did not have effective mechanisms for matching trainees to schools; they often turned away applicants who had not already been accepted by a school. Although some Recommending Bodies provided help and advice, applicants without school contacts were mostly left to their own devices to find a suitable school.

12. Recruitment for the academic year 2001/02 indicates that the Graduate Teacher Programme is becoming well known and is an attractive route into teaching. The inspection survey found some emerging good practice in recruitment to the GTP. Some LEAs, for example Lancashire, East Sussex and Suffolk, have, in varying degrees, accepted the responsibility for promoting the scheme, providing information to local

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<sup>1</sup> *Graduate Teacher Programme: information for schools on new salary arrangements.* TTA May 2000

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schools and helping to bring potential recruits and schools together. In these LEAs, Recruitment Strategy Managers play a central role. In Lancashire, where the LEA works in partnership with two HEIs, the GTP is part of a range of recruitment and retention policies within the LEA's Education Development Plan. The scheme benefits from informed advocacy by LEA personnel who keep in contact with the schools, trainees and HEIs. Trainees who enter the scheme from outside the school system are interviewed, matched to schools through negotiation and given the opportunity to spend several weeks working in a school before any long-term decisions are made.

13. The recognition of particular local recruitment needs has encouraged some Recommending Bodies to seek out a local supply of teachers. East Sussex LEA, for example, targets candidates in the Hastings area. The Hamilton Trust, that offers GTP training as part of a strategy to raise the quality of education locally, is helping to improve teacher recruitment in an Education Action Zone (Blackbird Leys, Littlemore and Barton Estates, Oxford).

### Selection

14. Selection decisions are generally well founded; nine out of ten trainees observed were assessed by inspectors as very suitable. Trainees are committed and hard-working; they possess in good measure the intellectual, personal and professional qualities required to teach successfully. In many cases, a school already had first-hand experience of the trainee's work because he or she had been employed there as an unqualified teacher or as a teaching assistant. However, selection processes that rely on prior knowledge are not suitable for the increasing number of entrants who do not have significant teaching experience. Forms of selection designed to test commitment and the ability to teach, and that include systematic observation of the candidate working in classrooms, have not developed and the specific contributions that the Recommending Body and the school make to the process have not been satisfactorily worked out.

15. Since September 2000, the TTA has published dates by which applications have to be received. As about 80 per cent of applications are received in the two weeks before the closing date, and there is a commitment to notify the Recommending Body of the outcome within 20 days of the deadline for applications, the time for assessing applications and for negotiating changes to the training plan is too tightly compressed to be fully effective. In some cases, applications are approved despite weaknesses in the training plan.

16. Each application is analysed by an assessor, using relevant criteria, to discriminate between the quality of the applications. Although application forms have been modified they remain long and complex and a source of difficulty, especially for new (mostly school) Recommending Bodies. Many Recommending Bodies fail to send in the required supporting documentation: for example the relevant OFSTED report is frequently missing, and obtaining these materials puts more pressure on an already restricted timetable.

17. The selection process extends beyond checking that a candidate is appropriately qualified to a need to make judgements about the suitability of the school and of the plans for training, assessment and monitoring. The major problem with the process is that the application form often gives only a limited indication of the likely quality of any subsequent training programme. Although assessors are as thorough as they can be in the circumstances, the information upon which decisions are based is often inadequate and the time too short to follow up applications in order to negotiate changes to the training plan.

18. There is a case for taking some risks in accepting borderline candidates in shortage subjects, but the basis for the risk-taking has to be much clearer than the needs assessment in the application form often indicates. In such cases, the training plan needs to be much more convincing about levels of support, details of targeted training and expected outcomes.

### **Suitability of schools for training**

19. The suitability of schools for providing training was judged to be either good or very good in the majority of the schools visited. However, over one third of all schools visited were judged to be no more than adequate, with half of the primary schools falling into this category.

20. The selection process uses OFSTED inspection reports to make judgements about the suitability of schools to prepare GTP trainees for teaching. While these reports provide much information about the quality of the schools they do not provide specific evidence about a school's capacity to provide initial teacher training. An accredited provider that acts as the Recommending Body for one of its established partnership schools normally knows about the school's capacity to train but there is little evidence that they generally recognise and take action to deal with any weaknesses in training.

21. In some secondary schools, the Recommending Body pays insufficient attention to the quality of the relevant subject department to support training. There were significant weaknesses in about one quarter of subject departments in which trainees were placed. These included poor management, staff shortages and high turnover, inexperienced staff, inadequate accommodation and low standards of teaching. The reasons why primary schools find it hard to provide good support and training lie either in problems of staffing instability and recruitment or in a lack of staff with the necessary expertise to provide training.

