



## Ofsted Report, July 2011

**Teach First rated ‘*Outstanding*’ in all 44 categories examined in training inspirational teachers to work in the most disadvantaged areas**

### Summary of Findings

#### Introduction

Teach First is delighted to share the results of its first ever graded Ofsted inspection, which took place 6-15 June 2011. Four inspection teams worked simultaneously across London, the East and West Midlands, North West, and Yorkshire inspecting the 2010-11 secondary teacher training provided through a partnership between Teach First, secondary schools in challenging circumstances and leading university Regional Training Providers (RTPs).

The partnership (known as NITTP, the National Initial Teacher Training Partnership) includes lead providers The University of Manchester; Liverpool John Moores University; Nottingham Trent University; Canterbury Christ Church University and Sheffield Hallam University, and is supported by staff from other institutions.

The last review of Teach First by Ofsted, published in 2008, praised the programme for outstanding practice. However, no formal grade was provided so this time we are very pleased to have been awarded the highest possible grade of ‘Outstanding’ in all 44 areas evaluated across all regions that Teach First has operated in. Crucially, Ofsted stated: “Teach First is very successful in meeting its commitment to address educational disadvantage”. Its report describes Teach First participants as “exceptional” with many on their way to being inspirational teachers in their first year. The training they receive was found to be “consistently high quality” while the leadership and management of the organisation was “very strong”. Ofsted highlights the way Teach First participants work effectively in collaboration with other colleagues and teachers in their schools. In addition, the report notes that Teach First’s retention is “exceptionally high” and “significantly above the national average”, while noting it recruits a “diverse cohort with a high proportion nationally of participants from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds”.

Former Ofsted Chief Inspector Sir Mike Tomlinson said: “This report is one of the very best I have seen. In my time with Ofsted I cannot remember a single report on teacher training involving a consortium of providers which was as positive as this.

“The outstanding provision made by Teach First and its partners, and the similar judgement on the capacity to improve, set this apart as a model. As such it is placing in our most disadvantaged communities teachers of the very highest quality. All concerned should be proud of what is being achieved.”

What follows are highlights from the report, broken down by key themes.

## **The quality of participants**

**A major feature of the Ofsted report was its focus on the high quality of the Teach First participants. They said:**

“In all regions, the quality of the participants is exceptional, particularly their personal characteristics, personal attributes, self-motivation, critical reflection and their commitment to raising the aspirations and achievements of the students in their schools and addressing educational disadvantage”.

“Participants’...intellectual capacity, resilience and commitment are exceptional; the way they can relate to a wide range of people is impressive. Even in their first year of training they are well on the way to becoming inspirational teachers, and some already are.”

## **The strength of the training partnership**

**The network of partner schools, university training providers and Teach First staff that deliver the Leadership Development Programme is a powerful and successful partnership. They said:**

“Excellent communication between all involved ensures that much of the training is consistently of very high quality. The arrangements for training, monitoring participants’ progress and assessment are clear and consistently applied across the partnership.”

## **Teacher to teacher relationships**

**Partnership both inside and outside schools is at the heart of the Teach First approach. The collaborative nature of Teach First was highlighted by inspectors. They said:**

“The fundamental principles of Teach First, and the focus on addressing educational disadvantage, mean that it works to support schools as well as ensuring high-quality training for participants. This is a good example of the wider impact of Teach First through developing coaching and mentoring skills in schools that will benefit other staff, and hence, the students in these schools.”

“An indication of how highly they [participants] are regarded in their schools is the proportion taking on additional responsibilities within their departments during their first year or at the beginning of their second year on the Teach First programme. Many senior staff in schools speak very highly about participants’ positive impact on students’ achievement.”

## **Summer Institute**

**The charity’s employment based training model, which sees its participants supported for two years after an intensive initial six week training period, was also praised by inspectors. The model, which was positively referenced in the Government’s Initial Teacher Training White Paper, provides participants with high-quality tailored support from in-school mentors, Teach First Leadership Development Officers and university based professional subject tutors, throughout their training. The inspectors said:**

“The high quality of the six-week Summer Institute, when participants spend three weeks in their region and three ‘national weeks’, means that participants are extremely well prepared for teaching. A rigorous analysis of individual strengths and areas of development, including subject

knowledge, and sharply targeted support enables participants to begin their full teaching commitments from the beginning of the school year.”

### **Quality of training**

**Inspectors highlighted the high quality of training participants received and the high expectations Teach First has of them. They said:**

“The expertise and research undertaken in all of the universities involved in the programme, as well as Teach First staff, are used to ensure that the programme is completely up-to-date and full account is taken of all current educational developments. The success of this is seen in the quality of the participants and their depth of understanding of key issues and current priorities.”

“As a result of the quality of the training they receive and their own ability to critically reflect, the overwhelming majority of participants make outstanding progress against highly challenging expectations, meeting or exceeding these expectations.”

### **Increased participant effectiveness**

**Inspectors highlighted the work that had been done to improve the effectiveness of participants. They said:**

“The extremely thorough and rigorous process of self-evaluation and improvement planning leads to continuous improvement in all of the outcomes for participants.”

“The attainment of participants is outstanding and has improved each year for the last three years. The proportion of participants whose attainment is outstanding has improved significantly.”

### **Pupil focus - teaching skill**

**Inspectors highlighted the range of strategies and techniques used by participants to understand and address the needs of pupils at schools in challenging circumstances. They said:**

“A notable strength is participants’ understanding and use of strategies to develop early reading skills, including the use of systematic synthetic phonics, and their understanding of how low levels of literacy can be a barrier to learning.”

“Their understanding of how to teach a diverse range of students, of the complexities of teaching students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of the wider role of the teacher is outstanding.”

### **Retention**

**Inspectors highlighted the link between the level of support participants receive and high retention rates. They said:**

“The level and quality of support for participants’ well-being and professional development result in exceptionally high retention and attainment.”

“Attainment, retention and successful completion [of the Leadership Development Programme] and the proportion of participants remaining in teaching beyond their two-year commitment, have all improved. These improvements have been sustained over several years.”

For more information please visit [www.teachfirst.org.uk](http://www.teachfirst.org.uk)

## Full summary of the Ofsted inspection grades

### Summary of inspection grades<sup>1</sup>

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is satisfactory; grade 4 is inadequate.

### Overall effectiveness

		Teach First region			
		London	East and West Midlands	North West	Yorkshire and Humber
<b>How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for participants?</b>		1	1	1	1
Participants' attainment	How well do participants attain?	1	1	1	1
Factors contributing to participants attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	1	1	1	1
	To what extent does the training and assessment ensure that all participants progress to fulfil their potential given their ability and starting points?	1	1	1	1
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	1	1	1	1
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	1	1	1	1
Promoting equalities and diversity	To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination?	1	1	1	1

### CAPACITY TO IMPROVE FURTHER AND/OR SUSTAIN HIGH QUALITY

	London	East and West Midlands	North West	Yorkshire and Humber
<b>To what extent do the leadership and management at all levels have the capacity to secure further improvements and/or to sustain high quality outcomes?</b>	1	1	1	1
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?	1	1	1	1
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?	1	1	1	1
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?	1	1	1	1