



An employment-based route into teaching 2004/05

An overview of the second year of the inspection of the designated recommended bodies for the Graduate Teacher Programme

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This report is based on the second year of inspections of designated recommending bodies (DRBs) which manage training through the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP), an employment-based route into teaching. The report updates the findings from the report of the first year of inspection, published in January 2005.

Ofsted found that the strengths and weaknesses of DRBs inspected in 2004/05 were similar to those found in the previous year. It found ample room for improvement in a number of areas, including the provision of subject-specific training for secondary trainees, and in the identification and provision of individual student training needs and relevant experience. It also found that GTP trainees were confident in their use of class and behaviour management strategies, and that overall management of DRB partnerships was improving.

Of particular interest to:

Initial teacher training bodies (designated recommending bodies, school-centred initial teacher training providers, higher education institutions); providers involved in teacher training (primary, secondary and nursery); local authorities; prospective trainees.

Age group

Post-compulsory

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Executive summary

1. The report of the first year of the inspection of designated recommending bodies (DRB) was published in January 2005.¹ This report updates the findings of the January report using evidence from the second year of inspection.
2. DRBs manage training through the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP), an employment-based route into teaching whereby schools train teachers on the job. Each DRB is responsible for recruiting candidates, identifying the training needs, organising training programmes to meet those needs and assessing training against the standards laid out in *Qualifying to teach*.²
3. The designation of recommending bodies is an interim stage on the way to full accreditation as a provider of initial teacher training (ITT). One of the purposes of the inspection programme is to provide information on each DRB to assist the Training and Development Agency (TDA) with the accreditation process. The inspections also provide evidence for Ofsted to report on the overall quality of DRB provision.
4. Of the 109 DRBs, 47 were inspected in 2004/05 in their second or third year of provision. Ofsted reported to the TDA that 13 providers met the requirements for ITT in *Qualifying to teach* and recommended them for accreditation. Grounds for refusing accreditation were identified in six providers that did not meet one or more of the requirements. Ofsted recommended that the remaining 28 providers should receive accreditation subject to specific conditions being met.
5. Following the outcomes of the 2003/04 inspections, four providers were reinspected in 2004/05. Ofsted recommended two of these for accreditation and identified grounds for refusing accreditation to two providers.
6. DRBs make a significant regional contribution to teacher training across England. The inspections found improvements in the management of DRB partnerships. Most of those inspected had established appropriate management and quality assurance procedures, but they were not implemented rigorously enough to ensure consistent high-quality training in all partner schools. Further improvements were required in matching trainees to good training placements and monitoring whether individual training needs were identified and then followed up with suitable training programmes.
7. While DRBs attracted good candidates into teaching, the outcomes they achieved at the end of their training indicated that they did not always fulfil their potential. The standards achieved by the GTP trainees inspected in

¹ *An employment-based route into teaching: an overview of the first year of the inspection of designated recommending bodies for the Graduate Teacher Programme 2003/04* (HMI 2406), Ofsted.

² *Qualifying to teach: professional standards for qualified teacher status and requirements for initial teacher training*, DfES, 2004.

2004/05 were very similar to those in the previous year, with primary trainees performing better than secondary trainees. One in five lessons observed by inspectors had some unsatisfactory features.

8. The GTP trainees showed strengths in their classroom organisation and were often more confident in managing pupils' behaviour than those trained through postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) courses. However, the GTP trainees demonstrated a narrower repertoire of teaching methods than PGCE trainees. They were also less secure about how to plan effectively and how to use assessment to support pupils' learning. In the inspection of 47 DRBs in 2004/05, as in that of 46 institutions in 2003/04, there was found to be a close relationship between the quality of training provided by DRBs and the quality of teaching that the GTP trainees achieved. Around a third of DRBs paid insufficient attention to how secondary trainees should teach their specialist subject and how pupils learn that subject. A similar proportion had weaknesses in their assessment of trainees.