### **Assessment of training needs**

22. The GTP sets out to provide training matched to individual needs. There are other factors that determine the effectiveness of the training, notably the expertise that schools have in training teachers. However, without an accurate and reliable needs assessment, the training plan that is designed to meet needs will inevitably be flawed.

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23. Overall, little confidence can be placed in existing practice in the assessment of needs when more than half of the needs assessments examined had significant weaknesses and one in ten was poor. Some examples of good practice were, nevertheless, found. These included: clear reference to the QTS standards; extensive formal observation and assessment of the trainee's teaching; scrutiny of a range of supporting documentary evidence; probing discussion by the assessor; and the use of subject and ICT audits. However, it was rare to find all of these characteristics even in the best practice.

24. The TTA recommends a period of at least 15 days for the initial needs analysis in school. This period of time makes it possible to arrange structured and formal observations aimed at producing reliable evidence of those QTS standards that the trainee already meets. However, the time available is more commonly used to build up a general impression of the trainee's competence rather than an assessment of training needs.

25. The assessment is almost always undertaken by a representative of the Recommending Body, usually in consultation with the head teacher or, in secondary schools, the trainee's designated subject mentor or head of department. Levels of consultation vary. In the weakest practice, consultation is non-existent, the Recommending Body representative acts alone and school staff are not consulted; in a quarter of secondary schools the needs analysis did not involve a subject specialist. In the best practice, there is almost joint assessment with the widest possible consultation.

26. The core activities in needs assessment usually take place over the course of a single day, sometimes less. This is not long enough to make a thorough or reliable assessment of the extent to which the trainee already meets the QTS standards. Assessment of needs usually includes either observation of the trainee or examination of evidence of others who have observed the trainee in the past. These observations are often part of the routine monitoring of teaching quality in schools and may not be linked directly to the QTS standards. In a minority of cases, needs analysis did not involve any formal observation or assessment of the trainee's teaching and in these cases the needs assessment lacks credibility.

27. A major part of all the needs analyses undertaken involved discussions with the trainee, often conducted informally. The evidence for achievement of some QTS standards often relied on the trainee's claims, reported orally, rather than secure evidence of prior achievement. Sometimes the time devoted to such discussion was too short to be of value. In the better practice, some trainees prepared thorough banks of evidence that were conscientiously examined. Trainees' qualification certificates were almost always checked carefully.

28. A major weakness in needs assessment is the failure by many Recommending Bodies to pay sufficient attention to the requirement of the ITT National Curriculum in the core subjects and ICT. A few Recommending Bodies conduct rigorous subject

audits that identify strengths and weaknesses. However, the absence of subject knowledge and ICT audits at the needs assessment stage is widespread. Where an audit is undertaken, it is usually done through discussion and without the use of formal instruments. Overseas-trained teachers and those who possess what their Recommending Body considered to be a 'good degree' are often assumed to have appropriate subject knowledge, though its depth, breadth and relevance to the school curriculum are not audited fully. The consequences of this particular gap in needs assessment is evident both in subsequent training and teaching standards achieved by trainees at the end of the programme.

29. Decisions about the length of training are more often related to the length of prior teaching experience than to the time required to meet needs. Because Recommending Bodies err on the side of caution where trainees do not have a relevant track record, decisions about the length, though not the content, of the training are usually appropriate.

30. The outcomes of such broad-brush assessment of needs vary enormously. For example, one needs assessor considered knowledge of the ITT National Curriculum for primary mathematics to be fully met while another considered it not met, on similar evidence. There is a tendency to make global assumptions; for example, that experienced teachers, by definition, meet all of the teaching standards - yet to then provide training programmes that unduly emphasise the observation of, and feedback about, the trainees' practical teaching. There is also a failure to spot important needs, such as experience in, and understanding of, the preceding or subsequent key stage.

### Training plans

31. All trainees have a training plan, almost always the relevant page in the official GTP application form, that states which of the QTS standards the trainee has yet to meet, what support, training and development are needed to achieve QTS, who is to provide the training, the resources needed and arrangements for monitoring. There is considerable variation in how well training plans are devised; over half the training plans seen had significant weaknesses, with one in eight considered to be of poor quality. Training plans for primary GTP trainees are commonly less well devised than those for secondary trainees; almost one in five was judged to be poor.

32. Less than half of the training plans were judged by inspectors to be good. Good training plans include comprehensive and detailed proposals that clearly document an appropriate range of training activities matched well to trainees' needs. They successfully translate the needs analysis into a training programme and specify trainers' and trainees' roles and responsibilities precisely. Many of the best plans propose a well-considered balance of school-based training with off-site subject specialist courses.

