

# Promoting improvement in initial teacher education (ITE)

As part of the ITE inspection framework from September 2012, Ofsted is promoting further improvement in the ITE sector by providing annual dissemination conferences and associated web-based materials for each of the thematic inspections conducted alongside individual inspections of ITE partnerships in 2012–13.

During 2012–13, these focused on:

- primary mathematics
- secondary modern languages
- secondary science
- secondary history.

## Thematic inspection of secondary modern languages

### The evidence base

During the course of 2012–13, HMI focused in depth on provision and outcomes in secondary modern languages in nine secondary ITE partnerships as part of their ITE inspections. Two were employment-based routes, two were school-centred initial teacher training providers (SCITT) and five were courses in universities. Modern language specialist inspectors observed trainees and newly qualified teachers (NQTs) teaching, and held discussions with course leaders, mentors, professional tutors, trainees and NQTs. Trainee files and other documentation were analysed, including recruitment and retention information and employment data.

### Key strengths of trainees and NQTs

- The vast majority demonstrate passion for the subject.
- They have good subject knowledge, many being native speakers. Partnerships are providing good support for developing their understanding of the British education system.
- They develop well pupils' understanding of the cultures of the countries where the languages are spoken.

- They manage behaviour well, understand the need for differentiation and engage learners well by using a wide range of activities including group and pair work.
- They make very good use of technology to deliver lessons, to introduce authentic materials and to add interest.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Trainees are not developing a strong ability to use the target language in their lessons. Often this is because of policies in schools. Mentors make too little reference to target language use in their feedback and the matter is rarely seen as an aspect to be developed.
- Understanding of transition matters is weak. Opportunities in the primary phase can be limited to a token visit with too little time to reflect on the experience. Sometimes no modern languages lessons are seen during these visits.
- The quality of subject knowledge auditing varies greatly.
- The experience trainees have of sixth form and in some cases Key Stage 4 teaching is very variable. This limits trainees' ability to understand how to stretch more able pupils lower down the school.
- Subject knowledge enhancement for trainees' second language is often weak or missing.
- Trainees have variable experience of teaching pupils for whom English is an additional language and training does not provide them with an understanding of the implications for the subject.