

Staffordshire University ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 25–27 April 2016 Stage 2: 21–23 November 2016

This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty’s Inspectors and Ofsted 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 each phase and separate route 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

	Early years ITT (EYTS)	Primary QTS	Secondary QTS	ITE in FE
Overall effectiveness How well does the partnership secure consistently high quality outcomes for trainees?	2	2	2	2
The outcomes for trainees	2	2	2	2
The quality of training across the partnership	2	2	2	2
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	2	2	2	2

Overview of the ITE partnership

The overall effectiveness of the ITE partnership is good in early years ITT; good in primary; good in secondary and good in further education.

This is because outcomes for trainees, the quality of training, and leadership and management are good in all four phases.

Key findings

- The partnership's high-quality training produces teachers whose teaching is consistently good, and sometimes outstanding; this enables most children, young people and adults to make good progress in their learning.
- Trainees use their strong subject and age-phase knowledge effectively to inspire and motivate pupils and learners to engage in learning. The centre-based training for mathematics in the primary phase is a particular strength.
- The development of most trainees is underpinned by a consistent focus on the teachers' standards and the professional standards for further education (FE) teachers and trainers.
- Trainees' and newly qualified teachers' (NQTs') and former trainees' professional attitudes mean that they are willing and eager to improve their teaching skills continuously.
- In most phases, the involvement of partnership schools and colleges in a rigorous selection and recruitment process makes sure that trainees who are offered training places have the necessary drive and commitment to become good teachers.
- The strong relationship between the university and its partner institutions is underpinned by good communication, which contributes to trainees' progress and standards.
- Leaders have a strong commitment to ensuring that outcomes improve quickly for pupils and learners in the local area and beyond. They have a clear vision to do this by ensuring the continued supply of highly skilled teachers.
- Leaders' quick and effective response to identified areas for improvement demonstrates the partnerships' capacity for improvement.

To improve the ITE partnership should:

- Further develop the rigour of quality assurance arrangements and ensure that they are implemented consistently and systematically across all phases.

- Review the systems for awarding final grades to ensure that tutors and mentors consistently apply assessment criteria.
- Improve the arrangements for monitoring the quality and consistency of mentoring to ensure that all trainees benefit from the high standards experienced by most.

Information about this ITE partnership

- The Staffordshire University Partnership works with over 100 colleges, early year providers, primary and secondary schools across the West Midlands.
- The partnership offers one-year postgraduate certificates in education (PGCE) in primary and secondary teacher training through PGCE and School Direct routes into teaching.
- Early years teachers status (EYTS) is also offered through a one-year PGCE course, and a three-year undergraduate award combined with BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies.
- The post-compulsory education and training (PCET) partnership is well established and it currently has seven partner colleges who deliver both the Certificate in Education and the PGCE (PCET) awards via an in-service route, and an additional one-year PGCE offered at the university campus.

The early years ITT phase

Information about the early years ITT partnership

- Staffordshire University currently works in partnership with approximately 38 day-care settings and schools to deliver early years initial teacher training (EYITT). Most settings are in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.
- The partnership offers two different training programmes which, on successful completion, lead to early years teacher status (EYTS).
- Trainees follow either a full-time, undergraduate route and gain a Bachelor of Arts with Honours degree (BA (Hons)) in Early Childhood Studies leading to EYTS, or undertake a part-time, one-year, employer-based route for postgraduates. The latter leads to a PGCE in EYTS. Trainees on the part-time route must be employed in early years settings for at least four days a week and attend university one day per week.
- The undergraduate programme began in September 2013; the postgraduate programme began in September 2015. Both courses are newly developed and the first cohorts of both programmes completed their training in July 2016. Five trainees attained a BA (Hons) degree and six trainees attained a PGCE. There are 24 trainees currently studying for EYTS on these programmes.
- All trainees follow an early years (0–5 years) training programme.

Information about the early years ITT inspection

- One inspector led stage 1 of the inspection and another led stage 2.
- During stage 1, the inspector observed two trainees from the postgraduate programme teach children in a nursery and primary school. She carried out each observation jointly with the setting-based mentor. The inspector observed the mentors' feedback to the trainees. They made further contact with mentors of the undergraduate trainees by telephone to gain their views and held a meeting with one of the university's trainers. The inspector examined recruitment, selection and safeguarding documentation, together with information provided on the university's website.
- During stage 2, the inspector observed four former trainees in their current employment in either day nursery or primary school. She also observed a university-taught session for undergraduates and gathered trainees' opinions on their experiences. Discussions with former trainees took place and their views were considered. Minutes of strategic management meetings were reviewed. The inspector observed part of a child development training session for trainees on the BA programme, most of whom are in their second year.

- At both stages, inspectors met with programme leaders, mentors in settings and trainees. Trainees' files were scrutinised. The inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including: self-evaluation and improvement plans; programme content; mentor handbooks; partnership agreements; and information relating to trainees' progress and outcomes. Inspectors also evaluated the 11 responses to the Ofsted online trainee survey and the university's own postgraduate survey.
- The inspectors reviewed documentation relating to statutory safeguarding as well as compliance with the early years initial teacher training criteria.

Inspection team

Sonja Oyen OI (phase lead inspector) stage 1

Heather Simpson HMI (phase lead inspector) stage 2.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the early years ITT partnership are:

- Leaders' enthusiastic, ambitious and responsive approach to addressing the needs of individual trainees and improving the quality of the programme in order to produce high-quality early years practitioners. Leaders are committed and determined to promote the value of early years teacher status in the sector.
- Good-quality training that equips trainees with a secure knowledge and understanding of how children learn and develop in their formative years. A good balance of work experience and academic teaching enhances this knowledge.
- The good range of enrichment opportunities provided for trainees to allow them to observe and develop a wider range of skills. Visits to other settings and additional qualifications, gained, for example, in 'Forest Schools', add to trainees' knowledge of alternative teaching strategies and broaden their experiences.
- Trainees' well-developed understanding and recognition of the importance of safeguarding children. All trainees exceed the minimum requirements in promoting the welfare of children and providing a safe environment; some demonstrate excellence in this area.
- The successful promotion of teaching as a vocation by university staff, which results in an ongoing commitment by undergraduates to remain in higher education and undertake further training to achieve qualified teacher status.