9. The leaders and managers of DRBs showed a determination to develop their practice and train teachers well. However, most relied on external scrutiny to identify where they needed to improve and they had not given sufficient attention to establishing effective self-evaluation.

Key findings

- ❑ DRBs have continued to attract good candidates into teaching and made a strong contribution to recruitment in secondary shortage subjects and from under-represented groups.
- ❑ The inspections identified similar strengths and weaknesses in training as in 2003/04, with wide variations between schools.
- ❑ The standards achieved by GTP trainees in 2004/05 were very similar to those in the previous year. Primary trainees continued to achieve higher standards than did secondary trainees. As last year, one in five lessons observed by inspectors had some unsatisfactory features.
- ❑ Increasingly DRBs were taking more responsibility for matching trainees to schools that were best suited to train them. However, not all DRBs had formal procedures to find a suitable alternative when a school failed to provide satisfactory training.
- ❑ In 19 of the DRBs, there were significant weaknesses in identifying and meeting individual training needs and providing a suitable range of teaching experiences. The potential of the second school experience as an integral part of the training was often not fully exploited.
- ❑ Around a third of the DRBs inspected has had significant weaknesses in subject-specific training for secondary trainees. This contrasts with PCGE provision where trainees are usually given a good grounding in how to teach their specialist subject.

- ❑ 16 of the DRBs inspected had significant weaknesses in the rigour and accuracy with which they assess trainees.
- ❑ There was a strong link between the quality of teaching that the trainees achieved and the quality of the training they received. Despite GTP trainees' high level of commitment, they did not attain high standards of teaching when they received weak training.
- ❑ Although GTP trainees were generally more confident in their use of class and behaviour management strategies than PGCE trainees, they demonstrated a narrower repertoire of teaching strategies which often did not extend beyond the models that predominated in their main school. GTP trainees' planning was also weaker.
- ❑ The management of the DRB partnerships had improved. The large majority had responded well to the challenges they face and were sharing successful practice through regional networks. Partnership agreements and communications between the DRBs and schools were more robust than last year.
- ❑ Most DRBs had quality assurance procedures in place, but around half did not monitor and evaluate all aspects of provision well enough to secure consistently high-quality training across the partnership.
- ❑ Few DRBs had given sufficient attention to self-evaluation. Most relied on external scrutiny to identify their strengths and weaknesses.

Recommendations

DRB partnerships should:

- expect higher quality teaching from GTP trainees
- undertake rigorous assessment of trainees' subject teaching to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to provide specific targets for them to improve
- improve the quality of subject-specific training
- provide more opportunities for trainees to work with expert teachers and extend their experience beyond the models of teaching and learning followed in their base schools and subject departments
- monitor and evaluate training wherever it takes place to ensure that it is of high quality
- give more attention to evaluating the quality of provision themselves, rather than relying on external scrutiny.

They should also continue to follow the recommendations in the 2003/04 report, that:

- all trainees receive appropriate training across the full range of the standards so that they fulfil their potential and become good teachers
- trainees' individual needs are assessed thoroughly at the outset to provide a basis for subsequent training

- training and assessment is carefully planned, in both the base and second school, and matched to the trainee's need to demonstrate the standards
- secondary trainees have an appropriate programme to develop their subject knowledge and their understanding of subject pedagogy
- school-based trainers are thoroughly prepared for their roles and responsibilities in the GTP
- the capacity of each school to train GTP trainees is checked carefully at the start of the training and the quality of provision is monitored and evaluated effectively
- trainees in receipt of salary grants are given adequate time for training and are not filling a teaching vacancy
- their self-evaluation and development planning are more rigorous and action is taken to secure improvements in quality.

Evaluation

Recruitment and selection

10. DRBs have continued to attract good candidates into teaching and made a strong contribution to recruitment in secondary shortage subjects and from under-represented groups.