33. Over half of the training plans had significant weaknesses. Training plans are often ineffective because they are not designed as working documents that can be used as

action plans and for monitoring progress. Action planning was undertaken much too infrequently, although one trainee took the needs assessment and plan from the application form and used these as the basis for a properly formulated working document that she used to monitor her own progress.

34. Many training plans are brief, vague and lack detail. It is unusual for times, time scales or purposes to be added to bald statements of activities. For example, a plan might say: 'Discussion with co-ordinator or a subject specialist' but not specify when, how often, how long for, what about, why or how outcomes would be assessed. Very often, plans include observations of the trainee but do not say how often such observations would take place or what was the trainee's entitlement. The tendency of some Recommending Bodies to answer all questions with 'see Recommending Body's programme' is unhelpful as it does not entail providing individual training plans.

35. Many trainees have substantial teaching commitments but their training plans do not take account of this. In a few cases, the Recommending Body had not fully negotiated training plans with the trainee's school to check if school-based trainers had both the time and expertise to provide the proposed training to a good standard. A minority of plans for secondary trainees did not specify a subject specialist mentor to provide training, allocating the role inappropriately to a non-specialist senior manager in the school.

36. Training plans are designed to link to the initial needs assessment but are commonly weakened by the omissions or inaccuracies in that document. This led to some inappropriate judgements about the trainees' training requirements; for example, plans put too much emphasis on providing teaching experience where specific training was required to address aspects of the QTS standards still to be achieved by the trainee.

37. One significant weakness of most plans is their failure to recognise that trainees could improve in the areas of the QTS standards that they have already achieved to an adequate level but not better. If a basic level of competence was identified by the needs analysis it was not generally deemed necessary to raise this to a higher standard. In this respect, the GTP is often not seen as an opportunity to improve the quality of a trainee's teaching from adequate to good; or from good to very good. This important weakness was reflected when trainees' standards had not improved to the extent that they should have done by the end of their training.

38. A major weakness of many plans is the lack of training specified for subject knowledge enhancement, most noticeably in respect to ensuring that trainees had a good grasp of the requirements of the ITT National Curriculum for the core subjects. A significant minority of plans rely too much on the achievement of trainees' development through self-study and discussion with colleagues rather than through planned and systematic training designed to achieve training objectives.

39. Training plans often also exhibited a range of other weaknesses. These included: insufficient provision for post-16 training and teaching experience, limited numbers of visits to other schools to observe good practice, minimal guided reading and the inconsistent use of assignments as a means of developing and assessing trainees' capabilities.

### Training programmes

40. School Recommending Bodies usually have experience of participation in initial teacher training but most have had no previous experience of taking full responsibility for training. There are weaknesses in their understanding of what constitutes effective training and how training enables trainees to achieve the teaching standards of Circular 4/98. Schools and teachers are often expected to take on full training responsibility without sufficient time to prepare and to undertake training for new roles. School-based trainers face a difficult task in turning the training plan into a training programme. Although a GTP training role goes significantly beyond that required for school-based trainers involved in standard ITT routes, training for GTP school mentors is rare. A school providing all the training may well have to rely on a visit once or twice a term from a Recommending Body representative as its major or only source of advice and guidance. A school Recommending Body may, if it recognises the need, buy in some training or consultancy. By contrast, in the nearest parallel, schools that engage in school-centred ITT consortia commonly spend many months preparing for their training role.

41. Over half of the training programmes were considered to have significant weaknesses and one in twelve were poor. There is, nevertheless, a significant minority of good practice to show what is possible, where trainees made the most of their opportunities of working alongside good, experienced teachers. In the most effective programmes, trainers made sound judgements about the amount of teaching trainees should undertake, trainees' knowledge, understanding and skills progress throughout the training and their portfolios of evidence show clear improvement in their teaching competence. In those training programmes that match the trainees' needs well, there is an appropriate early emphasis on class management followed by a phased programme of support from mentors on how to teach and to assess the progress of pupils. In the weaker training programmes, the planned training has too little impact on the trainees and significantly limits the progress that many of them make. For a minority of trainees, there is limited opportunity for training. Inspectors visited trainees whose teaching commitments were excessive and whose training was neglected.

42. All trainees' programmes include observations and feedback on their teaching by Recommending Body staff and by school-based trainers; for a school Recommending Body these roles overlap. The frequency of observation varies considerably and bears only a limited relationship to the individual trainee's needs. Some trainees are observed formally only twice during their whole programme while others, particularly in primary schools, are observed more than 20 times.

43. Observation of lessons and feedback are the most effective parts of GTP training; they were judged to be good in a majority of the schools visited. The best observations and feedback are guided by formal, well-designed observation proformas that require observers to focus on particular QTS standards. These result in thorough written and oral feedback that clearly identify trainees' strengths and weaknesses and provide valuable, formative, practical guidance.

