Practice Makes Perfect: Teachers Collaborating to Create Outstanding Trainees

Introduction
The North East Partnership SCITT provides outstanding training for those wishing to pursue a career in secondary physical education teaching. It has consistently been graded as outstanding by Ofsted (2005, 2009, 2013) and, in November 2013, was graded outstanding in every category. It was also identified as the top secondary SCITT in the country in the most recent Smithers’ Good Teacher Training Guide. Outcomes for trainees are exceptionally high. All trainees exit the course as either good or outstanding trainee teachers, with the majority being outstanding. We are keen to maintain this record and continue to increase the number of trainees who exit with the highest possible grade.

To achieve this aim we identified four focus areas for trainees and school staff to work on:
- measuring and monitoring pupil progress
- developing outstanding resources
- using video analysis
- effective behaviour management.

Link tutors from the North East Partnership worked in small groups to create and pilot resources for each of these four areas with targeted trainees and school staff. As a result of their work they have set developmental priorities for 2015/16, when the resources will be rolled out across all of the schools. This article provides a brief insight into the resources developed for each area and how they were used with the selected trainees.

Measuring and monitoring pupil progress

What the project is about
In line with the Carter Review (2015) which stated that “ITT (initial teacher training) should have a relentless focus on pupil progress” the aim of this particular mini project was to improve the trainees’ understanding and practice in measuring and monitoring pupil progress both in lessons and over time. Three tasks were created to help trainees focus on pupil outcomes over the time they are responsible for teaching them, and to support them in their understanding of how they can measure and record the progress pupils make in achieving these outcomes.

Who piloted it and why
This was an opportunity to try out some new ideas for recording pupil progress which would...
inform decisions about how to move forward with the whole cohort of trainees next year. Trainees who were either achieving a high grade 2 or low grade 1 at the midpoint of their second professional school placement or whom had been identified by their link tutor as needing to develop their practice in this area were targeted. The group, consisting of five trainees, met during tutorials to discuss the tasks, which were to focus on one practical class and one theory class. Subject mentors in school were contacted and made aware of the mini project so they could support their trainees in school.

Findings and impact

At the end of their second school placement, three of the five trainees were graded as outstanding and the remaining as good. The feedback was positive and all trainees commented that they found the tasks made them much more conscious of including progress feedback was positive and all trainees.

Trainees felt that the project had developed
their practice and resulted in them achieving
higher grades.

"My mentor has spoken to me about how I have progressed in my teaching and specifically in showing students’ progression."

Kurt Burns (NEP PE SCITT 2014/15)

The samples produced by the trainees documented evidence of the work they had done with individuals and groups to show current attainment and targets and end of unit results. It would have been good to move this forward by meeting with the trainees with their files and reviewing good practice and areas for development. This is certainly something we will look to incorporate with the next cohort.

Next steps

Although still at the planning stage, this work will become a real focus for next year’s cohort. The idea of developing a ‘bundle of evidence of pupil progress’ at three points during the academic year will allow trainees the opportunity to reflect and improve their practice in this area.

Measuring and monitoring progress task

1. Produce a file of pupils’ work in one or two practical classes you have taught showing evidence of pupil progress over a unit of work. Consider including the following evidence to support pupil progress:
   - pupil data (prior to activity to show starting point, e.g. previous activity level)
   - baseline assessment tasks undertaken at start of activity and results to determine starting points
   - grouping plans
   - tracker sheets
   - self- and peer-assessments undertaken
   - target-setting sheets, e.g. "I can…" and "To improve I need to…"
   - mid-point/final assessments
   - visual or electronic evidence, for example:
     - photographs of pupils’ placement on traffic lights/ level descriptors at points during a lesson to show progress through a skill or of knowledge
     - video clips of lessons or parts of lessons to show individuals at start, middle and end of unit of work
     - lesson plans, formal observations and lesson evaluations which relate to progress (2a,b,c standards); evaluations must make comment in relation to pupil progress
     - brief comment about each pupil in relation to progress, i.e. outcomes, behaviour and effort, which could be used by class teacher at parents’ evening.

2. Produce a file of a copy of one or two pupils’ work from a theory class you have taught showing evidence of pupil progress over the time you have taught them (book scrutiny). Consider including the following evidence to support pupil progress:
   - pupil data – target grade and current grade
   - seating plan
   - work produced in lessons (worksheets, notes, exam questions, mark schemes)
   - self- and peer-assessed work (feedback)
   - homework
   - teacher marking (in line with school/ department policy)
   - work acted on by pupils showing improvements (clearly identified)
   - exams/end of unit tests and results
   - lesson plans, formal observations and lesson evaluations which relate to progress (2a,b,c standards).

3. Produce a five-minute presentation to show how you have shown progress in one practical lesson. You should support your presentation with video clips showing pupil progress. Include in your presentation:
   - pupil starting points
   - grouping plan
   - differentiation
   - lesson plan
   - lesson observations
   - lesson evaluations.
Developing outstanding resources

What the project is about

To date, resources have been used within lessons by the SCITT cohort with varying success. During second placement the trainees had a strong understanding of what is required to deliver an outstanding lesson. However, a common perception amongst those who observed them was that too few of them were developing enough quality resources. Based on a discussion as to why students weren’t consistently using outstanding resources in their lessons, the following reasons were mentioned:

- at this stage in the placement, students are still focusing on organisation, behaviour and lesson content when planning so resources weren’t a priority
- well-thought-out and outstanding resources take time to develop and produce
- partnership schools may not be using resources consistently in their own lessons so trainees don’t see them as the norm.