11. Several of the DRBs made good use of taster courses and open evenings to recruit trainees, often in liaison with local authority (LA) recruitment officers. These events enabled prospective applicants to learn about the training and discuss its distinctive features with experienced mentors, subject leaders and trainees.

12. DRBs have continued to refine and develop selection and interview procedures. The best were developing consistent approaches with broad partnership involvement. They established agreed selection criteria and maintained interview records that show clearly why each trainee was accepted or rejected.

13. For a minority of DRBs, a continuing and significant weakness was the insufficient attention they paid to applicants' subject knowledge and skills during the recruitment process. They missed opportunities to undertake detailed investigation of secondary trainees' degree qualifications and subject experience which would have helped them to identify any important deficits in their subject knowledge. For example, in mathematics the auditing of trainees' subject knowledge was often superficial, amounting to little more than a simple checklist completed by the trainee, even where trainees held degrees that included very little mathematics. In art, a trainee's degree background may not reveal whether core art skills have been maintained.

14. In two cases, DRBs failed to undertake a formal interview of applicants who were already employed in the school. In the best practice, such candidates were interviewed by staff from elsewhere in the partnership to ensure that an impartial judgement was made of their suitability for training.

15. The effectiveness of the procedures by which DRBs matched trainees to schools for training varied considerably. Generally, the DRBs were taking more responsibility for identifying the schools best suited for training. They often had a list of recommended schools based on previous success in GTP training, local authority recommendations on the school's or a department's capacity to train, inspection reports and school self-assessments. Where applicants themselves were required to identify a school willing to train them, the DRB had limited influence over the match and it was less easy to avoid trainees being placed to suit the school's needs rather than those of the trainee.

16. Most of the DRBs visited in 2004/05 set clear expectations about the training that schools should provide. However, a minority of the schools did not

establish and maintain an agreed training programme, particularly when trainees were filling a teaching vacancy. Occasionally, schools and trainees were not fully aware at the start of the programme of the age-range for which trainees were being prepared to teach.

Training and assessment

Identification of training needs

17. In the DRBs visited, the procedures for analysing training needs had generally improved, but further developments were required, particularly in identifying subject-specific needs. In 19 DRBs there were significant weaknesses in the way trainers identified and planned to meet trainees' needs. The implementation of needs assessment often varied considerably from school to school within a DRB and did not always match the expectations set out in documentation.

18. Some partnerships and schools made effective use of others' expertise to meet trainees' needs.

An example of the effective contribution to GTP training by advanced skills teachers

In a DRB led by a local authority, advanced skills teachers (ASTs) work with mentors and trainees over several weeks early on in the programme to consider training needs. Subsequently, in consultation with mentors, they observe lessons and focus on developing the trainee's teaching repertoire. Training plans are discussed and revised in the light of the observations. In between visits, ASTs provide support

19. The prior experience of those who had worked as teaching assistants or classroom support workers was usually taken into account. However, not all schools recognised the implications of the change of role from teaching assistant to teacher when they identified specific training priorities. For instance, teaching assistants were often skilled in working with groups of pupils using the teacher's planning but were unfamiliar with the planning process itself. They therefore need more focused training in this area than trainers might assume to be the case. Other forms of prior experience were not always considered carefully enough or credited appropriately.

20. DRBs audit trainees' subject knowledge to identify the training required to remedy weaknesses. However, the audits examined were over-dependent on self-identification of needs and for secondary trainees they often lacked rigour. It is often assumed that trainees' subject knowledge is good because they are graduates, rather than considering the match between the content of their degrees and the curriculum they are being prepared to teach. Many of the DRBs relied on the schools to devise their own methods of subject auditing and did not provide any expert subject specialist advice. Consequently, the range of

auditing was narrow. Primary trainees did not always complete an audit of the knowledge required to teach science and the foundation subjects.