44. In primary schools, the focus of observations is mostly on generic teaching. While this is often a good feature of primary training, subject knowledge aspects receive too little attention. This imbalance is not so marked in secondary schools but it was apparent there too, together with insufficient identification of areas for development and minimal comment on trainees' assessment of pupils' progress during lessons. Many observation reports are too brief and insufficiently detailed to provide a good analysis of the trainees' performance. In a few cases, where observations are not formally recorded and no written critiques provided, trainees have no point of reference or clear guidance that would help them to improve their teaching.

45. The majority of trainees meet regularly with their mentor, usually for about an hour a week. The emphasis on observation of trainees means that these meetings, especially in primary schools, are often extended debriefings; other aspects of trainees' needs, such as subject knowledge, broadening age-range experience and general professional issues, receive less attention. In the minority of schools where there is not a programme of ring-fenced meetings, the support provided by mentors is too informal and lacks substance; planned meetings are often cancelled, postponed or truncated because of the other commitments of the mentors.

46. Primary trainees observe other teachers, a valuable practice but one that is less common in secondary schools. Trainees also meet with other staff who have subject and whole-school responsibilities, though the rationale, objectives and structure of these meetings are not always apparent and the benefits to the trainee not clearly discernible. Trainees benefit from their attendance at school and department or year group meetings; in the best practice these meetings recognise the trainee's needs and have a training and development element that includes the sharing of good practice.

47. More than half of trainees had no subject and ICT audits to assess their needs or to review their developing subject knowledge. A minority of trainers were not even aware of the ICT requirements of Circular 4/98. Where audits were used, they were often too late to have an impact on the training. Many of the audits were not rigorous; trainees' subject knowledge and ICT capability were rarely tested objectively. The majority of trainees' audits were not followed up either by trainers or mentors.

48. GTP trainees usually make the most of opportunities to participate in the normal in-service training and professional development activities of their schools. These make an important contribution to the training but, as the focus of much of this training is dictated by the needs of the school, it is rarely a direct way of meeting a trainee's needs as specified in the needs assessment or training plan. Training attended by secondary trainees is generally more appropriate in content.

49. Where an accredited ITT provider is involved in GTP provision, usually as the Recommending Body, trainees often have the opportunity to attend centrally provided courses. Some of these are designed specifically for GTP trainees, usually assuming that a group of trainees have broadly similar needs. An alternative model is for GTP trainees to attend a selection of courses being followed by postgraduate certificate of education (PGCE) trainees. However, trainees may not always be able to attend at the times when the most relevant courses occur.

50. Trainees often needed to build on their experience in school and come to a deeper understanding of pupils and their subject. However, the majority of trainees could show little evidence of reading as a planned part of the training, in part because most were not required to undertake assignments. Self-study was not planned to contribute to the training programme of the majority of the GTP trainees. Where it did, it was usually a small element of the training, such as a limited amount of reading of texts and National Curriculum documents recommended by mentors or the Recommending Body. Very few trainees kept a reading log. Only a minority of trainees, mainly those whose training was overseen by an HEI that is an accredited ITT provider, undertook study linked to PGCE course-based modules, sometimes using distance learning materials. About a quarter of trainees completed formal written assignments though there was only a loose relationship between assessed needs and the topics covered. Directed tasks were rarely set, though where they were they made a valuable contribution to the training. Visits to other schools to see good practice did not feature significantly in many training programmes despite the importance of this type of experience for understanding progression between key stages.

### **Assessment of trainees**

51. The effectiveness of the monitoring of trainees' progress varies considerably across Recommending Bodies. Good practice is more frequent in secondary than in primary schools. The variation is to be explained, in part, by some mentors' confusion about their assessment role where the overall responsibility lies with the Recommending Body, regardless of whether the Recommending Body was the school where the mentor was employed or was a provider from outside the school.

52. A portfolio of evidence is the main instrument for assessing GTP trainees. However, for around half of the trainees visited, the portfolio had significant weaknesses as a source of evidence for their achievement of the QTS standards. Nearly one in five was poor. There is inconsistent practice in the extent to which trainees present evidence from lesson observations and feedback, lesson plans and schemes of work. Most trainees provide class records and evidence of marking pupils' work as well as a good range of reports written for pupils and parents. By contrast audit evidence, that shows the development of the trainee's subject knowledge, is sparse. Few trainees maintain a reflective diary, though when they do they find that it is a valuable and important element of their portfolio because of the evidence it provides for their understanding of teaching.

53. In the minority of cases where monitoring is really effective, the school's GTP co-ordinator or Recommending Body representative scrutinises closely the trainee's compilation of the portfolio of evidence and produces regular formative reports on a monthly or termly basis. These are undertaken rigorously and evidence is sought that shows the range of QTS standards achieved by the trainee. Trainees are given helpful guidance on how to collect and record evidence of achievement and how to organise their teaching files and portfolios of evidence.