- Trainees and early years teachers display high standards of personal and professional conduct. Many trainees quickly take on leadership roles due to their commitment to making a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of their setting.

What does the early years ITT partnership need to do to improve further?

The partnership should:

- Strengthen the consistency in the quality of mentoring by:
 - checking the commitment and expertise of mentors to ensure that they are able to provide trainees with the time and support needed
 - increasing training opportunities for mentors so that they have the skills and knowledge needed to fulfil the role effectively
 - further developing quality assurance systems and moderation of mentors' assessments and judgments of trainees, so that they are accurate and matched against the teachers' standards (early years) at all times.
- Improve the leadership and management of the partnership by:
 - ensuring that trainees gain experience in contrasting socio-economic settings, and settings which Ofsted has judged to be less than good.
 - heightening all trainees' knowledge, understanding and skills in working with children who speak English as an additional language
 - ensuring the involvement of practitioners from partnership settings in selecting trainees and contributing to the development and evaluation of EYTS programmes.

Inspection judgements

1. The overall effectiveness of the partnership in the early years phase is good. Trainees are well prepared to work with children between 0 and 5 years. They have a positive attitude to learning. They demonstrate a willingness to apply themselves to academic study and to improve their teaching by practising what they have learned in their lessons.
2. The partnership complies fully with the EYITT criteria and meets all the relevant safeguarding and other statutory requirements for promoting equality, diversity and eliminating discrimination. Trainees and early years teachers (EYTs) act as good role models for children and other adults in their settings, as they lead by example and demonstrate high levels of professional conduct. Their behaviour management skills are effective; trainees create safe and calm environments in

which children can thrive. High numbers of trainees exceed the levels expected in relation to the early years teacher standards for fulfilling their wider professional responsibilities.

3. Recruitment is effective, as seen in the steady number of graduate trainees who study part time, and the increasing number who choose the full-time programme. No discernible differences are evident in the quality of training for the different routes. Selection procedures are rigorous, as demonstrated by the resilient, dedicated and reflective attitudes of trainees. As the programmes are becoming more established, more males and members of minority ethnic groups are joining the training.
4. The outcomes for trainees are good. Almost all trainees successfully completed their training in 2016. Withdrawal rates for current trainees are low. Those who leave the course do so for valid personal reasons. Employment rates are high and some former trainees have already gained promotion as a result of their increased skills and knowledge. Most of those who completed the undergraduate route have continued in higher education and are working towards qualified teacher status. This demonstrates their satisfaction and appreciation of the training received, and their ongoing commitment to teaching children.
5. In 2016, all trainees exceeded the minimum level of practice set out in the early years teacher standards. Particular strengths include setting high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge all children, safeguarding and promoting children's welfare, and fulfilling their wider professional responsibilities. However, fewer trainees demonstrated strengths in planning and adapting education and care to meet the needs of all children.
6. The quality of training across the partnership is good. Trainees are confident in their ability to teach and to lead others. They build positive relationships with children, parents and other staff. They have good subject knowledge of teaching early phonics, literacy and mathematical development. Regular assignments and tasks during placements foster trainees' ability to be critically reflective. This aids their planning and improves their ability to self-evaluate, and identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Tutors and leaders provide high levels of care and support to ensure that trainees understand and carry out what is expected of them. They also provide good-quality feedback on assignments with an appropriate focus on improving academic performance.
7. Due to constant evaluation and review of training, leaders have increased the level of focus placed on child development from 0 to 5 years. They have revised course content, with additional visits and speakers, and held conferences. Modules such as 'brain development' together with 'approaches to literacy and numeracy acquisition' contribute to trainees' good understanding of how children learn. Trainees apply the theory well in practice. The vast majority of

learning activities observed during both stages of the inspection demonstrated children making good gains in their physical, social and emotional development due to carefully planned activities and high levels of good-quality adult support. The majority of trainees have a good awareness of, and take account of, the individual needs of children in their settings, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

8. Managers and staff give safeguarding and promoting children's welfare the highest priority and this translates effectively into training. As a result, trainees have a good knowledge and understanding of how to keep children safe, and what action to take if they have concerns. Staff integrate training in preventing extremism and radicalisation well, together with first aid skills. Staff assessed all trainees who completed their training in 2016 as achieving above the levels required in this aspect of early years provision, and over half as excelling in this aspect. Some former trainees have gone on to take on the leadership role for safeguarding within their settings due to their detailed knowledge and understanding.
9. Leadership and management of the partnership are good. This is demonstrated through the commitment, enthusiasm and determination of a small team to meet local needs and raise the profile of early years teacher status. Leaders set high expectations for trainees and check and follow up attendance issues stringently. They regularly seek trainees' views and respond to issues which arise. For example, managers have withdrawn placements from the partnership where trainees report that they are not fully supported.
10. Most placements used for training purposes are of high quality. Leaders ensure that trainees gain experience of the full age range between 0 and 5 years and an opportunity to see how learning continues in key stage 1 in school. However, there are very few settings in the partnership which are less than good and which provide trainees with a different perspective on day care or school improvement. Leaders allocate placements according to the geographical location of settings. They do not ensure that trainees gain a sufficiently diverse or contrasting work experience; for example, working with children who speak English as an additional language, or teaching in settings which are in challenging socio-economic areas. Trainees, therefore, lack the opportunity to develop additional or alternative teaching strategies in a wider range of settings to meet the needs of different groups of children. Former trainees did not think that these aspects were covered well enough during their training.
11. Leaders responded very quickly and positively to feedback provided at stage 1 of the inspection. They carried out a thorough review of their documentation and made improvements to current systems and procedures. For example, the teacher observation pack provided for trainees and mentors now requires trainees to make clear the learning intentions for lessons taught, together with more explicit reference to meeting the needs of children with different abilities.

Managers have also revised and improved the annual calendar for monitoring trainees and taught programmes. Staff have placed a greater emphasis on the teaching of literacy and mathematical development. They check the quality of trainees' abilities to teach these areas on each placement. Career profiles and clear targets aid trainees in their transition to employed roles. Managers in settings report that these initial targets provide useful starting points upon which they can build.