An example of effective training to meet the subject needs of a mathematics trainee

Initially the trainee held unrealistic views about his prior achievement and cited inappropriate evidence for the standards for qualified teacher status in his own needs analysis. Careful guidance from teachers helped him to understand his training needs and he completed a comprehensive subject knowledge audit against National Curriculum and examination specifications. An experienced mathematics teacher was deployed to support him to develop his subject knowledge and pedagogy. In-school training sessions were arranged. The trainee also worked alongside the secondary strategy consultant with a Year 9 intervention group. The trainee's progress and achievements towards the standards was reviewed regularly and emerging needs identified to further shape the training.

Training plans

21. There were more examples in 2004/05 than in the previous year of training plans comprising detailed, individualised programmes with a clear sequence of training matched to trainees' needs. However, the majority of trainees, particularly in the secondary phase, continued to work with generic plans that described activities to be completed rather than the learning to be achieved. Plans did not always identify the range of teaching experiences necessary for trainees to demonstrate that they had met all of the standards, and the potential of the second school placement was often not fully exploited. Around half of the secondary trainees had plans drawn up in the early stages of the programme that had little impact on the training because they were not reviewed as the programme progressed.

22. The plans for primary trainees were frequently more detailed than those for secondary trainees and were better structured term by term. Nevertheless, one in ten trainees did not include subject audits in their plans. On a few occasions, this was because the DRB had not shared the audit outcomes with the school. Often, too little attention was paid to developing the understanding of secondary trainees about how to teach a subject effectively across the age and ability ranges for which they were being trained. Plans were inadequate where they concentrated only on the topics the trainee was teaching without considering how these topics connected with others to build the pupils' understanding of the subject. The majority of trainees visited this year had difficulties in teaching some aspects of the curriculum as a result of the lack of clarity in identifying and meeting their needs.

Training

23. In over half of the schools visited, trainees received good training. However, training was unsatisfactory in one in ten secondary schools. In virtually all primary schools the training was at least satisfactory.

24. The inspectors identified similar strengths and weaknesses in training as in 2003/04, with wide variations between schools. Improvements are still needed to provide suitably rich training experiences and to ensure that trainees receive high quality feedback from mentors.

An example of effective training in a nursery school

The school has an ethos of professional development and improvement that provides a context for good training. The headteacher selected the mentor on the basis of her experience and good practice. Specific aspects of training – such as speech and language, the Foundation Stage curriculum, planning and assessment, extending able children – have been led by different teachers, capitalising on their expertise. The nursery team evaluates lessons fully in relation to learning outcomes in each area of the curriculum and this provides the trainee with a good model. The trainee plans jointly with different members of the nursery team and has been guided to read widely and to become up to date with the most recent research into children's learning and development. All the team observe the trainee teach frequently, making focused observations of only 15–30 minutes. The mentor often provides feedback across several observations to identify areas for development. Sometimes, the trainee is observed by more than one teacher at the same time and they discuss their observations with each other and the trainee.

25. Even in the minority of schools where good subject knowledge audits were completed at the start of the training, they did not necessarily lead to specific targets which would help trainees to make progress over the year. In around half of the secondary schools visited, trainees had no structured support to enhance their subject knowledge and were reliant on their own study or informal discussions with teachers.

26. Where subject training was good, DRBs supported schools through central provision, clear guidance and training for mentors. Schools also placed a strong emphasis on subject pedagogy.

An example of effective training and assessment for an English trainee

The trainee experienced teaching a wide range of pupils of different abilities. The six-week second placement was at a school with a different intake and approach, so the trainee could teach low achieving pupils, a broader ethnic mix and pupils for whom English was a second language. The trainee taught, with support and independently, a range of literature, language and cross-curricular themes across a spread of age groups. The department recognises a corporate responsibility for providing subject knowledge training. Each of her host English teachers observed her teaching each week, scrutinised her portfolio evidence and guided her in how to improve her understanding of how to teach English. The mentor planned the training systematically, requiring her to prepare texts in depth and to investigate examination specifications. National Strategy documents and assessment for learning materials for English were provided and discussed at length and coursework marking was rehearsed and closely monitored.

