

Birmingham City University PGCE Secondary

**School 2 Evaluation 2012-13**

**Response rate:**

**Trainees**

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| **Subjects** | **Number of trainees** | **Evaluations recieved** | **%age response rate** |
| **Art and Design\*** | 26 | 24 | 92% |
| **Design Technology** | 16 | 14 | 88% |
| **Drama** | 16 | 14 | 88% |
| **Mathematics**  | 29 | 18 | 62% |
| **Music\*** | 27 | 25 | 93% |
| **Science** | 14 | 7 | 50% |
| **Total**  | 128 | 102 | 80% |

\*trainee numbers for Art and Design and Music include trainees on School Direct programmes

**Mentors**

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|  | **Number of mentors** | **Evaluations recieved** | **%age response rate** |
| **PM’s** | 85 | 36 | 42% |
| **SM’s** | 114 | 30 | 26% |
| **Total**  | 199 | 66 | 33% |

**For this evaluation trainees responded to the following points:-**

During my School 2 placement, the training provided by the school incuded….

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| 1. ….the national priority: meeting the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs.

Trainees’ generally very positive perceptions of the training provided by placement schools on this national priority are marred by those in Art and Design, Science and Music who thought that they had received either no provision at all or very limited provision in this area. The return for Science in percentage terms appears to be particularly negative. However, in terms of raw data the return of “limited” counts for the perceptions of only 3 trainees. The return for Science should be viewed in the context of the bar for “Total Trainees”. It should also be noted that the return for “Mentors” is a very good match for the perceptions of the totality of trainees. Evenso, it is imperative that mentors make thorough reference to this issue when feeding back to trainees on their evidence gathering and in setting targets. It is strongly recommended that mentors check that their provision in this area is robust, and that trainees are receiving it. |

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| 1. ….the national priority: meeting the needs of pupils with English as an additional language.

Trainees’ perceptions of the training provided by placement schools on this national priority are mixed. A significant proportion of them perceive that they receive either no provision at all or very limited provision in this area. The return for Science in percentage terms appears to be particularly negative. However, in terms of raw data the return of “limited” counts for the perceptions of only 5 trainees. The return for Science should be viewed in the context of the bar for “Total Trainees”. It should also be noted that the return for “Mentors” is a very good match for the perceptions of the totality of trainees. As meeting the needs of pupils with English is both a national priority and a crucial ingredient of the trainees’ preparation for their careers, it is imperative that mentors make thorough reference to this issue when feeding back to trainees on their evidence gathering and in setting targets. Again, it is strongly recommended that mentors check that their provision in this area is robust, and that trainees receive it. |

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| 1. ….the national priority of managing behaviour and discipline.

Trainees perceive that this area of national priority has been addressed well in School 2. Mentors are to be commended on this as these results are an improvement on the same data for School 1. Of the national priorities this area is the one that trainees perceive School 2 placements to be addressing most successfully. Mentors may wish to audit their provision in this area and seek to implement similar levels of provision for the other national priority areas. |

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| 1. ….the national priority of supporting early readers (including an understanding of systematic synthetic phonics)

These findings reveal an improvement from the School 1 placement in trainees’ perceptions of the provision they receive in this area. However, the findings are still a cause for concern. The return for Science in percentage terms appears to be particularly negative. However, in terms of raw data the returns of “not at all” and “limited” count for the perceptions of only 5 trainees out of the total cohort. The return for Science should be viewed in the context of the bar for “Total Trainees”. It should also be noted that the return for “Mentors” is a very good match for the perceptions of the totality of trainees. This suggests that both trainees and mentors perceive that they have some way to go before full success in this area can be claimed. Secondary teachers and trainees in all subjects need to have an understanding of systematic synthetic phonics so that introducing key subject vocabulary can occur in a way that will be meaningful to pupils. Following the School 1 evaluations, the Partnership Committee produced training materials on the issue of systematic synthetic phonics. It is recommended that mentors retrieve these and consider their use in future training. The Partnership will consider further actions that can be taken to bring about improvements in this area. |

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| 1. ….discussions/meetings/INSET on a range of other whole school issues, possibly meeting other key members of staff

It is evident that trainees perceive that they are receiving good training in this area, apart from a very small proportion of Art and Design, Drama and Music trainees. As for School 1, it is not clear how trainees can have gained this perception as all partnership schools offer discussions/meetings/INSET on a range of whole school issues, usually alongside NQT provision and other CPD. Professional mentors may wish to monitor trainees’ attendance at these sessions, and where attendance could be an issue, address this with trainees. |

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| 1. ….direct support with, and feedback on, the trainees’ planning and preparation (Units of Work and Lesson Plans)

These findings are generally encouraging, although the small proportion of trainees who perceive that they have “limited” support and feedback on their planning and preparation is disappointing considering the fundamental nature of this activity. It could be that the nature of “support and feedback” that trainees can expect throughout their placement should be outlined at the start of future placements. This will result in a like-for-like understanding between mentors and trainees of what direct support and feedback they can expect during their training. |

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| 1. ….support with developing teaching and learning strategies to enable teaching of his/her specialist subject

These findings are generally very encouraging, and underline the expertise of the partnership’s subject mentors in this area and their effectiveness in passing this expertise on to trainees. Although this is as is to be expected in this fundamental area of teacher training, it remains that mentors are to be commended for their very good work in this area. It is recommended that all mentors, except for the Maths SM’s who the Maths trainees perceive to be already doing this, should aim for all their trainees to perceive by the end of the training that they have dealt with this area “in great detail”. |

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| 1. ….support with responding to the individual needs of pupils being taught by the trainees including pupils with SEN, EAL and the G&T, including access to relevant pupil information