12. Trainees are positive about the range of enrichment opportunities provided. Former trainees described the benefits of visiting outstanding settings and observing different teaching methods, and the impact this had on their own practice. The opportunity to engage in 'Forest Schools' strongly enhanced their understanding of the use of outdoor learning. A greater number of visiting speakers and external trainers are included in the programme content and contribute to trainees' wider skills and knowledge, for example in information technology. Tutors have also developed online resources, which enable them to set pre-course activities to accelerate trainees' progress, for example a pre-course activity about child development.
13. Tracking and assessment procedures have been further developed and improved following stage 1 of the inspection. Trainees' entry, mid- and exit points are assessed on each placement to determine their progress. These assessments now take better account of the impact of their teaching on children's progress, as this information is included in the revised teacher observation pack. Leaders have improved their tracking of trainees' progress over time by using trainees' assessment profiles more effectively. Assessments are increasingly accurate and based on sound evidence. Summative statements support judgements made by mentors and tutors and pinpoint further areas for improvement.
14. Leaders regularly seek feedback from trainees through surveys and discussion. They acknowledge that inconsistencies in mentoring led to variability in trainees' performance and assessment in the programme's first year. For example, trainees' grades were occasionally erratic and did not show progress; where relationships were not positive or trainees were not challenged, trainees' grades appeared to decline. Other concerns centred on mentors not having regular or dedicated time to support trainees during placements. A few trainees felt at a disadvantage in a setting if their mentor did not themselves have any early years knowledge or experience.
15. Leaders are keen to address these issues by providing additional training for mentors, quality assuring and moderating their judgements, and expanding the number of settings in the partnership to extend the level of experience available. They have already developed an online resource to support mentors and begun to carry out joint observations with mentors for current trainees. This is leading to a more accurate and consistent reflection of trainees' abilities.

16. The training focuses well on the importance of leadership in the early years settings and how trainees can develop leadership skills. Tutors often link leadership roles to trainees' targets, which set out ongoing areas for development. Trainees value the opportunities to introduce new ideas and initiatives within their placements or employed settings. Managers and mentors also commented on the positive influence that former trainees have had on their colleagues, and how they have brought about change in a sensitive but productive way. This has resulted in some trainees and former trainees being promoted or given greater responsibilities.
17. Trainees' files are well organised and provide clear evidence to support judgments made against the early years teacher standards. Witness statements validate changes introduced and reflect the positive impact of leadership initiatives. The inclusion of samples of children's work and annotated planning shows how teaching has affected positively children's learning and development. Regular reviews of 'what I have learnt' demonstrate trainees' ability to reflect upon, and evaluate, their own performance.
18. Strategic leadership and more effective action planning are evolving as the programme becomes better established. Leaders have formulated an early years subcommittee to review and evaluate outcomes, provision and future development. While there is local authority representation on this committee, to date there has been little or no involvement of practitioners within the partnership. Leaders are aware that the views of stakeholders are key to ensuring that training meets local needs. Managers have extended invitations to employers to assist with selection and recruitment of trainees in order to incorporate the stakeholders' voice and to strengthen the partnership.
19. Leaders have built good relationships with partnership settings and local authorities. Links formed are productive and mutually beneficial. Setting leaders comment on the positive impact that trainees and former trainees have in raising the quality of teaching and learning and improving the practice of others. Employers are keen to maintain or offer employment to early years teachers from Staffordshire University due to the depth of knowledge and understanding they have about children's early development.
20. Programme leaders are highly enthusiastic, knowledgeable and dedicated to promoting high-quality early years provision. They provide vision, drive and purpose. They are receptive to advice, keen to learn from other early years ITT providers and determined to raise the quality of EYITT at Staffordshire University even further.

Annex: Partnership schools/settings

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

Carmountside Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent
Hutchinson Memorial First School, Stoke-on-Trent
Ipstones Tinytots, Ipstones
Staffordshire University Nursery, Stoke-on-Trent

The primary phase

Information about the primary partnership

- Staffordshire University began offering training in primary initial teacher training in 2012.
- The primary partnership includes approximately 28 schools across five local authorities.
- Trainees follow a one-year training programme, which on successful completion leads to qualified teacher status (QTS) and a postgraduate degree in education (PGCE).
- All trainees follow a primary (5 to 11) training programme.
- The partnership offers core and School Direct PGCE training places. At the time of stage 1 of the inspection, there were 22 trainees enrolled on the training programme. Nine of these trainees were following the School Direct route.
- Biddulph High School was the only lead school for School Direct at the time of the inspection. The partnership has since expanded to include six new School Direct partnerships, which are located across two regions.

Information about the primary ITE inspection

- During stage 1, the inspector visited three schools and observed three trainees teaching. She spoke to headteachers, school mentors and trainees. She also met with groups of trainees across different training routes, mentors, link tutors and trainers at the university. The inspector held discussions with award leaders and members of the strategic partnership board. She took account of the 20 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for trainees.
- During stage 2, the inspector visited three schools. One of these schools was included in the stage 1 sample. She observed five newly qualified teachers (NQTs) teaching. She spoke to headteachers, school mentors and induction tutors while in school. The inspector also met with NQTs from different training routes at the university. Meetings were held with award leaders and representatives from the partnership. She also held telephone discussions with schools who have recently employed NQTs from the partnership.
- In both stages of the inspection, the inspector evaluated a range of evidence, including trainees' files and the work in pupils' books. She also considered a range of documentation provided by the partnership, including

information on trainees' attainment, employment and completion. The inspector reviewed the partnership's website and checked safeguarding arrangements and compliance with the ITT criteria.