To develop this area, both trainees and mentors need to see the production and use of outstanding resources as key ingredients of delivering outstanding lessons. It also goes hand-in-hand with facilitating individual pupil progress. Therefore, a tool was produced that would be used by the trainees and their mentors to:

- facilitate discussion around what makes an outstanding resource
- increase both the quantity and quality of resources being produced by trainees
- encourage trainees to reflect on the impact of their resources in their lessons
- support and further develop trainees’ understanding of what makes an outstanding lesson.

Who piloted it and why

The pilot was carried out with six trainees in the latter stages of the second placement. Some of these trainees were already using resources in lessons but their quality and impact could be improved. Some trainees were selected to develop their reflective skills, to further improve their planning and delivery of lessons. All trainees were asked to produce two or three resources considering the questions posed in the support tool. Following the delivery of the lesson, they were asked to complete the reflective section and discuss the impact with their mentors in their weekly meetings and as part of their lesson feedback.

Findings and impact

All trainees involved in this project developed resources and used them in their lessons. Both trainees and mentors commented that the support tool focused their thoughts in the planning stage on the reason for producing the resource. Trainees’ feedback stated that the questions provoked thought on the impact of the resource on the lessons and how they could significantly contribute to the delivery of outstanding lessons. The reflection stage of the project encouraged trainees to challenge their own practice and the impact they were having on pupils’ progress in lessons. In addition, a clear benefit was the professional dialogue that took place between the trainees and mentors around this piece of work.

Next steps

The tool will be built into the programme and used by trainees at some point on the course. It will also be integrated into a lecture on how outstanding resources can contribute to outstanding pupil progress. To challenge the more able trainees, or to support trainees who are struggling with their planning or delivery, this will be available for mentors to use with their trainees as a monitoring tool.

Collaboration is clearly something that everyone can benefit from. Therefore, it is important to decide how and where good ideas are shared. Suggestions include the SCITT/school learning platform or a web-based sharing application such as Dropbox or other customisable products. This will supplement the resources that currently exist in partnership schools.

Are Your Resources ‘Outstanding’?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R</th>
<th>Caffolds</th>
<th>Are the content and purpose clear and do they strengthen the pupils’ depth of knowledge?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Does it stimulate pupils and relate to their interests?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Does it provide support that can be adapted for each pupil to enable them to make progress towards their learning objectives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Is it differentiated to facilitate all pupils’ learning and understanding to enable progress?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Can you identify how and to what extent the resource helps pupils to achieve learning objectives?</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>Is it a well-thought-out, quality product that lasts the lesson or series of lessons?</td>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Is it imaginative, challenging and something that focuses your pupils’ attention?</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Does it build on prior knowledge and promote pupil independence and desire to gain further knowledge?</td>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Do all of your pupils understand the resource and what they are meant to achieve by using it?</td>
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Can you answer YES to these questions?
Using video analysis

What the project is about

As a partnership we have done a significant amount of work on identifying the characteristics of an outstanding trainee teacher and, as a result, staff from partnership schools can clearly articulate the difference between a good and an outstanding trainee teacher. Where they sometimes find it more difficult to make a judgement is if a trainee sits on the border between grades 1 and 2. To support staff in making this judgement, we set up a private YouTube channel for staff to upload clips of trainees’ teaching. These clips are shared with the trainees during weekly tutorials and with other staff at the annual moderation meeting.

Who piloted it and why

All schools in the partnership have been tasked with uploading clips to the YouTube channel. In addition, those trainees who were sitting on a grade 2 towards the last quarter of their final placement were specifically asked to discuss clips of themselves teaching in their weekly tutorial and highlight what they needed to do to improve further.

Findings and impact

Staff have commented on the usefulness of the video clips at the annual moderation meeting. Trainees have commented on the usefulness of observing themselves teaching and using the clips as a basis for discussing strengths and areas for improvement at the weekly tutorials.

Next steps

The YouTube channel will be developed further next year so that individual clips are referenced to the relevant Teachers’ Standards.
Effective behaviour management

What the project is about

A behaviour management tool was produced using a range of resources that had been used in two partnership schools. The aim was to create a working document that trainees could use to assist them in the planning and delivery of lessons. Through discussion we came up with the ‘3 Ps to successful behaviour management’. The 3 Ps are: policy, personal and planning. Within each P we identified three things trainees could do to improve the quality of their teaching and their behaviour management. In addition, we provided a series of strategies they could try in lessons; these were colour-coded to link to the 3 Ps.

Who piloted it and why

We identified four trainees who were either working in challenging schools or who were struggling with elements of behaviour management that were having an impact on the quality of their teaching. The behaviour resource was given to these trainees and they were asked to use it for certain classes or activities where they were having most issues.

Findings and impact of pilot

Trainee 1: “I have used a few of the strategies in my lessons. All the options are great and it’s good to have so many different strategies to use. I think it’s all about picking what strategy you might feel is suitable for that specific class as some classes don’t respond to the management technique. With regards to the cards specifically I think the first sheet with all the strategies may be too wordy and could maybe put someone off using it because there is so much writing.”

Trainee 2: “I have used it and I think that it is extremely useful and would benefit the trainees for next year right from the start. It is clear on how to use the different strategies. Because we only started using this after Easter we had already built up a bank of strategies ourselves and had settled into the classes but I think for the students next year on their first placement it would be highly beneficial for them. It is really useful for the practical lessons however and I have used it to battle some students. E.g. following the policy procedures and gaining respect from a student who now follows the rules.”

Generally the trainees who piloted the resource commented that their confidence and behaviour management within the class had improved.

Next steps

Following the trainees’ feedback, we will try to reduce the text on the front sheet to make this more user-friendly. All trainees will be presented with this document following their behaviour lectures in the second week of the new course and will have it for the year as a resource to use in lessons. Hopefully this will provide more support for trainees in the early stages of their placement.

The NE Partnership SCITT

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