

# Leicester and Leicestershire SCITT ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 29 June 2015

Stage 2: 23 November 2015

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This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors, in accordance with the 'Initial teacher education inspection handbook'. This handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from September 2015.

The inspection draws on evidence from 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 judgments: Grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is requires improvement; grade 4 is inadequate

	<b>Primary QTS</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b> How well does the partnership secure consistently high quality outcomes for trainees?	1
<b>The outcomes for trainees</b>	1
<b>The quality of training across the partnership</b>	1
<b>The quality of leadership and management across the partnership</b>	1

## The primary phase

### Information about the primary partnership

- The Leicester and Leicestershire ITE partnership provides early primary (3–7) and primary (5–11) school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) for graduates. Trainees who successfully complete their training are recommended for qualified teacher status (QTS) and gain a Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) that includes 60 credits at masters level from the University of Wolverhampton.
- The partnership provides two training routes for trainees: the School Direct route and the core-training route.
- The partnership consists of 65 schools within Leicester and Leicestershire local authorities. It has close links with Abbey Teaching School Alliance, Ash Field Academy Teaching School, Oadby Launde Partnership Teaching School Alliance, and Syston and Thurmaston Educational Partnership in Leicester and the Devon SCITT.
- During Stage 1 of the inspection, there were 32 trainees on the core-training route and 24 on the School Direct route.

### Information about the primary ITE inspection

- Inspectors visited six schools at Stage 1 of the inspection, observing 10 trainees teach. They also met with a further 10 trainees in school to review their evidence in relation to the teachers' standards. Inspectors also met with eight trainees in the SCITT base to seek their views on the quality of their training.
- At Stage 2, inspectors visited seven schools, observing 12 newly qualified teachers (NQTs) teach. They also met with two other NQTs. Inspectors also reviewed the transition documentation and targets for induction. Two of the schools were visited at both stages of the inspection.
- During Stage 1, the lead inspector observed the recruitment process for the 2015/2016 candidates.
- Inspectors held discussions with individual trainees and NQTs, leaders and managers, mentors, trainers, induction mentors, headteachers, and members of the SCITT management board. Inspectors also took into account the responses to the trainee online questionnaire completed in July 2015, the partnership's own trainee questionnaire, the current NQT survey, and the actions taken by leaders and managers to improve training and outcomes between stages 1 and 2 of the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the new website. Inspectors also reviewed recruitment and selection procedures, training materials, tracking information and assessment data.

- Inspectors also reviewed the partnership's self-evaluation, improvement plan, analysis of outcomes for trainees, and feedback from partnership and non-partnership schools.

## **Inspection team**

Jan Connor, HMI lead inspector

Jane Neech, HMI assistant lead inspector

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Grade: 1**

### **The key strengths of the primary partnership are:**

- The vision and drive of all partnership leaders ensure the partnership strives to innovate and improve practice continuously. As a result, it provides highly qualified and motivated teachers for the national workforce.
- The course leader and deputy course leader have created a culture where high standards and a passion for improving outcomes for pupils permeate every aspect of the course.
- The highly skilled management board provides strong challenge and support to partnership leaders. Consequently, there is a timely and focused review of the effectiveness of the partnership's actions to improve the quality of its training.
- The partnership has developed strong and productive partnerships with a wide variety of schools within the Leicester and Leicestershire region. This has proved to be mutually beneficial in sharing high quality practice among partnership and non-partnership schools.
- Trainees and former trainees demonstrate strong professional and personal attributes that make them greatly sought after by schools. As a result, employment rates are continuously high.
- Outstanding school and centre-based training ensures that trainees move seamlessly into their roles as newly qualified teachers. A wide variety of further training and support for former trainees supports them to develop their new roles quickly.
- The quality of training in phonics (the sounds letters make), English, and mathematics prepares trainees and former trainees well to become effective teachers of these key subjects.
- Excellent communication across the partnership ensures all stakeholders know and understand their roles. This results in a cohesive and efficient organisation. The partnership works collaboratively with schools who support trainees and also with schools who employ the newly qualified teachers.

## What does the primary partnership need to do to improve further?

### The partnership should:

- Increase the proportion of trainees who achieve grade 1 (outstanding) on the early primary course so that it is at least in line with the proportion of trainees who achieve this grade on the primary course.
- Increase the proportion of:
  - high-quality male trainees accepted onto both the primary and early primary routes
  - high-quality trainees from different ethnic backgrounds onto both the primary and early primary routes.

