

Cambridge Teaching Schools Network ITE Partnership

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Inspection Dates Stage 1: 30 June–2 July 2014

Stage 2: 20–22 October 2014

This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty’s Inspectors in accordance with the *ITE Inspection Handbook*. This handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from June 2014.

The inspection draws upon evidence from the secondary phase within the ITE partnership to make judgements against all parts of the evaluation schedule. Inspectors focused on the overall effectiveness of the ITE partnership in securing high-quality outcomes for trainees.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is requires improvement; grade 4 is inadequate

	Secondary QTS
Overall effectiveness How well does the partnership secure consistently high quality outcomes for trainees?	2
The outcomes for trainees	2
The quality of training across the partnership	2
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	2

Secondary routes

Information about this ITE partnership

- The Cambridge Teaching Schools Network (CTSN) is a partnership of three Teaching School alliances, five lead schools and a range of additional schools that include academies sponsored by the lead schools. The Teaching School alliances are led by Comberton Village College, Swavesey Village College and Saffron Walden County High School. Other lead schools are Parkside Community College and Coleridge Community College (The Parkside Federation). Since September 2014, CTSN is also a SCITT provider for Cambridge & Suffolk Schools Alliance and Anglian Gateway Teaching School alliances. In addition, Histon and Impington Junior School is the lead school for the primary provision that started in September 2014, after the first stage of the inspection.
- The partnership evolved from the Saffron Walden and Comberton employment-based initial teacher training partnership that was established in 2003. The partnership aims to address the need for high quality teachers in shortage subjects in the locality of Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Essex, Hertfordshire and Suffolk.
- The partnership provides School Direct (salaried and non-salaried) primary and secondary training routes leading to qualified teacher status (QTS). The inspection focused on the School Direct (salaried) secondary route that provided training at stage one and stage two of the inspection.
- Secondary training (11-16) is provided in English, mathematics, science (physics and chemistry), modern foreign languages, history, geography and computer science (salaried). The non-salaried route also includes art, design and technology, biology and drama.
- Trainees are recruited to a full-time, 12 month programme. In June 2014, 15 trainees had either completed or were completing their training.

Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- Inspectors visited eight schools at stage one, observing eight trainees teach. They also met with four other trainees to review their evidence in relation to the Teachers' Standards. At stage two, inspectors visited six schools and observed nine newly qualified teachers (NQTs) teaching. Three of the schools were visited at both stages of the inspection.
- Inspectors held discussions with individual trainees and NQTs, leaders and managers, mentors, subject leaders, induction co-ordinators and headteachers. Inspectors also took into account responses to the trainee

online questionnaire, which nine trainees completed in June 2014 and actions taken by leaders and managers to improve training and outcomes between the two stages of the inspection.

- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentary evidence including information on recruitment and selection, statutory safeguarding and compliance with the initial teacher training criteria, tracking, assessment and summary reports, records of trainees' teaching, and evidence of how well trainees' teaching meets the Teachers' Standards. The inspection team also reviewed the partnership's analysis of outcomes for trainees, evaluations of training, improvement planning and the partnership's website and online training resources.

Inspection team

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Overall Effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the secondary partnership are:

- the high employment rates and the contribution of the partnership to meeting local needs
- the increase in the recruitment of highly qualified trainees and trainees who reach an outstanding level of teaching
- the wide experience and expertise of trainers and increasing breadth of training settings used, including placements in contrasting schools
- the good quality of mentoring, supported by mentor training, written guidance and support provided for mentors
- the cohesive vision for initial teacher education and continuing professional development, including subject leadership development
- efficient management, supported by effective communications, which contribute to a strong ethos of professionalism across the partnership.

What does the secondary partnership need to do to improve further?

The partnership should:

- Ensure that all trainees' teaching is consistently good or outstanding by the end of their training by:
 - increasing evidence of trainees' impact on pupils' progress over time, including examples of work by different groups of pupils
 - strengthening trainees' awareness of, and contribution to, the focus of improvement in their subjects and partnership schools
 - reviewing individual training plans rigorously, to pursue any further action required to enable trainees to exceed the requirements of the Teachers' Standards.
- Ease trainees' transition and promote their progression as newly qualified teachers by:
 - making clearer the summary of trainees' strengths and how they plan to build on areas of excellence as NQTs
 - providing more explicit targets for further development, particularly in relation to pupils' outcomes.
- Engage all schools and school leaders in the partnership in helping to realise the aim to demonstrate outstanding effectiveness by:
 - making closer links between the initial teacher training partnership and school improvement plans
 - ensuring that partnership systems are applied consistently well and, where appropriate, are shared with other employing schools.

