

NaPTEC
National Primary Teacher Education Council

Policy Statement

September 2007

NaPTEC

National Primary Teacher Education Council

An Organisation Promoting Quality in Teacher Education

NaPTEC is a major body in the United Kingdom representing Higher Education (HEI) tutors, mentors, teachers and others in schools engaged in teaching, research and educational development related to the primary age range. Its origins date back to 1983 when a group of programme leaders and heads of department in the midlands and the north came together to establish a forum for articulating the primary voice in teacher education. Since then its membership has expanded across the UK and its activities diversified, especially in relation to staff development.

The model of the beginning primary teacher as that of an emerging professional rather than simply a technician is fundamental to NaPTEC's approach to teacher education. We consider the goal of primary initial teacher education is to produce a competent, critically aware and imaginative beginning teacher, engaging in the rigorous analysis of practice and responsive to change and development. This model of the teacher as the reflective practitioner informs our approach to teacher education, including the nature of our methodology, our styles of communication with students and the design of directed tasks and assignments. Continuing professional development and the benefits of research will consolidate and enhance initial teacher education and develop confident professionals capable of leadership and the management of teaching and learning in a complex and rapidly changing society.

The policy statement outlines the fundamental principles to inform decisions regarding the future of teacher education. These provide a focus for in-depth professional dialogue. It is important that all parties, including tutors in teacher education, students, teachers and other professionals, politicians, parents and other members of the public, take part in the debate and have opportunities to influence the decision making process.

NaPTEC is committed to provide a forum for tutors and others involved in primary teacher education to engage in such debate and to benefit from being part of a professional community.

1. Initial Teacher Education

In order to maintain and enhance quality in primary initial teacher education there must be a recognition of and commitment to:

- ◆ the complex and wide-ranging role of the primary teacher, working alongside parents, carers and professionals in support of children's learning and the promotion of their well-being;
- ◆ the model of generalist competence supported by the opportunity for some degree of specialisation;
- ◆ the central role of dialogue in learning and teaching as a medium for extending children's horizons;
- ◆ a view of the learner as actively engaged in constructing understanding and taking ownership of the processes of learning;

- ◆ an all graduate teaching profession and high quality professional preparation;
- ◆ the importance of continuing dialogue with professionals engaged in all phases of education;
- ◆ the distinctive contribution made by HEIs in initial teacher education, while acknowledging the flexibility provided by the wide range of routes into the profession;
- ◆ the enhancement and enrichment of the quality of the students' academic and professional experience beyond the standards and requirements for QTS.

2. *Higher Education Institutions in Partnership*

In working with a range of partners, which might embrace such institutions as museums, galleries, field study centres as well as schools and early years centres, there must be a recognition of and commitment to:

- ◆ the fostering of mutually beneficial partnerships with clearly articulated roles and responsibilities;
- ◆ the significant but not exclusive responsibility of HE tutors for encouraging and disseminating good practice, complementing the role of other partners with different experiences and perspectives related to the educational process.
- ◆ opportunities for discussion, reflection and critical appraisal of teaching and learning in a range of educational settings;
- ◆ the need for adequate funding to support high quality provision in all aspects and stages of professional preparation and training;
- ◆ the importance of international experiences which can extend professional awareness for both students and staff.

3. Professional Development

If there is to be continuity in initial preparation, induction and continuing professional development for primary teachers which is seen as vital to the well-being of the profession, then there must be a recognition of and commitment to:

- ◆ professional development responding to the individual agendas of teachers as well as local, national and international agendas;
- ◆ a more direct and proactive role for partnerships in the induction process for newly qualified teachers;
- ◆ the provision of opportunities for engaging in and benefiting from relevant research and scholarship;
- ◆ a model of research which is perceived as both supporting ‘cutting edge’ personal professional development and responding to national and international issues.

September 2007