### Inspection judgements

- The overall effectiveness of Leicester and Leicestershire ITE partnership is outstanding. The commitment and determination of both course leaders and partnership schools to seek out and train high-calibre teachers of the future are evident in every aspect of the SCITT's work.
- All trainees who complete their training exceed the minimum standards required for qualified teacher status. Outcomes are outstanding for all trainees and groups of trainees in both the core and School Direct routes. In 2015, nearly three quarters of trainees achieved an outstanding grade for their final assessment. There are no significant differences between the outcomes for core or School Direct trainees as a result of the strong quality assurance systems across the partnership. Outcomes for male and female trainees are also similar and have been so for the last three years.
- The SCITT developed a new early primary course in 2014/2015. The proportion of trainees who achieved an outstanding grade on the well-established primary course exceeded that of trainees on the early primary course. Course leaders are fully aware of this gap and have already taken action to address it. However, it is too early to report on the success of their actions.
- The proportion of trainees completing their course exceeds the national average. The completion rates for both males and females and for the core and School Direct routes are high. Retention rates for all trainees over the last three years are well above the national average.
- Headteachers from partnership schools support course leaders in the rigorous selection process. Candidates' suitability for teaching is assessed through audits of their subject knowledge, through school-based activities and through interview. From the selection process, successful trainees have a personalised and comprehensive training programme devised to meet their needs. This ensures they have all the necessary competencies to begin

teaching in schools. Trainees make rapid progress from the start of their training and quickly demonstrate proficiency when measured against the teachers' standards (QTS). All trainees spoken with and those who completed the online questionnaire agreed that they had gone through a demanding process to be selected. Course leaders are absolutely committed to ensure only the best candidates gain a place.

- As a result of the progress trainees make, many trainees receive offers of employment well before the end of their course. Overall employment rates are high. Every trainee seeking employment for the last three years has been employed by the end of his or her training. In Leicester, the demand for Leicester and Leicestershire SCITT trainees outstrips the supply. Headteachers spoken with during the inspection repeatedly said trainees were sought after because of their high levels of subject knowledge, their professionalism, and their understanding of how pupils learn.
- The impact of the support from highly skilled and committed course tutors, SCITT mentors, and the rigorous systems for checking the progress of trainees is evident in the confident and competent newly qualified teachers seen in schools. Course leaders know their trainees very well. There is a strong sense of 'family' within the SCITT. Leaders are aware not only of the intellectual needs but also the personal needs of trainees. As a result, trainees' placements are well crafted to suit their learning needs. Course leaders respond rapidly to any difficulties that arise and resolve them immediately. Many headteachers commented on the commitment and care that course leaders show to trainees in order for them to achieve and achieve well. As a result, trainees complete their courses and find employment quickly.
- Trainees and former trainees rapidly establish safe, secure environments for learning. Classrooms are bright and display pupils' continued learning well. During both stages of the inspection, trainees and former trainees managed pupils' behaviour exceptionally well. In every classroom visited, positive climates for learning promoted pupils' confidence to 'have a go'. In an early years classroom, very young children spontaneously applauded a child who had succeeded in his learning. This mutual respect and celebration was mirrored in many classrooms visited.
- Trainees and former trainees model positive behaviour very well. Trainees and former trainees said the centre-based training for managing behaviour was instrumental in providing them with a variety of different ways to support their pupils. Placements in challenging schools help trainees to develop the necessary resilience when helping pupils modify and improve their behaviour. As a result, trainees demonstrated high levels of confidence in managing their pupils' behaviour appropriately in a variety of circumstances.

- Trainees are extremely positive about the quality of feedback and support from school-based mentors and visiting tutors. Targets for improvement challenge trainees to reflect carefully on the quality of their teaching. Subject tutors and course leaders provide valuable support to trainees as they learn to teach across a wide variety of subjects in the National Curriculum. Systems for checking the quality of training and school-based support, including joint observations, the quality assurance of assessments and the moderation of grades against the teachers' standards (QTS) means the quality of training and assessment are consistently high.
- Partnership schools provide high-quality training environments. All trainees and former trainees spoken with felt that the variety of placements offered by the partnership strengthened their understanding of schools in very different socio-economic circumstances. As a result, trainees and former trainees moved between their placements and employment easily. One school mentor commented that she had to keep reminding herself that the NQT was only in her first year of teaching because of how quickly she adapted to the new school and showed proficiency in the classroom.
- Headteachers say trainees are well prepared to teach phonics, reading, and writing. This is because of subject tutors' outstanding subject knowledge and current school practice. Tutors carefully check the progress of trainees and offer further bespoke training to those trainees who need support. In teaching observed, trainees and former trainees demonstrated excellent subject knowledge of phonics. The impact of this was clearly seen in the good progress pupils were making in learning to read and write. Every stakeholder spoken with during the inspection expressed the same view that the quality of the centre-based training meant trainees and former trainees displayed confidence and a secure understanding of how to support pupils in these key subjects.
- In mathematics, trainees demonstrated sound subject knowledge of the mathematics mastery curriculum. Their use of problem solving, careful choice of resources and teaching methods ensure their teaching is effective. The centre-based subject tutors broaden and deepen trainees' understanding of mathematics because of their own excellent up-to-date school practice.
- Although the centre-based training for physical education provides trainees with the subject knowledge and skills they need to teach this subject, not all trainees feel confident to do so. Trainees said this is because they do not always have the opportunity to teach physical education consistently during their teaching practices.
- Trainees and former trainees understand the need to plan learning tasks to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. It is a credit to the SCITT that during a year of changing assessment practice in schools, trainees and former trainees demonstrate a good understanding of how to track and

assess the progress of pupils. A considerable strength of the course is the way trainees and former trainees reflect on their teaching. During Stage 1, inspectors observed robust learning conversations with SCITT mentors that challenged trainees' thinking about the impact of their teaching. This was also observed in Stage 2 when former trainees spoke eloquently about the quality of learning and progress in their lessons.