There is significant improvement in the data on this area from the School 1 evaluations. However, a proportion of trainees perceive that they are receiving training in this area only to a “limited” extent. Although this is not a great proportion, it does represent a possible limiting of the effectiveness of teaching for the trainees concerned, and a possible disappointing dilution of the impact on some pupils’ progress of the trainee’s otherwise good teaching. It could be that schools’ methods of accessing pupil information need to be more clearly delineated in some cases, and that SM’s when looking at trainees’ lesson planning prior to its delivery should refer explicitly to Sections D and E of the trainee’s lesson plan, and suggest improvements where necessary. |

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| 1. ….support in using assessment for learning strategies

There is significant improvement in this area from the School 1 evaluations. This is to be expected in that assessment is frequently more thoroughly addressed in School2, and that trainees’ understandings of it deepen as they practice assessing pupils’ work more frequently. The timing of the assignment “Assessment at Key Stage 3” should also increase understanding in this area during School 2. However, a few trainees in Art and Design, Drama and Music perceive that they receive only “limited” training in this area. This could mean that assessment *for* learning needs to be specifically referred to in mentors’ discussions with trainees and in feedback to teaching. This could be important as “assessment *of* learning” is often more frequently referred to as the School 2 placement proceeds.  |

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| 1. ….discussion of trainees’ lesson evaluations, including teaching and assessment of the pupils’ learning

The proportion of trainees who consider that the training that they receive in this area is “in great detail” is very high. This is to be celebrated. However, the proportion who perceive that they have either had no discussion of their lesson evaluations at all or limited discussion, although in the minority, is still disappointing. The data also reveals that this perception is quite broadly based in 4 out of 6 subjects. It is possible that a few mentors are overlooking this part of the trainees’ work when feeding back to them after lessons or in Weekly Reviews, concentrating instead on the teaching of the lessons and the curriculum content. This is understandable as these areas might appear to be of more immediate concern, but helping trainees with the quality of their self evaluation is crucial for their future development as reflective practitioners. It is recommended that those mentors who consider that they may not have emphasised this aspect of training in School 2 make a particular effort to specify it in future placements. |

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| 1. ….addressing the national priorities of communication and language development in subject teaching

The data for this area reveal a significant improvement on School 1. This is a new area of attention, brought about by the specific language of Teachers’ Standard 3(c). Considering this, the progress made in addressing this area between School 1 and School 2 is to be commended. Mentors are obviously considering this area in their own practice and are feeding this consideration on to trainees. It is recommended that this development continues, with mentors in Art and Design, Music and Science in particular making sure that they refer specifically to this area when feeding back to trainees on their subject teaching. |

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| 1. ….regular target setting and formative feedback (using the BCU descriptors) of the trainees’ progress towards the Teachers’ Standards

Trainees’ perceptions of their training in this area are on the whole that it is excellent. This is to be celebrated, especially as it reveals that mentors are taking very seriously this essential aspect of training. It is recommended that those few mentors whom trainees perceive are not providing training in this are in some depth or in great detail look carefully at their record of Weekly Meetings. These meeting are the most reliable method for the provision of feedback and the setting of sharp and challenging targets.  |

**Mentors’ Feedback on the School 2 Placement**

**Ways in which BCU might strengthen practice:-**

**Professional Mentors**

* More opportunity to meet other professional mentors, such as at networking meetings.
* More support early on in the course on how trainees can keep on top of their planning.
* When trainees arrive at the start of School 2 it would be good to know in advance what ITT support they have had previously
* To give schools a copy of the training that is copied at university so that schools do not repeat the same material.
* Make trainees aware of whole school issues, for example SMSC. Develop techniques for differentiation.

**Subject Mentors**

* Further practical advice to trainees on how to structure and self-monitor their PDF File.
* Maybe some “mentor standardisation” would be good.
* It would be good to receive the trainee information earlier.
* More “pinks” need to be produced with clearer points to be observed and how to complete them.
* Perhaps some collective CPD for SM’s, an opportunity to gather as mentors.
* Further raise trainees’ awareness of SMSC issues.
* Trainees had a lot of guidance on planning, but more guidance on assessment would be useful.

**Other helpful comments**

* Contacts with university mentors run very smoothly. Meetings were punctual and ran very efficiently
* First dealings with BCU and all seemed to go smoothly, trainee appeared confident. Would be happy to take trainees from BCU again.
* BCU and XX school have traditionally worked together very well. The provision in Art and Design that we offer is excellent.
* We enjoy working with BCU and are only limited by the number of places we can offer, being a small school.
* We feel that support from the university is excellent. In particular we appreciate that tutors can come in at short notice if required. Communication is excellent and we feel that we work in partnership with BCU staff.
* The paperwork is strong, supportive and works well.
* The supporting paperwork is “user friendly” and purposeful. Professional Mentors and Subject Mentors appreciate this. The trainees clearly understand the function of their record keeping and its practical application to the job they are training for.
* I bel;ieve that BCU has the balance of provision correct. The trainees have the appropriate level of ability. Support was appropriate and worked collaboratively with the SM.
* Subject tutors are very supportive.
* An excellent partnership established for 20+ years.
* The two trainees that we have had this year were excellent. They have been well briefed and have made a significant contribution to the department.
* BCU continues to send us quality trainees who are motivated and passionate about their career.

NB the relatively low return of mentors’ evaluations is at first sight disappointing. However, it could indicate that most mentors are satisfied with the School 2 arrangements and do not wish to make any suggestions for improvements. However, it will still benefit the partnership to consider ways in which a greater return of mentors’ evaluations can be solicited. A greater return would indicate an ever closer relationship between the BCU course team and mentors, and will also provide more reliable data.