Inspection team

Joanne Olsson HMI (phase lead inspector) stages 1 and 2

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the primary partnership are:

- The training programmes are successfully meeting the local and regional demand for good and better teachers in the primary phase. Employment rates are high and a considerable proportion of trainees gain employment within partnership schools.
- Rigorous recruitment procedures are highly effective in selecting trainees with the right attitudes, skills and enthusiasm to become successful primary practitioners.
- Trainees' and NQTs' professional attitudes and attributes underpin the strong gains they make against the teachers' standards. Outcomes are good for all trainees, regardless of the training route they follow.
- Trainees and NQTs share excellent skills in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their teaching ensures that respect, dignity and tolerance are at the forefront of pupils' personal development.
- The ability of trainees and NQTs to teach the whole primary curriculum is especially impressive. They are creative practitioners, who willingly try out new ways of teaching to promote pupils' progress and make learning enjoyable.
- The centre-based training for mathematics is a particular strength in this partnership. Consequently, trainees and NQTs are confident mathematicians who possess a deep understanding of the mastery curriculum.
- Leaders' passion for primary education shines through all that is on offer. They inspire trainees and harness their excitement for teaching. In turn, NQTs use this excellent example to create memorable experiences for the pupils in their care.
- Careful planning and thoughtful action are enabling leaders to expand the partnership without diluting the quality of training or the trusting relationships with schools.

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

The partnership should:

- improve the quality of school-based training by:
 - ensuring that mentor training promotes mentors' coaching skills and sharpens their ability to set precise and purposeful targets to aid trainees' progress
 - ensuring that mentors take greater account of the impact of trainees' teaching on pupils' learning when they make judgements about trainees' performance against the teachers' standards
 - confirming the role of the link mentors so that everyone understands their responsibilities
 - tightening the procedures for checking the quality of school-based training
 - ensuring that trainees have greater opportunity to gain experience of schools that require improvement
- tighten the systems for awarding trainees the highest grades against the teachers' standards when they complete their training programme by:
 - establishing a shared understanding among schools, mentors and trainees as to how the performance against the teachers' standards is used to reach a final grade
 - strengthening the rigour by which final assessments are moderated
- improve the quality of information sent to employing schools so that NQTs are able to build on their strong training more effectively.

Inspection judgements

21. 'We are proud to have them' sums up the views of school leaders about the trainees and newly qualified teachers (NQTs) from this tight-knit partnership. Although relatively young, the primary partnership is gaining a positive reputation for producing good, well-rounded and enthusiastic new teachers who deserve their place in the teaching profession. Consequently, employment rates are high and almost all headteachers are unstinting in their praise for the NQTs' readiness for teaching.
22. Trainees' and NQTs' strong professional attitudes underpin their success. They are keen to learn and proactive in seeking out guidance to consolidate their knowledge. Trainees make the most of their time in school placements, and during university-based training sessions, in order to build their teaching competence. As a result, they make swift progress. All emerge as good or better teachers, who are well equipped to make a valuable contribution to local and regional schools.

23. By the time they complete the training programme, all trainees surpass the teachers' standards. No particular group underperforms. School Direct trainees and those who follow the core programme achieve equally well.
24. However, partnership leaders have an overgenerous view on just how well trainees achieve. Partnership data indicates that over two thirds successfully completed the training programme with the highest grades. This is not borne out consistently in classrooms. While many trainees and NQTs do excel in some of the standards, for example in managing pupils' behaviour and setting the right climate for learning, they are not as proficient in others. Trainees' and NQTs' skills in assessing and promoting excellent progress for different groups are not as strong as their final assessments suggest.
25. Nonetheless, the systems to moderate final assessments do successfully ensure that no one gains QTS undeservedly. Equally, the judgement on trainees' achievement beyond the minimum expectations is also secure. The weakness in assessment lies firmly with the exceptional grade. This is because mentors do not take enough account of the impact that trainees have on pupils' progress over time when they reach their conclusions on trainees' attainment. They place too much emphasis on the weekly lesson observations. Furthermore, the systems to moderate final assessments lack sufficient rigour to ensure that they are accurate. Trainees, NQTs and mentors have different views as to how the final assessment grade is reached.
26. Despite this shortcoming, trainees' and NQTs' teaching is consistently good and some is better over time. They use their good subject and phase-specific knowledge to plan lively and well-structured lessons which meet the needs of most groups of pupils. They use resources well, ask good-quality questions and mark pupils' work carefully, using the information they glean to plan next steps in learning.
27. Most trainees and NQTs have high expectations, which are reflected in the quality, quantity and presentation of work in pupils' books. Trainees and NQTs have a good presence within the classroom and quickly earn pupils' respect and trust. The strong rapport they establish with pupils, other staff and parents leads to warm relationships, calm classrooms and happy pupils who enjoy their learning.
28. Trainees and NQTs have a good understanding of how to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, adapting activities and deploying additional staff well. Sometimes, their high expectations take over and they ask too much of the less able pupils. They are well versed in encouraging the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to think hard and rise to the challenges they offer. This is especially true in mathematics.

29. Trainees and NQTs know their role in tackling achievement gaps for disadvantaged pupils. Some NQTs are already putting extra teaching sessions into place, for example additional reading sessions, to help these pupils catch up. Centre-based training provides a good overview of the best techniques available to meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language. However, up to this year, trainees have not had enough opportunity to put this learning into practice. Leaders are now making greater use of the extended partnership to overcome this barrier to trainees' development.
30. There are plentiful opportunities for trainees to observe phonics teaching during their training year. However, during stage 1 of the inspection it became apparent that a few did not have enough opportunity to plan, teach and assess pupils' early reading skills. Speedy action has resolved this weakness quickly and firmly. Those NQTs who are working with younger pupils are teaching phonics competently, needing little additional support from school leaders.
31. Similarly, weaknesses in trainees' understanding of children's starting points in the early years were also uncovered in the first stage of the inspection. Again, this area has received close attention. Managers have reviewed training sessions to take greater account of the early years. They have implemented an additional placement task to strengthen trainees' learning during the time they spend in the early years. They also make good use of an early years practitioner to secure trainees' understanding of childhood development and the associated demands of the curriculum. Consequently, trainees are being better prepared if they find themselves teaching in the early years at the beginning of, or during, their career.
32. A stand-out characteristic of trainees and NQTs from this partnership is their creative approach to teaching and their ability to teach across the whole curriculum. Most classroom walls are covered with pupils' beautiful work that gives visitors an insight into the breadth of learning on offer, for example, superb models of the solar system, unicorn sculptures linked to a class book, and an African village to bring the story of 'Handa's surprise' alive.
33. Trainees and NQTs are especially skilled in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and in preparing the pupils in their care for life in modern Britain. For example, a focus on war poetry enabled pupils to empathise and see the importance of Remembrance Sunday, while spending time outside in sleeping bags broke down stereotypes about people who are homeless. NQTs seized on the recent presidential election in the United States of America as rich material to develop an understanding of democracy and tolerance.
34. These notable strengths are due to a well-structured, purposeful and relevant centre-based training programme, which is linked effectively to high-quality school placements. The link between the two aspects of the training