Inspection Judgements

1. The overall effectiveness of the Cambridge Teaching Schools Network ITE partnership is good. Committed staff, efficient management and effective communications combine to provide a supportive and very professional training experience which is highly rated by trainees. Continuously improving outcomes over the last three years are underpinned by effective leadership. This is reflected in the swift actions taken to improve following feedback given at the end of stage one of the inspection.
2. Almost all trainees exceed the minimum level of practice as defined by the Teachers' Standards by the end of their training. There are no significant differences in the progress made by different groups of trainees. The higher proportion of trainees that reached an outstanding level of teaching in 2014, reflects the recruitment of more highly qualified trainees. All trainees demonstrate high standards of personal and professional conduct.

3. The partnership is compliant with the ITT criteria and meets all the relevant safeguarding and other statutory requirements for promoting equality and diversity, and eliminating discrimination. Trainees benefit from the efforts made by leaders to widen their experience of schools working in ethnically and socio-economically diverse settings.
4. Employment rates are high. All trainees who completed the training successfully gained employment in schools, mostly within the partnership. School leaders value the contribution of the partnership to meeting local needs in shortage subjects. Completion and employment rates are consistently above national norms. Two trainees continuing their training due to personal circumstances are receiving good support to complete.
5. Training across the partnership is supported by very experienced trainers in the lead schools. These include specialist leaders in education (SLE) and national leaders in education (NLE). Effective professional development, high levels of attendance at mentor training and robust quality assurance contribute to consistently good quality training. The partnership schools rate the quality of guidance and training highly. The role of professional tutors in monitoring the impact of training, for example through joint observations of teaching and feedback, contributes very positively to improving outcomes for trainees. Course leaders provide additional support judiciously, for example where schools or mentors are new to the partnership.
6. Trainees show good understanding of the Teachers' Standards. Most trainees build a comprehensive range of evidence as they progress through their training. A weaker aspect of trainees' evidence is the lack of information about the impact of their teaching on pupils' progress over time, for example by annotating examples of work by the same pupil or different groups of pupils. Similarly, not all NQTs had displayed examples of pupils' work in their classrooms, or used progress data to evaluate their teaching. The partnership's response to stage one of the inspection has raised expectations of trainees in relation to the evidence they provide about the quality of their teaching and its impact on pupils' learning.
7. Reviews of the Teachers' Standards contribute regularly to discussions between trainees, mentors and professional tutors. However, the focus on exceeding the Teachers' Standards is not relentless enough to ensure that the teaching of all trainees is good or outstanding by the end of their training. Since stage one of this inspection additional strategies have been introduced to raise trainees' performance and increase awareness of their progress and attainment. These include self-assessment trackers using more clearly defined starting points for trainees and individual action plans that target specific standards not yet

exceeded. It is, however, too early to judge whether these new systems and procedures will raise standards further.

8. Continuity between each stage of the training is helped by good communication, including transfer of relevant documentation. In all of the partnership schools visited, evaluative use of the Teachers' Standards by NQTs contributed to the trainees' transition into teaching. However, where trainees gain employment in schools beyond the partnership, the standards are not always used frequently enough to improve aspects of their performance as NQTs.
9. Trainees and NQTs are ambitious for their teaching and their pupils. They respond purposefully to the advice and guidance given. They use opportunities well to observe teaching by their peers, or by more experienced staff. Although all NQTs had received feedback from formal and informal observations very few had been given the opportunity to observe other staff teach. An outstanding trainee who had quickly become a self-motivated and reflective NQT took the initiative to strengthen his A-level teaching by making productive links with a different school he had encountered through the training.
10. Trainees' subject knowledge is a consistent strength. Rigorous recruitment and selection are contributory factors. The partnership is very successful in the recruitment of trainees with good degrees and relevant experience. This has a positive impact on outcomes. For example, an outstanding history trainee used her experience as a teaching assistant, working with pupils learning English as an additional language, to adapt her teaching materials to the wide range of pupils' needs in her class. Subject audits are used effectively to address any gaps in trainees' subject knowledge early. Strong subject leaders within the partnership, some leading initiatives with professional associations nationally, add to the breadth and depth of expertise available. Five days of good quality subject-specific training complement the weekly programme of professional studies. Trainees' and NQTs' subject knowledge has a discernible impact on their confidence to set suitably high expectations, for example through challenging activities and asking searching questions.
11. The training enables trainees and NQTs to develop professional and productive relationships with pupils. The partnership has improved trainees' confidence in managing pupils' behaviour following critical feedback from previous trainee surveys. Almost all trainees and NQTs are able to engage different groups of pupils well. Conscientious lesson planning, imaginative resources and well-timed intervention are common strengths where trainees and NQTs are successful in promoting good progress for different groups in the class.