27. Seventeen DRBs did not give enough emphasis to the specific knowledge and skills required to teach a subject and how pupils learn that subject. This contrasts with PGCE provision, where the development of a good understanding of subject pedagogy is the norm.

28. In schools, a number of factors contributed to this weakness, including:

- trainees' lack of awareness of their own training needs
- weak subject expertise in a school
- lack of support from DRB specialist trainers
- poor subject mentoring
- unscheduled changes of mentor.

29. A key feature of good quality training was the example set by practising teachers. Skilled teachers in effective schools and departments provided valuable role models for trainees to emulate.

An example of effective subject training in art

The trainee was placed in a large art department, with a wide range of 2 and 3D activities including painting, drawing, sculpture, textiles, photography and ceramics. The department has good examination results, a strong involvement with visiting artists, and arranges regular visits to galleries. The trainee has seen, modelled and participated in a range of teaching strategies, and the art staff have given her a good grounding in practical art skills and knowledge. She has participated with the department in broader professional development workshops.

30. Secondary subject training was usually more effective when school-based training was supplemented with central training by PGCE trainers, local authority advisory staff or advanced skills teachers.

An example of effective training in design and technology

At the start of the year, the trainee completed a comprehensive subject knowledge audit based on nationally recognised minimum competencies published by the Design and Technology Association. The training plan deals with the trainee's subject pedagogy and subject enhancement needs and ensured that the school-based and centre-based training complemented each other. The mentor provided regular feedback on the trainee's teaching and a design and technology tutor from the DRB provided lesson observation reports. The trainee attended specific workshops and sessions alongside PGCE trainees through the autumn term, a subject-enhancement course at the university and a two-day specialist textiles and computer aided design course. This gave her a wider perspective than she would have gained solely from the lead school. The trainee had a well balanced teaching timetable which enabled her to teach both of her fields of design and technology and this was carefully planned to develop her subject pedagogy and knowledge in resistant materials.

31. Such training was well received by trainees because it enabled them to gain a wider perspective from their contact with experts and with a network of other trainees with whom ideas could be shared. However, few DRBs ensured that there were good links between central training and training that took place in school.

32. Few DRBs monitored trainees' teaching experiences to check, for example, that they taught pupils across the age and ability ranges for which they were being trained. Nor did they always encourage trainees to explore teaching in different contexts, such as museums, theatres or employment-based settings. A minority of secondary trainees had narrow experiences of teaching Key Stage 4 or of developing the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the classroom. Primary trainees often had limited opportunities to develop their awareness of the key stages before and after the age range for which they were training.

33. The narrowness of subject training often restricts trainees' progress towards meeting the standards. For example, in religious education, trainees in faith schools sometimes lacked appropriate training and experience to teach religious education in other contexts. In modern languages, trainees were not taught strategies for using the target language effectively. In physical education, trainees frequently lacked practical experience of teaching all six

areas of the National Curriculum, particularly swimming and outdoor and adventurous activities. Training in effective questioning and in assessing pupils' understanding during lessons was often weak.

34. In the best training, trainees visited other schools, such as specialist colleges, or spent time working alongside expert teachers, such as special needs coordinators. For a few trainees, the amount of teaching they were timetabled to undertake restricted their opportunities to participate in wider training experiences, especially when they lacked the confidence to negotiate release time for such activities.

35. Improvements were noted in the arrangements for the second school experience. In the best examples, trainees benefited from well-considered placements that provided a contrasting experience and supported specific areas for development.

An example of effective second school experience

In collaboration with mentors, trainees in one DRB identify specific focus areas for the second school experience and plan appropriate training activities in advance. Review documents from the second placement are detailed and clearly outline the trainees' strengths and weaknesses; this enables the base school to modify the training programme for the final phase of the programme and, if necessary, arrange further placements for some trainees. For example, one primary trainee in an infant school spent more time in the adjoining junior school to gain a greater understanding of Key Stage 2. Other trainees spent more time in a school with a high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language.