programme is very good. New learning is put into practice quickly to consolidate and extend trainees' understanding. Placement handbooks set out clear expectations of the experiences trainees should encounter and the breadth of subjects they should teach. All NQTs are well prepared to teach the different aspects of physical education (PE) because they have many opportunities to practise as a trainee, despite many of their placement schools employing PE specialists.

35. Centre-based training is filled to the brim to ensure that trainees have a firm foundation as a primary practitioner. Key aspects such as mathematics, English and behaviour management are front-loaded so that trainees can make the most of their time in school from the outset. The programme carefully unfolds across the year to ensure that trainees gain a broad experience and sufficient subject knowledge to meet the demands of teaching the whole of the primary curriculum. The highly rated and much valued arts residential gives trainees the confidence and the tools to teach subjects such as drama, art and music.
36. Staff make good use of external experts and school practitioners to ensure that the training programme is preparing trainees and NQTs for modern classrooms. Trainees and NQTs are overwhelming in their praise for the experiences they receive. 'Amazing', 'fantastic' and '... could not ask for more' are common phrases they use when asked to evaluate their training year. They especially value the focus on teaching styles alongside subject knowledge, so they learn how to teach as well as what they should teach. Regardless of their training route, all trainees and NQTs hold these positive views. This is because all have equal access to the rich learning experiences.
37. Trainees and NQTs have a very good grasp of primary mathematics because of the expert and up-to-date training they receive. They plan lessons that fulfil the aims of the mathematics national curriculum well, encouraging pupils' fluency with mathematical ideas while deepening their knowledge through good-quality questions and activities. Pupils' books show that trainees and NQTs are equally adept at supporting the writing process. They thoughtfully plan and select activities which develop pupils' comprehension skills and enjoyment of reading.
38. Partnership schools provide good-quality learning experiences for trainees to hone their craft. A good range of schools, serving different neighbourhoods, make up the partnership. This means that trainees experience schools facing different challenges, including those that have high levels of social deprivation. Some trainees find out first hand about working within schools that require improvement. However, this is not widespread enough, meaning that some NQTs have not had enough grounding in schools which Ofsted has judged to be less than good.
39. School leaders and mentors are committed to the training programme and keen to play their part in nurturing teachers for the future. This is evident in the

steps that school mentors take to adhere to the expectations placed upon them. Despite their willingness, mentors are having varying degrees of impact on trainees' progress. In the past, the training they have received has only skimmed the surface of the competencies they require to do the role well. The training has placed too much emphasis on systems and procedures rather than coaching and modelling. Too little attention to setting good-quality targets means that the goals that mentors set for trainees often lack precision or purpose.

40. Work is under way to tackle these deficiencies in school-based training. More training is on offer across the wide geographical spread of schools. Experienced link mentors have been appointed to support those new to the role. However, much of this is in its infancy.
41. The rejuvenated strategic management board is beginning to provide greater support and challenge on the strategic direction of the partnership. It is a useful link between the different School Direct partnerships to ensure that the strong equality of opportunity currently in place is not diluted as the partnership expands. Schools play a considerable role in the delivery of the training programmes. The primary sub-committee is beginning to provide a more formal vehicle for extending schools' influence on the design of the programmes.
42. Programme leaders share a passion for primary education. Their strong belief that all pupils can achieve and benefit from good or better teaching across different subjects shines through all their work. This vision underpins trainees' and NQTs' excitement and enthusiasm for their chosen career. Despite the increased workload and additional responsibilities as a full-time class teacher, NQTs are buoyant and enjoying their new role enormously.
43. Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the programme well. Consequently, priorities for improvement are accurate and development planning identifies the next steps to move the partnership forward. Their success in shaping a new programme, creating a thriving partnership and ensuring that trainees emerge as good or better teachers is testament to their capacity to improve.
44. Managers have good systems in place to gather the views of trainees, NQTs and school partners. They listen and take action. National priorities and local issues play a part in their vision for the future. Improved use of data is helping leaders to identify areas of the teachers' standards where trainees achieve less well. Leaders have a good understanding of their partnership schools and there are now appropriate systems to check the work of mentors. However, this knowledge has not led to swift enough action to stamp out variations in mentors' skills.

45. Leaders have considered the expansion of the partnership carefully and planned with integrity to ensure that they maintain the unique aspects of the training programme. Consequently, trainees continue to benefit from close support and high-quality training.
46. Leaders know their trainees well and do all they can to tailor the programme to meet their individual needs. The systems to support trainees who may be struggling are secure. Over half of the current NQTs triggered some extra support during their training year. This was highly effective, meaning that withdrawals were low and all trainees exceeded the teachers' standards. Leaders willingly go the extra mile because they have the trainees' best interests at heart. Trainees and NQTs recognise and value this work, describing their tutors as a 'second mum'.
47. Managers send sufficient information for employing schools to gain a broad overview of the NQTs they are accepting into their school. However, the targets set are often too vague to help each NQT make swift progress and do not add enough value to the start of their NQT year.
48. Leaders put great weight on trainees' preparation for keeping pupils' safe. Consequently, trainees are well equipped to spot the signs of abuse, including those related to prejudice-based bullying, radicalisation, extremism or child sexual exploitation. All requirements relating to the ITT criteria are met in full.
49. Completion rates at the inception of the programme were not good enough. Leaders responded assiduously to this weakness and took great care to improve the rigour of recruitment procedures. These much-improved systems test out candidates' potential skills as an effective primary practitioner well. The involvement of school leaders and pupils strengthens the process considerably. This improvement is reaping real rewards. Almost all trainees who start the programme complete to a good or better standard. Very few choose to withdraw and those trainees who defer for personal reasons return, get back on track quickly and do well.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe trainees' and newly qualified teachers' (NQTs') teaching:

Fulfen Primary School, Burntwood
Goldenhill Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent
Heron Cross Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent
Oakridge Primary School, Stafford
Woodcroft First School, Leek

The secondary phase

Information about the secondary partnership

- Provision for the secondary phase continues to be relatively small and specialist in nature, as at the previous inspection. Training in secondary initial teacher education follows two main routes. The larger uptake is for the university-led postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE), and the smaller is for the school-led School Direct PGCE route. A very few trainees each year follow an assessment-only route. All trainees who are successful are awarded a PGCE with qualified teacher status (QTS).
- The partnership comprises approximately 30 schools in around 10 different local authorities across a wide geographical area in the West Midlands. The only provider for the School Direct route is The Staffordshire Schools' Biddulph Partnership.
- Training is offered in around eight subject specialisms across the university and school-led routes. At stage 1 of the inspection, these were computer science, design and technology, business and economics, mathematics, social sciences, art and design, English and physical education.
- At stage 1, 36 trainees were enrolled on the course. Some 31 trainees were on the core programme, four on the School Direct route and one trainee enrolled on the assessment-only route. Numbers are broadly similar each year.

Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- Inspectors observed seven trainees during stage 1 of the inspection and six newly qualified teachers (NQTs) at stage 2. At stage 1, inspectors observed the feedback given to trainees by subject mentors.
- Over the course of the two-stage inspection, inspectors held meetings with trainees, NQTs, school-based subject and professional mentors, headteachers and leaders with responsibility for training and induction, university subject tutors and a member of the newly formed strategic management group.
- Inspectors scrutinised self-evaluation and improvement plans, trainees' teaching files, information on trainees' performance linked to the teachers' standards, employment and completion information, the results of the NQT survey and Ofsted's online trainee questionnaire.
- Checks were carried out to determine if the partnership meets all statutory criteria and requirements for initial teacher training and for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Denah Jones HMI (phase lead inspector) stages 1 and 2

Mel Ford HMI (assistant lead inspector) stage 1

Jane Jones HMI (assistant lead inspector) stage 2

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the secondary partnership are:

- Trainees' teaching by the end of the course is of a high enough standard to ensure that most pupils make good progress over time from their starting points. University-based training has helped trainees to understand how pupils learn.
- Trainees' strong specialist subject knowledge enables them to plan well-structured lessons with carefully designed resources to inspire and motivate pupils and support good engagement. Trainees meet the needs of middle- and low-attainers well, but are less skilled in providing the challenge required to deepen the learning of the most able.
- Strong relationships between the university and partner schools are underpinned by effective communication and ongoing support. Good-quality guidance for school-based mentors is available through a combination of face-to-face meetings and online training.
- Effective training gives trainees confidence in promoting pupils' good behaviour. This enables newly qualified teachers to establish good relationships and working routines rapidly in their classrooms, allowing them to concentrate on refining their teaching skills.
- The involvement of partnership schools in the rigorous selection and recruitment process makes sure that trainees who are offered training places have the necessary drive and commitment to become good teachers. This year, all trainees have successfully been appointed to teaching posts.
- The partnership's assessment of trainees' performance against the teachers' standards is accurate and supports trainees' continuous development throughout the training.
- Leaders are passionate about, and committed to, ensuring that outcomes improve quickly for pupils in the local area and beyond. Their clear vision is focused on developing a continued supply of highly skilled teachers.
- Leaders have taken swift action to tackle the areas for improvement identified during stage 1 of the inspection.

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

The partnership should:

- Work with partnership schools to develop training materials on assessing pupils' work in national curriculum subjects at key stage 3, so that trainees are well placed to pitch learning that builds on what pupils know, understand and can do, including their starting points in year 7.
- Extend quality assurance arrangements to include a final assessment of trainees' teaching, agreed jointly between school mentors and university tutors, that also enables sharply defined targets to be set to support the newly qualified teachers as they start their teaching careers.

Inspection judgements

50. By the end of the course, all trainees exceed the minimum level of practice expected of teachers as defined in the teachers' standards. Trainees' personal and professional conduct is consistently of a high standard. Trainees and NQTs make excellent contributions to their schools and willingly embrace opportunities to lead clubs. School leaders value trainees' and NQTs' strong subject knowledge. Some NQTs are taking a leading role in developing colleagues' subject knowledge, such as in computer science and design and technology, and are using their specialist interests to design new units of work for pupils.
51. No significant variation exists in the outcomes for different groups of trainees in terms of their gender, age or ethnicity. Outcomes are similar for trainees on each of the three routes. Virtually all trainees are successfully appointed as NQTs within six months of attaining QTS. However, the outcomes for trainees in mathematics are not as strong as those in other subjects. Following stage 1 of this inspection, the university further refined monitoring systems to keep a closer eye on any variation in the outcomes for groups of trainees, by subject specialism or routes.
52. Trainees' exposure to sixth-form teaching experience was inconsistent at stage 1 because not all trainees had opportunities to teach post-16 students. Leaders acted swiftly to introduce an additional school placement for these three trainees. Further improvements now ensure that all trainees are able to experience the full range of teaching across the 11 to 19 age group, in a diverse range of school placements.
53. The quality of trainees' teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Trainees have high expectations for their pupils and plan work and resources which inspire and motivate, helping them to learn. Trainees understand how pupils learn and are able to blend well the theoretical and pedagogical aspects

of their training with their practical experience, particularly during their second school placement.