12. The quality of trainees' and NQTs' feedback to pupils contributes positively to pupils' progress in lessons. However, the quality of their marking is inconsistent. Not all NQTs have used their marking effectively to establish high expectations of presentation, spelling, grammar and punctuation. One had been discouraged from continuing the high quality marking he had started, due to the concerns of experienced staff about the time taken. The resilience required of trainees to succeed and grow professionally as NQTs, particularly in schools that are not in the partnership, is an area to strengthen.
13. Trainees encounter a wide range of relevant topics and assignments. As a result, they are well-informed about the new National Curriculum and changes to assessment and testing in their subject. Experience as form tutors develops the skills they require to monitor pupils' personal well-being and academic progress. The range of experiences provided helps prepare trainees to teach personal social and health education (PSHE), support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and to work with sixth form pupils. The partnership has innovative plans to help trainees promote continuity between primary and secondary phases by developing links with the new primary training programme.
14. Trainees and NQTs are well-informed about school routines, policies and procedures. As a consequence, they become integrated quickly into school life. However, they do not always have enough knowledge of their school to contribute to wider improvement. For example, not all trainees or NQTs are aware of the focus of improvement in their placement schools, or in the schools to which they have been appointed. Lack of knowledge about trends in achievement for different groups of pupils, in their subject, or across their school, limits their impact on pupils' outcomes. Course leaders have started to address this issue in order to increase trainees' and NQTs' role in contributing to school improvement.
15. Transition from initial teacher training to induction is facilitated by close links between partnership schools and the staff who contribute to the training. Most trainees have gained employment within the partnership. Nevertheless, not all NQTs or mentors, including those in partnership schools find the summary of trainees' strengths and areas for development clear enough to build on. In particular, the areas for development do not make targets for NQTs clear enough in relation to the expected impact of their improvements on pupil's outcomes. Conversely, the high quality differentiated resources that contributed to an outstanding modern foreign languages trainee's effectiveness was not recognised. Her resources are now influencing more experienced colleagues. The quality of NQT induction and materials is largely dependent upon the employing school.

16. Between stage one and two of this inspection, the partnership development plan had been supplemented by a three-year strategic plan. Priorities include development of the new primary and secondary non-salaried courses and integration of the new partner alliances. This reflects the changing and expanding local needs well. The wider work of the Cambridge Teaching Schools Network, which includes a cohesive vision for initial teacher education and continuing professional development, is not fully reflected in the actions planned. For example, in articulating how planned actions will maximise the skills of the rising proportion of outstanding trainees and NQTs in relation to meeting the need for emergent leaders. The partnership acknowledges the need to engage school leaders in linking school and partnership plans more effectively.
17. Trainees who responded to Ofsted's trainee online questionnaire felt confident in most aspects of their work but a few felt less secure about promoting learners' mathematical skills in the context of their subject. Inspection evidence supports trainees' positivity about the range and quality of placements used. Trainees agreed that their training had helped to make them a good or better teacher and enabled them to secure employment. Inspectors received strongly supportive comments from trainees and NQTs about the quality of training, leadership and management. The good capacity for improvement demonstrated by course leaders in response to this inspection positions the partnership well to build on this secure reputation.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to meet with providers, analyse documentation and observe trainees' and newly qualified teachers' (NQTs') teaching:

Comberton Village School, Comberton, Cambridgeshire
Chesterton Community College, Chesterton, Cambridgeshire
Coleridge Community College, Cambridgeshire
Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport, Essex
Nene Park Academy, Peterborough
Sawtry Community College, Huntingdon
Saffron Walden County High School, Saffron Walden, Essex
St Mary's Catholic High School, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire
St Ivo School, St Ives, Cambridgeshire
Swavesey Village College, Swavesey, Cambridgeshire
The Voyager Academy, Peterborough