54. Most Recommending Bodies do not, however, review trainees' progress with sufficient rigour. Common weaknesses are the absence of regular monitoring of the trainees' progress, too long a gap between monitoring reports and the tendency to accept experience rather than achievement as evidence that particular standards have been met. Trainees are not made fully aware of their shortcomings. While targets are usually set as part of lesson observation feedback, these are rarely translated into longer-term targets with associated action plans; this limits their effectiveness for developing or monitoring the trainee's progress.

55. The majority of trainees are not required to do written assignments or tasks. In the best practice, usually where the Recommending Body is an HEI-accredited provider, they are used to address gaps in trainees' competence, to provide evidence of standards that are difficult to judge through observation of teaching, and to broaden trainees' awareness of recent curriculum developments. However, most of the assignments and tasks had significant weaknesses, and almost one in three was poor. These weaknesses included a lack of rigour and challenge and limited relevance to the QTS standards and to the needs of trainees. Most assignments are not marked formally and only in a small minority of cases are assessment criteria provided.

56. Where a Recommending Body is an accredited ITT provider it is responsible for the final assessment of the trainees. Where the Recommending Body is not an accredited provider, a TTA-appointed external assessor has to verify the final assessment. A Recommending Body representative normally makes a summative assessment just prior to formal final assessment. By leaving summative assessment entirely to the external assessor, some single school Recommending Bodies missed a valuable opportunity for external moderation of their own judgements.

57. The weaknesses apparent in monitoring progress, and in the range and quality of evidence presented to show that all standards have been achieved, make final assessment difficult. Lack of evidence, as well as poor teaching, contributed to HMIs' assessment that six trainees were not meeting at least one of the three QTS standards (subject knowledge and understanding; planning, teaching and classroom management; or, monitoring, assessment, recording, reporting and accountability). Although HMIs' judgements were made close to the end of the training programme, at final assessment all six trainees were judged to have met all the standards for QTS. While additional evidence may have been available, it is difficult to be confident about the security of these judgements.

## Management and quality assurance

58. This area is a major cause for concern. Inspectors judged management and quality assurance to be poor in almost one third of provision, with a further one third judged to have significant weaknesses. Management and quality assurance are the responsibilities of the Recommending Body and were judged by inspectors in relation to the provision that Recommending Bodies had negotiated with schools.

59. Accredited provider Recommending Bodies have struggled to cope with increasing numbers and demands on staff time. What started as a small-scale management activity, with a handful of trainees and an uncertain future, has become, for some, significant business. Management structures and processes have not generally kept pace with this expansion; often the programme is run by one person with limited administrative support, engaged in time-consuming activities that include handling a wide range of enquiries, negotiating with schools, explaining roles, and overseeing assessment, monitoring and quality assurance. GTP provision is often not well-integrated into accredited providers' ITT provision generally and lacks support from other experienced training personnel. A similar situation is often evident in LEAs where inspectors and advisors have the GTP together with other responsibilities.

60. Monitoring and quality assurance pose particular challenges in a training programme largely devolved to schools and where responsibility lies with Recommending Bodies, some of whom are new to training. Recommending Bodies place different emphases on monitoring and quality assurance, so there is considerable variation in practice, from good to the unacceptable.

61. An understanding of roles and responsibilities depends on effective channels of communication and agreement about what the roles should be and how they should be exercised. In the absence of mentor training related to the GTP, too much depends on documentation and personal contact.

62. In a minority of cases, good documentation sets out clearly trainee entitlement and mentor, tutor and assessor responsibilities. However, in the majority of Recommending Bodies and schools visited, there was uncertainty about roles and responsibilities of school-based trainers. School-based trainers were generally familiar with a training role within HEI/schools partnerships in more traditional ITT and often did not recognise the extent to which the GTP required an extension of this role. Also, there was a widely held belief that an experienced trainee required little training. In a minority of schools, school-based trainers expected that training and assessment roles would be mainly exercised through the occasional visits of a Recommending Body representative or a consultant. Particularly vulnerable to this assumption were those schools that were acting as their own Recommending Body and employing a consultant or where one school was acting as a Recommending Body for another school.

63. In almost one in three schools visited there was no written plan for monitoring the GTP. There is variation in the effectiveness of the monitoring undertaken by those Recommending Bodies that are accredited ITT providers. Monitoring procedures are developing effectively where the GTP is seen as an integral part of ITT provision, where the head of ITT takes a direct interest and has established strong lines of accountability with the GTP co-ordinator, and where the co-ordinator recognises the need to monitor carefully. Where the GTP is treated as peripheral to the work of the HEI and the co-ordinator receives little support or supervision, however, monitoring systems and procedures are often not well developed.