54. Effective training has helped trainees to promote good behaviour. Trainees expertly create a positive and safe learning environment for pupils, based on the strong and supportive relationships between trainees and their pupils. Working routines are quickly established, enabling teachers to concentrate on improving their teaching skills.
55. All trainees and NQTs visited during the inspection demonstrated a good understanding of how to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They used the school's information about pupils to good effect to plan work to help them to make good progress.
56. Some trainees' knowledge and skills about meeting the needs of the most able pupils were less well developed. Although they planned extension work or challenge tasks for this group, on a few occasions pupils did not engage in the activities. Trainees know who are the disadvantaged pupils in their class but are unsure about how to use this information, or how to help these pupils to overcome their particular barriers to learning.
57. Trainees conscientiously follow their placement school's policies in relation to assessment and marking. Marking is accurate and helps pupils to see where they are going wrong in their work. Trainees' knowledge of assessment at key stage 3 is less secure. Training does not help trainees to develop sufficient understanding of standards in their subject within the new national curriculum. Trainees have yet to grasp the raised expectations of pupils leaving primary school and so are unable to plan work for pupils in Year 7 which builds on what they already know, understand and can do.
58. Training has helped trainees to develop confidence in promoting literacy development. They know how to help pupils to spell key words and to use correct punctuation and grammar. Occasionally, however, they did not model spoken English well. Training to support mathematical development is less strong. A few trainees did not model correct mathematical language or spot when pupils drew and labelled graphs inaccurately.
59. Coherence in the centre-based training for trainees on different routes is a strong feature of the training. Trainees on PGCE and School Direct routes attend the education professional issues (EPI) programme together.
60. The EPI programme is highly regarded by trainees. School leaders and other leading educational professionals, who are respected for their knowledge and experience, deliver some sessions. Trainees commented on the high-quality presentations they received on issues such as diversity and tackling discrimination due to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender characteristics. As

a result of this programme, trainees have a better understanding of how to keep children safe from threats such as extremism and radicalisation. Schools are provided with a calendar of training themes in advance, to enable them to plan their own training and to help trainees apply these themes in the context of placement schools.

61. Trainees demonstrate a commitment to improve their own subject knowledge and greatly appreciate the subject knowledge enhancement programme delivered by trainers. They talk confidently about how their practice has improved through trainers' high-quality teaching and wide range of shared resources.
62. Trainees reflect accurately on their teaching and its impact on learning, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their practice. At the end of the course, trainees' reflections inform targets within their career entry development plans (CEDP). School leaders say that the information and targets in the CEDP are helpful in supporting NQTs as they embark on their teaching careers. However, those set for later in the year are often of more limited value, being overtaken by development points identified through NQTs' reflections on their first term of teaching. For some trainees, targets set are too imprecise to guide development.
63. Strong communication between the university and partner schools is a strength of the partnership. School-based mentors and trainers work well together to make sure that trainees have the skills they need to teach effectively. School-based mentors are confident that they can contact trainers with any concerns or queries. Trainers respond immediately and carry out additional school visits or observations of trainees' teaching if required. This strong support ensures that training is cohesive and tailored to the needs of trainees.
64. Inconsistencies exist in the quality of school-based mentors' work. Not all attended the training events. Following stage 1, leaders took swift action in response to this and made the expectation for mentors to attend training explicit in the partnership agreement. As a result, attendance at the most recent event was far higher than in any previous year. Managers organise school-based, catch-up training for any mentors who are unable to attend and they provide resources for mentors via the university's online training.
65. Completion rates have improved and are broadly similar to the sector average. Course recruitment and selection processes are rigorous in ensuring that only the best trainees, who are committed to wanting to teach, start on the course. Leaders from partner schools are involved in the selection process because they know best the local and regional needs.
66. Support provided by tutors is of high quality. Most trainees complete their course with a small proportion who suspend their studies due to personal or

financial difficulties. Typically, these trainees return to complete their studies in subsequent years.

67. Over time, trainees' outcomes improve and, by the end of the training, all trainees exceed the standards expected. Careful tracking of trainees' teaching performance is based on observations of teaching by school-based mentors and three joint observations with tutors for quality assurance purposes. However, the third quality assurance observation occurs too far in advance of the end of the course. Additional quality assurance checks are required to provide greater rigour in monitoring, to provide a final quality assurance check of the overall assessment and to enable more precise targets to be set for trainees' further development during their NQT year.
68. Schools are closely involved in the leadership and management of the ITE partnership. Some headteachers are members of the strategic management group. Managers present detailed information to the group on outcomes, completion and employment rates, compared with sector norms. This enables members to evaluate accurately the impact of the provision and to use this in their improvement plans. Nonetheless, minutes of group meetings fail to record questions asked by members or agreed actions arising and, therefore, the level of challenge may not be sufficiently rigorous to hold leaders to account for their provision.
69. Leaders have high expectations and are ambitious for the ITE partnership. They are passionate about, and committed to, ensuring that pupils in the local area and beyond are taught by highly skilled and knowledgeable teachers so that pupils' outcomes improve quickly. Leaders' swift action to tackle the areas for improvement identified during stage 1 of the inspection demonstrates their capacity to drive further improvements in the partnership.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe trainees' and newly qualified teachers' (NQTs') teaching:

Blessed William Howard Catholic School, Stafford
Haywood Academy, Stoke-on-Trent
Madeley Academy, Telford
Ormiston Horizon Academy, Stoke-on-Trent
Painsley Catholic College, Cheadle
Sir William Stanier Community School, Crewe
Trentham High School, Stoke-on-Trent
Woodhouse Academy, Stoke-on-Trent

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Information about the FE in ITE partnership

- Staffordshire University works in partnership with a variety of colleges in and around Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Cheshire and surrounding counties to offer two routes into post-compulsory teaching: postgraduate certificate in education in post-compulsory education and training (PGCE) (PCET) and Certificate in Education (Cert Ed) (PCET)
- All routes lead to a full teaching qualification in post-compulsory education. The Cert Ed (PCET) carries 120 credits at level 5 and the PGCE (PCET) carries 120 credits at level 7, with 60 toward a full Masters in Education degree.
- The post-compulsory sector covers the 14 years upwards age range. Training in the subject specialisms of English and mathematics, and a generic teaching award, are offered in both the PGCE and the Cert Ed routes.