- Trainees and former trainees are exceptionally well prepared to contribute to the wider life of their schools. That trainees willingly take part in clubs and other school activities is noteworthy. Former trainees are already contributing to the development of pupils' assessment and the curriculum in their new schools. Trainees and former trainees are ambitious to make a difference quickly. Many former trainees rise rapidly to positions of leadership within their schools due to the quality of their preparation for teaching.
- Trainees are well prepared for employment. Partnership headteachers provide workshops in how to complete job applications and manage interviews. During Stage 2 of the inspection, headteachers from both partnership and non-partnerships schools said the reason they employed SCITT trainees was the quality of their knowledge and understanding of teaching at interview.
- The excellent quality of training and support extends into trainees' first year of teaching and beyond. Targets for NQTs take trainees seamlessly into their new roles. Schools welcome the transition week when the trainees visit their employing schools during the end of their training. Schools highly value the opportunity to ensure trainees understand policies, practice and procedures before they begin their new roles. Trainees also meet their new classes and staff. As a result, trainees are well prepared to begin their life as a newly qualified teacher.
- The partnership uses its resources well to provide a wealth of further training for NQTs. Twilight sessions looking at the assessment of the skills and capabilities of very young children support early years teachers in understanding what their children need to learn. Enhanced training in English and mathematics provides NQTs with the support and resources they need to teach well. The partnership also works with the Abbey Teaching Alliance to provide a structured NQT course over a period of six weeks. NQTs not only learn but also share their successes and challenges with others. The feedback from those attending is overwhelmingly positive and the course is sought after.
- This valuable support is widened so that school mentors also have opportunities to improve their skills in supporting NQTs. Without exception, those mentors who attended the training said it supported them in providing even more focused support and help to their NQTs.

- Trainees' and former trainees' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire and the NQTs' responses to the National College for Teaching and Leadership's survey indicate well above average levels of satisfaction with all aspects of their training. A particularly strong response in the NQT survey demonstrates overwhelmingly that former trainees feel confident to teach phonics, English, and mathematics. Former trainees also feel strongly that they are able to reflect on the progress of pupils and meet their needs.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The course leader and deputy course leader are passionate about developing excellent teachers for schools in Leicester and beyond. Their leadership has been instrumental in ensuring the partnership has maintained its high standards and excellent quality of training since the previous inspection and has also improved upon them.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is rigorous and exact. Their analysis of the partnership's strengths and areas for development mean improvement planning is accurate. Resources are well targeted to areas of need and tight timeframes for improvement ensure that improvements happen quickly. For example, leaders identified the gap last year in the attainment of early primary trainees. They immediately changed the course content and developed further resources and support to close the gap this year.
- Partnership leaders are very aware of the need to attract more high-quality male trainees to the course. They are also aware that the proportion of different ethnic groups represented within the partnership, although in line with the national average, is an aspect to improve. Leaders have taken action this year to attract a wider cross section of trainees. The partnership website is much improved. It better reflects the rich diversity of Leicester city and beyond. Early indications show an upturn of interest from the target groups.
- Course leaders and the partnership as a whole acted with urgency to address the areas for development from Stage 1. As a result, the role of the management board has strengthened further so that members are able to provide even tighter and timely challenge to course leaders with regard to the impact of their work.
- The management board is highly motivated and ambitious to ensure the partnership provides an outstanding quality of training and excellent teachers for schools in Leicester and Leicestershire. It regularly reviews the improvement plan and checks the quality of provision through regular visits to training and by quality assuring the school-based visits by SCITT tutors. Engagement of partnership schools is high and all stakeholders see the benefit of the high-quality training in their schools through improved outcomes for pupils.
- The partnership complies with the criteria for initial teacher training. All safeguarding and other statutory requirements for the promotion of equality and diversity and the elimination of discrimination are in place.

## **Annex: Partnership schools**

The following schools were visited to observe trainees' and former trainees' teaching:

Braunstone Community Primary School, Leicester

Broom Leys Primary School, Coalville

Buswells Lodge Primary School, Leicester

Christ The King Catholic Primary School, Leicester

Dovelands Primary School, Leicester

Eastfield Primary School, Leicester

Mayflower Primary School, Leicester

Montrose Primary School, Leicester

Parks Primary School, Leicester

Rowlatts Hill Primary School, Leicester

Willowbrook Primary School, Leicester

## ITE partnership details

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<b>Type of ITE partnership</b>	SCITT
<b>Phases provided</b>	Primary
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 May 2009
<b>Previous inspection report</b>	<a href="http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/70163">http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/70163</a>

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