64. A similar point can be made of LEA and school Recommending Bodies. LEA officers and senior members of staff in school have a range of responsibilities and have to respond to a variety of pressures; the monitoring of a programme for an individual trainee does not always rank high in their list of priorities unless recognised as important by the organisation generally and by line managers. For example, one of the main features of any monitoring process, namely the recording by the mentor or the trainee of mentor/ trainee meetings, commonly receives little attention and is frequently not maintained.

65. Visiting Recommending Body representatives exercise an important monitoring role. However, the difficulty of the visit once or twice a term is that the representative has too much to do in too short a time, attempting to monitor the trainee's progress and moderate assessment as well as checking on entitlement and training. In extreme circumstances there have been breakdowns in training provision that appear to have gone unrecorded and unresolved.

66. In the majority of Recommending Bodies and schools, quality assurance procedures are characterised by their ad hoc nature and their informality. If a trainee has an issue to raise, this will normally be raised in school. Trainees are also given the opportunity to provide oral feedback to the Recommending Body, for example through attendance at centre-based training or when the Recommending Body representative visits the school. Issues raised may well focus on the trainee's entitlement set out in the training plan and on what training is actually being provided. What is generally lacking in this feedback is an evaluation of the quality of the training. Trainers are not usually required to identify specific training objectives that could be assessed, nor are they asked to explain or justify their training decisions.

67. In nearly all Recommending Bodies and schools, formal evaluation procedures are undeveloped. Most trainees are not asked to evaluate the training directly or formally. Some Recommending Bodies, in particular HEIs, are introducing formal evaluations of the programme, by interview and through questionnaire, but the general picture is that training programmes have too often not been subject to critical scrutiny and that evidence which could be used for improvement has not been obtained.

### The trainees' subject knowledge and understanding (ST1)

68. Overall, the quality of secondary trainees' subject knowledge and understanding is good; just over two-thirds of all secondary trainees had good subject knowledge and one-eighth were very good. Their knowledge and understanding of the concepts and skills of their specialist subject were secure. Nearly all trainees are appropriately qualified, with a relevant degree. A minority of trainees had shortcomings because they were training to teach a subject that formed only a part of their degree or because their degree provided a narrow subject foundation and they had not developed their subject knowledge as part of the training.

69. Over half of the primary trainees had significant weaknesses in their English and mathematics subject knowledge, and that of a small minority was poor. Only a few of the primary trainees had studied mathematics beyond GCSE level; a quarter had degrees in English.

70. The majority of secondary trainees have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum programmes of study at key stages 3 and 4 in their specialist subject. They are less secure in their knowledge of level descriptions and their familiarity with Key Stage 4 and post-16 qualifications and examinations is patchy; particularly so in their understanding and experience of vocational courses. A minority have shortcomings in their understanding of Key Stage 4 requirements owing to limited opportunities to teach in this key stage. However, a majority of secondary trainees are aware of, and often include, key skills in their teaching.

71. Primary trainees generally have an adequate knowledge of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics. The trainees' knowledge of the subject matter of the lesson they were seen teaching was generally good, though a minority showed a lack of understanding that often led to the setting of work which was too easy for the pupils.

72. Primary trainees are knowledgeable about both the English and mathematics National Curriculum for the key stage that they are teaching. However, substantial proportions of trainees, in English almost two-thirds, have significant gaps in their knowledge of the National Curriculum for the key stage that they are not currently teaching. This is exacerbated by the lack of opportunity many of the trainees have to teach classes other than their own. In English, only those trainees who have taught in the foundation stage or Key Stage 1 have a secure knowledge of how to teach the early stages of reading or how to develop pupils' phonological understanding; in addition, trainees who have not taught older year groups have little idea of how to teach extended skills.

73. Most secondary mathematics and science trainees have a secure knowledge of the subject content of the relevant ITT National Curriculum, though many portfolios did not exhibit direct evidence that they had met its requirements. A minority had no knowledge of the subject or ICT requirements of Circular 4/98.

74. Two-thirds of primary GTP trainees have significant weaknesses in their knowledge and understanding of the English and mathematics subject content of the ITT National Curriculum. Trainees often do not see the ITT National Curriculum as being directly relevant to their situation. For example, one trainee's effective classroom control of a difficult class, and her enthusiasm for teaching, obscured weaknesses in her own knowledge of aspects of grammar and spelling as specified in the National Curriculum for ITT in primary English, with consequences for her ability to develop able pupils' reading and writing.

75. Primary trainees usually have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) and National Literacy Strategy (NLS), particularly as these relate to the year group they are teaching. However, few trainees have a thorough understanding of the principles underpinning the strategies or the research that informed their development.