36. Second placements in partnership schools helped to secure consistency and promote common expectations. Nevertheless, weaknesses remained, particularly when the experience was too short for the trainee to undertake sustained teaching or was not tailored to the trainee's needs. For most secondary trainees, the choice, timing and length of the second school placement were strongly influenced by expediency. In such circumstances, positive outcomes were often more the result of chance than careful planning.

37. The majority of mentors gave clear feedback to their trainees when they observed lessons and set appropriate targets.

An example of good feedback and training practice

The mentor observes formally every week and the written reports pick out the trainee's strengths and areas for development. The mentor focuses the trainee on learning outcomes and her impact on pupils' learning. The trainee is set weekly targets based on the standards identified for development in the observations, which form an agenda for short-term improvements. For instance, the trainee was able to consider how she might deal with problems she was experiencing when teaching a challenging Year 10 group by observing the strategies used by other teachers when teaching this group.

38. However, the quality of mentors' feedback was inconsistent from school to school. Common weaknesses were:

- trainees being observed solely by one person
- trainees not receiving regular feedback
- comments that were not referenced to the standards
- comments that were limited to generic teaching skills and behaviour management.
- failing to highlight key issues, such as weak lesson planning

Assessment

39. In over half of the schools visited, the assessment of trainees was good. However, assessment was unsatisfactory in one in ten secondary schools. Inspectors identified significant weaknesses in the rigour and accuracy of the assessment of trainees against the standards in sixteen of the DRBs inspected.

40. Most trainers demonstrated a clear understanding of the assessment procedures. Good assessment was a result of a combined effort, involving the trainee, the mentor, the school's GTP coordinator and the DRB. Assessment was often particularly strong when there was close liaison between a well-informed mentor with good subject expertise and a watchful GTP coordinator who had a thorough understanding of how to record and assess the standards.

41. Mentors new to the role were often unsure how to assess accurately against the standards and needed more effective support than they sometimes received. In a majority of the DRBs inspected, the lack of subject-specific training for secondary mentors or visits from DRB subject experts meant that the assessment of trainees' subject knowledge and their understanding of how to teach the subject well was particularly problematic.

42. Inadequate assessment was often caused by the trainee and school failing to produce secure evidence on which to base their judgements. Most trainees compiled substantial portfolios to submit for assessment, but much of the evidence they included did not demonstrate how the standards were being met or how training was having an impact on the trainee's progress. Where DRBs provided limited guidance on the collation and sufficiency of evidence, trainees struggled to devise suitable systems for recording their achievements and often resorted to compiling numerous examples of the training they had received. Portfolios were not always monitored carefully by school-based trainers and inspectors noted gaps in the evidence of which mentors were unaware.

43. Nearly nine out of 10 DRBs had appropriate moderation arrangements which ensured that final assessments at the pass/fail borderline were accurate. However, internal moderation in schools did not routinely include paired observation even where subject mentors and class teachers were inexperienced and would have benefited from such support to confirm that their assessments were accurate.

Trainees' progress in achieving the standards

44. The standards achieved by GTP trainees inspected in 2004/05 were very similar to those in the previous year. Primary trainees continued to achieve higher standards overall than secondary trainees. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was also similar. As was the case last year, one in five lessons observed by inspectors had some unsatisfactory features.

Professional values and practice

45. Trainees demonstrated high levels of professional conduct. Eight out of ten trainees showed strong commitment and good understanding of their professional responsibilities.

46. However, trainees' evaluation of their own teaching remained a weakness. While trainees were usually self critical, they often did not evaluate the impact of their teaching on the pupils' learning. The majority of trainers were willing to accept superficial self-evaluations of teaching from trainees and did not help them to identify how they could improve their practice.

Knowledge and understanding

47. There were improvements in primary trainees' command of subject and professional knowledge, although a minority were still insecure in the foundation subjects.