76. Secondary trainees usually have a good knowledge of common mistakes and misconceptions that occur in the topics that they are teaching. Most primary trainees cope well with questions from pupils during mathematics lessons but in English lessons a significant minority have some difficulty in responding confidently and flexibly to pupils' questions, particularly those about grammar or spelling. Trainees are less capable of identifying and addressing pupils' common difficulties in English.

77. Nearly half of secondary trainees had significant weaknesses in their knowledge about pupils' progression from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3. Primary trainees have limited experience outside their own year group and key stage; their understanding of progression from the Early Learning Goals across the primary key stages and into Key Stage 3 is only adequate. This lack of a broader understanding of progression across the age-range is not usually perceived by school head teachers or mentors as either unusual or as a cause for concern, although such understanding is a clear requirement of the standards for QTS.

78. Most secondary trainees have only a limited awareness of research related to the classroom. There is occasional good practice where trainees undertake a range of directed and self-selected tasks related to teaching and learning, write summaries and consider implications for their teaching. Primary trainees generally have very limited knowledge of recent research and inspection evidence in the teaching of English and mathematics. Fewer than a quarter of trainees in English and fewer than a third in mathematics had good knowledge of this aspect. However, most trainees keep abreast of current developments in the NLS and NNS.

79. While just under two-thirds of both secondary and primary trainees have a good or better level of ICT capability, a significant minority has only an adequate knowledge and understanding of the content specified in the ITT National Curriculum for ICT. These trainees did not demonstrate any significant ICT skills in their teaching. Primary trainees made better use of ICT in mathematics lessons than in English; good use of

ICT in English lessons was rare. A small number of primary and secondary trainees were unable to apply their knowledge of ICT in their teaching because of resource difficulties in their schools.

### The trainees' planning, teaching and classroom management (ST2)

80. The majority of secondary trainees' planning, teaching and classroom management were good, though a significant minority had significant weaknesses. Around half of the primary trainees were judged to be good or better; half reached the standard but at only an adequate level. The weaknesses of trainees in this area of teaching stem mainly from the shortcomings in their subject knowledge and result in a lack of confidence in the teaching of subject content.

81. A significant minority of both secondary and primary trainees demonstrated weaknesses in their knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to use, the teaching and assessment methods specified in the ITT National Curriculum for ICT in their subject teaching. Two-thirds of secondary trainees were good, one-third were adequate. Just over a half of primary trainees were good, just under a half were adequate.

82. Two-thirds of secondary trainees demonstrated planning of good quality. They identified clear learning objectives linked to well timed and appropriate teaching strategies, and carefully matched to the needs of individual pupils. Their planning is cross-referenced to National Curriculum programmes of study or to examination syllabuses in ways that ensure good coverage. They value and make effective use of information about pupils, drawing on school records and assessments to supplement their own observations and evaluations. These trainees have a good knowledge and understanding of pupils' special education needs and make full use of individual education plans (IEPs) in their planning. They also set high expectations for pupils and devise tasks that will challenge and motivate. They evaluate their lessons well to provide information to inform their subsequent planning.

83. The planning undertaken by a significant minority of secondary trainees was superficial. Learning objectives were too general, lessons were poorly structured, there were few links to National Curriculum requirements and insufficient consideration was given to the timing of lessons. There were few references to the teaching resources to be used and assessment and differentiation were not planned specifically enough. In many of these cases, the mentor did not expect comprehensive planning from experienced trainees and the trainees attached little value to detailed planning.

84. The majority of primary trainees are well aware of their school's medium and long-term plans for English and mathematics for the class or set that they teach. However, as these plans are invariably based very closely upon the NLS and NNS frameworks and planning formats, there is limited scope for trainees to plan individual lessons. Trainees rarely have to plan a sequence of lessons that would demonstrate their understanding of the National Curriculum for English or mathematics. When trainees plan

lessons, they usually set clear learning objectives for pupils. These objectives are generally better in the planning of mathematics lessons than they are for English lessons; lack of clarity in setting English objectives led to insufficiently high expectations for the quality of pupils' work in almost a quarter of the lessons seen.

85. Guided by the standard format of the national strategies, most primary trainees plan the structure of lessons well and allow appropriate time for whole class and independent activities. Trainees pay particular attention to planning for pupils who have special educational needs and for those who have English as an additional language.

86. The majority of primary and secondary trainees met the standards at a good level, or better. Trainees manage their classes well. They have appropriate expectations of pupils' behaviour and maintain an orderly and safe environment by consistent application of effective management techniques. Most trainees generally structure information well, present ideas clearly and give understandable instructions. Questioning skills are more variable; where a trainee has insecure subject knowledge closed questions are often used. The trainees' relationships with pupils are good and they value individuals and recognise their needs. They have a good knowledge of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs and of the use of IEPs. They contribute well to pupil reviews and liaise appropriately with their school's special education needs co-ordinator and learning support assistants. Trainees are usually effective in organising and teaching the whole class, though occasionally transitions to small group or individual work are less successful. Secondary trainees, in particular, recognise the importance of responding to gender differences in pupils' performance.

87. A minority of trainees met the standards at an adequate level overall, but with some shortcomings in key aspects of their teaching. These include matching teaching approaches to the subject and the pupils and the effective use of questions. These trainees find selective and effective use of a range of questions difficult to master. They are also less effective in the ways in which they provide opportunities for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Some trainees made a good attempt to widen the scope of their lessons but, for many, this area of work was neglected. Most trainees endeavoured to provide opportunities to improve pupils' basic skills, but not with sufficient regularity.

88. The half of primary trainees who were judged to have weaknesses in their subject knowledge exhibited a lack of full confidence in their teaching. Over half of the primary trainees seen teaching delivered lessons that did not capture pupils' imaginations or stimulate their curiosity sufficiently. They sometimes engaged in pedantic explanations, and a significant minority of lessons suffered from too slow a pace.

89. Most secondary and primary trainees evaluate their own teaching critically though a small minority of primary trainees have never been required to do so in writing. A minority of secondary trainees evaluate their lessons more in terms of management, organisation and behaviour than in terms of what pupils have learned.

### The trainees' monitoring, assessment, recording, reporting and accountability (ST3)

90. A majority of trainees were judged to be good or better at the monitoring, assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' progress and attainment but, as in other standards, a significant minority had significant weaknesses; nearly half of primary trainees fell into this category. In a few cases trainees were judged to be poor.

91. Most secondary trainees have a good understanding of the statutory assessment and reporting requirements, especially for Key Stage 3. Trainees are usually involved in Key Stage 3 teacher assessment and in the preparation for national tests. They are often included in moderation meetings and develop sound practice in assessing the level at which a pupil is working. However, trainees' knowledge of statutory requirements and their understanding of assessment and course requirements diminished progressively through Key Stage 4 and for post-16 courses.

92. Primary trainees' familiarity with statutory assessment and reporting requirements is very variable. A third of trainees have outstanding strengths in this area, a third are judged good while another third have significant weaknesses. There are weaknesses in primary trainees' knowledge and use of National Curriculum level descriptions in both English and mathematics. Although most trainees are able, with the help of experienced colleagues, to assign levels to the pupils in their own classes, almost half do not have sufficient understanding of each relevant level description or end-of-key stage description across the full primary age range. Most trainees have had experience of reporting to parents in writing and orally.

93. The majority of trainees assess how well learning objectives for lessons have been achieved but the weaknesses shown by a minority of trainees in identifying learning objectives means that their assessments are flawed. While all trainees mark and monitor classwork and homework, some marking relies too much on a grade and a brief comment about effort rather than identifying the source of any learning problem. A significant minority of trainees have difficulty providing diagnostic assessment, whether given orally in the lesson or as part of written feedback, and found difficulty in setting realistic targets. The practice of setting written targets to move pupils forward in their work, making effective use of local, national and school comparative data, is not widespread. Only a small number of trainees attempt to diagnose reasons for errors and to advise pupils on strategies to improve.

94. Only a few trainees have developed forms of recording and monitoring pupil progress that extend existing school practice; most reflect school practice and mentor expectations. Trainees record what pupils have learned; the best supplement tabular records with notes about individual pupils that identify strengths and weaknesses and indicate where intervention should occur. There remains a significant minority where records show only what has been covered and completed and not what has been achieved, limiting their usefulness in informing future teaching. Primary trainees' records are often confined to tick lists or the highlighting of NLS or NNS Framework outlines. In the worst practice, surprisingly unchecked, a few trainees did not make any record of their assessments.



## **Conclusion**

95. The GTP is now successfully attracting a substantial number of applicants of good calibre, most of whom are successful in meeting the QTS standards. The majority teach and plan well, but there is a significant minority which makes less marked progress than should be expected given their starting-point. Where they achieve less than they might, weaknesses in the training are frequently responsible for this, from inadequate processes in identifying trainees' needs to shortcomings in the monitoring of trainees' development. Responsibilities are not always clearly enough understood or acted on, and this often points to weaknesses in the overall management of the programme. Since those who take this route are required to demonstrate standards no less exacting than those expected from trainees on traditional routes, training cannot afford to be any less rigorous or to leave gaps in the coverage of the QTS standards and the National Curriculum for ITT. At present, too many trainees are failing to achieve the high standards of which they are capable, an issue which needs urgently to be addressed if the scheme is to reach its full potential.