48. In secondary training the picture was very varied. Half of the trainees seen had shortcomings in this area and one in ten was weak. Secondary trainees who taught a subject that was not well matched to the content of their

degree often taught weak or poor lessons because their understanding of the subject had not been developed sufficiently during the training programme.

49. In contrast to trainees following other ITT routes, few GTP trainees read recent classroom research or educational publications. This hampered their ability to evaluate their teaching and pupils' learning. It also restricted the range of teaching strategies they could call upon. GTP trainees often demonstrated a lack of understanding of some of the key concepts in the subjects they taught and they failed to identify pupils' errors and misconceptions.

50. Compared to last year, trainees were paying more attention to equal opportunities, for example in their awareness of teaching pupils for whom English is an additional language and considering how to raise boys' achievement in English.

Teaching

51. The strengths and weaknesses of trainees' teaching were similar in the two years of inspection. There was a close relationship between the quality of training received and the quality of teaching that the trainees achieved. Despite GTP trainees' high level of commitment, none of the trainees seen taught well when they had received weak training.

52. Trainees with weaknesses in their subject knowledge had lower expectations of what pupils should be learning. A significant minority (between 35 and 49%) of trainees planned lessons that failed to challenge and stretch pupils. Although sustained experience in one school enabled trainees to gain a good understanding of the needs of individual pupils, few GTP trainees demonstrated a good grasp of strategies to cater for these different needs in their classes.

53. Most trainees organised and managed their classes well, reflecting the high quality of the school-based training they received in these respects. GTP trainees were often more confident in managing pupils' behaviour than PGCE trainees. However, they demonstrated a narrower repertoire of teaching strategies, which often did not extend beyond the models that predominated in their main school.

54. Their planning was also weaker than that of PGCE trainees, often because the school presented the trainee with a poor model of curriculum and lesson planning. Only a minority of GTP trainees planned their lessons with assessment in mind and few of them made effective use of a plenary session towards the end of the lesson to judge what pupils had learned.

Management of the ITT partnership

55. Most DRBs had invested considerable time and effort in developing more effective management. Only six of those inspected did not fully meet the management requirements laid out in *Qualifying to Teach* in 2004/05. However, few partnerships had yet managed to achieve training of consistently good quality across all their schools.

56. Most DRBs had appropriate management structures, with a steering group to take forward strategic planning and sound operational management. A large majority of the DRB managers provided strong leadership and high levels of commitment. The best had a detailed understanding of the workings of the partnership and a close relationship with the schools. In small school-led partnerships, management often relied on a single manager and the programme was not necessarily sustainable if the manager was unable to continue in this role.

57. Compared with DRBs inspected in 2003/04, communications within partnerships were better in the majority of DRBs inspected in 2004/05. Partnership agreements had developed appropriately during the year to include detailed statements of roles and responsibilities. However, partner schools were sometimes not fully involved in decision making and the diversity of schools within partnerships was not always fully capitalised upon in training programmes.

58. The TDA had recently facilitated regional networks of DRB providers. As a result, DRBs had profited from sharing expertise, management strategies, resources and quality assurance arrangements. The impact of the regional networks established early in the year on the quality of provision was particularly evident.

Schools' capacity to train

59. Most DRBs screened schools for suitability to train GTP trainees and the majority of managers visited schools to check and monitor their capacity to train. However, these procedures did not always extend to checking the suitability of particular subject departments. Several DRBs intervened when they became aware of inadequacies in the training and de-selected unsuitable schools.

60. DRBs did not always recognise that high quality training depended on schools providing good role models for trainees to emulate. The inspections this year uncovered examples where trainees received poor training. At times, this was the result of an unexpected change of mentor. Not all DRBs had formal procedures in place to find a suitable alternative in circumstances where a school did not provide satisfactory training.

Preparation of school-based trainers

61. In this year's sample, the DRBs paid more attention to preparing trainers for their roles than the DRBs inspected in the previous year.

An example of effective mentor preparation

In a primary DRB led by a local authority, lead school mentors attend a thorough, four-day programme of training in observing, supporting and assessing trainees' progress towards the standards. This is supplemented by visits from DRB staff and well-attended self-help groups. The DRB has also set up a system of mentor 'buddies' to provide day-to-day support.

62. Most DRBs ensured that trainers understood the programme's procedures and expectations but they still did not ensure that all trainers were familiar with the ITT Requirements, particularly the need to prepare trainees to teach across at least two consecutive Key Stages. Increasingly, DRBs were recognising the need for a more robust approach to mentor training and providing differentiated programmes for new and established mentors.

Quality assurance

63. The majority of the DRBs inspected had quality assurance procedures to meet the ITT Requirements, but around half do not monitor and evaluate all aspects of provision well enough to secure consistency in the quality of training across the partnership. In many cases, quality assurance arrangements at the start of the inspection year were informal and over-reliant on good relationships between trainees and trainers. The arrangements improved as over the year.

64. Where quality assurance operated successfully, the DRB had usually established a pattern of regular checks on the quality of training and assessment by DRB staff or consultants.

An example of the effective use of a QA consultant

An external consultant is contracted to work with a DRB steering group to monitor effectiveness. The consultant has advised on procedures and structures and undertaken training for school-based tutors. The consultant reviews and comments in detail on each trainee's needs analysis and training plan at the start of the programme. This has led schools to review and address shortcomings in the plans and the DRB recognises the need to improve practice in this area. The steering group has established a range of mechanisms for the consultant to evaluate the effectiveness of selection and the assessment. The consultant reviews trainees' portfolios and has helped the DRB to improve the quality of evidence that is collected.

65. A key to successful training was the role of the school's GTP coordinator in monitoring the work of the mentor, overseeing the trainee's progress and making sure that everything was kept on track. However, even otherwise good schools did not always carry out these procedures rigorously and systematically. DRB staff often missed opportunities to monitor the quality and effectiveness of school-based training and consequently failed to pick up significant weaknesses.

66. A large majority of DRB managers collected evaluations from schools and trainees and resolved difficulties brought to their attention. The evaluation process would often have been improved if the questionnaires had asked more pertinent questions about the quality of training and the relevance of training in how to teach subjects. Almost no DRBs tracked employment destinations carefully or sought comments from newly qualified teachers on how well the training programme had prepared them for their first post.

Improvement planning

67. Few DRBs had given sufficient attention to self-evaluation and most relied on external scrutiny from TDA consultants, external examiners and inspectors to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Most of the DRBs had no explicit development planning process in place at the start of the inspection period 2004/05, but several of the sample were approaching planning for improvement with increased rigour. DRB managers had begun to draw on practice in other DRBs and were making use of published reports and benchmarking data to set targets for improvement. External support from the TDA consultants was valued and used actively to secure on-going improvement to the programme. However, the DRBs inspected did not take advantage of the support available from professional subject associations.

Notes

68. DRBs were first established in 2002 and the three-year inspection programme of DRBs started in September 2003. There were 109 DRBs in 2004/05, of which 47 were inspected in that year. These DRBs were in their second or third year of operation.

69. Each DRB received two inspection visits during the year. Reporting inspectors visited for up to a week during the autumn or spring terms. They scrutinised documentation, met key staff to discuss the systems in place to manage and quality assure the training and visited two or three schools to meet trainees and school-based trainers. In the early part of the summer term, phase and subject specialist inspectors visited a sample of 184 trainees in schools to observe them teaching and judge how well the trainees were meeting the standards; the inspectors also evaluated the training, assessment, management and quality assurance arrangements in the schools.

70. Following the outcomes of the 2003/04 inspections, four providers were reinspected in 2004/05. Each inspection was completed within a week, focused on the areas that were judged inadequate, and included inspectors visiting trainees in schools to observe teaching. Ofsted recommended two of these DRBs for accreditation and identified grounds for refusing accreditation to two providers.