Information about the FE in ITE inspection

- Five inspectors were involved over the course of this two-stage inspection. Inspectors carried out 15 observations of trainees nearing the end of their training in stage 1 and 14 observations of former trainees in five settings in stage 2.
- Inspectors interviewed trainees and former trainees, trainers and mentors in the different settings visited. They also interviewed course leaders and managers from the partner colleges and the university. They scrutinised trainees' and former trainees' pen portraits and their portfolios of assessed work, lesson plans, lesson observation reports and progress records.
- Inspectors considered the partnership's self-evaluation, improvement plan and position statement documents and management and quality assurance information, and checked compliance with legislative requirements for safeguarding. They analysed data on outcomes for trainees by different groups. Inspectors also reviewed trainees' responses to Ofsted's online trainee questionnaire.

Inspection team

William Baidoe-Ansah HMI (phase and overall lead inspector) stages 1 and 2
Steve Hailstone HMI (assistant lead inspector) stage 1
Anne Taylor OI (team inspector) stage 1, (assistant lead inspector) stage 2
Margaret Thomas OI (team inspector) stages 1 and 2
Kanwaljit Dhillon OI (team inspector) stage 2

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the FE partnership are:

- An improving and high proportion of trainees successfully complete the programme, all of whom attain high standards.
- A high proportion of trainees maintain or gain employment.
- Highly effective teaching by trainees who use their subject knowledge, and the professional standards well, to enable their learners to make good progress.
- The training programme is of a consistently high quality and prepares trainees well for their future teaching careers.
- The support trainees receive from tutors and mentors ensures that they have the skills they need in their working lives to deliver effective learning programmes within the further education sector.
- The assessment of trainees' academic work and practical activities is detailed and thorough and helps trainees to improve, develop and reflect on their work.
- The university and their partner colleges have a positive working relationship, communicate effectively, and provide a forum for the sharing of good practice, which contributes to the high-quality training.
- Managers have acted speedily to address areas for improvement identified at stage 1.

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

The partnership should:

- Ensure that the evaluation of the trainees' attainment is consistent and focussed on the impact trainees have on the progress their learners make.
- Make sure that the self-evaluation document (SED) is evaluative and judgemental and clearly indicates the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership, and that managers monitor the implementation of agreed actions by partners rigorously.
- Make sure that developmental targets set for trainees, both during and after the course, are sufficiently detailed to help them to identify clearly what they need to prioritise to improve further.

Inspection judgements

70. Leaders and managers have ensured that a high proportion of trainees continue to successfully complete the programme. Completion rates for those taking the one-year programme are slightly higher than for those taking the two-year, in-service programme. Across the partnership there is some variability in completion rates, with two colleges having all trainees complete and another two having only two-thirds completing.
71. A high proportion of trainees who are not in full employment while taking the course, gain employment as a result. Many former trainees who have successfully completed the course improve their employment situation by gaining more hours, being employed full time and, in a few instances, being promoted.
72. Managers monitor the completion rates by different groups well. Over the last two years, there have been no consistent patterns in the achievement of different groups. Numbers of minority ethnic trainees are too small to enable secure comparative judgements and the performance of males and females has changed year on year.
73. All trainees who complete the course attain at least a good standard, with almost half of the grades being awarded at the highest level. Inspectors confirmed that trainees were consistently at least good teachers. However, inspectors did not always agree with the highest attainment grades. The criteria used rely too much on teachers' performance and not enough on the impact of teaching on the progress that learners are making in lessons.
74. The quality of former trainees' teaching is good. Former trainees demonstrate their subject knowledge very effectively in lessons and this helps their students to make good progress. Former trainees teaching across a range of subject areas is effective. Strengths include swift engagement of learners, detailed planning with the setting of specific and measurable learning outcomes, and innovative use of technology and strategies to involve learners and ensure that they make good progress.
75. In one language class, for example, a former trainee used well-structured planning skills to develop learning for a group of beginners. The former trainee's effective choice of a wide variety of activities maintained learners' interest and reinforced the main teaching points. The focus on language development encouraged learners to speak to each other in the target language with increasing confidence.
76. High-quality training is a strong feature of the partnership. Training is of a very high standard and enables trainees to develop their skills quickly and have the confidence to apply in their practice the techniques and activities that they have been introduced to in their training.

77. The training programme covers current priorities in the post-16 sector effectively. It includes a strong focus on developing English and mathematics skills, on safeguarding, the promotion of fundamental British values and the prevention of extremism and radicalisation. Despite this focus, trainees' and former trainees' success in integrating mathematics into the curriculum varied considerably. However, their promotion of British values and aspects of the 'Prevent' duty were often more successful. In a basic skills class a former trainee effectively used a discussion that arose around protective wear on a building site to have a discussion on British values as it related to the rights of builders who are Sikhs.
78. The training also places a strong focus on the development of the professional standards for trainees. Tutors use them constantly in assignments and observations to develop trainees' teaching. This means that former trainees are confident teachers able to use the full range of professional standards in planning, delivering and assessing learning. As a result, their classroom practice is strong and they provide high-quality learning opportunities for their students. They use assessment and feedback effectively to promote progress and foster productive and professional relationships with students and colleagues that enhance the learning of both students and staff. Trainees understand the standards and know the progress that they are making against each of them; former trainees continue to evaluate their teaching practice against them.
79. The training makes good use of technology to model best practice and to support training. For instance, tutors and course teams use podcasts to provide feedback to trainees and they use the well-stocked university online resource to extend trainees' learning. The strong focus on the course in developing trainees' skills in using technology means that trainees confidently use these skills to enhance their teaching and extend their own students' learning.
80. Arrangements for mentoring are good and trainees speak highly of the personal and subject-specific support they receive from mentors. Most mentors are clear about their roles, have access to university resources and have regular meetings with tutors to support them in their role. However, in 2015/16 not all mentors had undertaken formal training and some inconsistencies in practice were evident.
81. Managers have made a number of recent changes to mentoring, including providing training to ensure a greater consistency of practice among mentors and monitoring mentors' documentation more closely. It is too early to gauge the impact of these changes in improving the provision.
82. Assessment practice throughout the training programme is good. Tutors give good developmental feedback on assignments and in observations of teaching. This feedback enables trainees to improve their work and teaching practice, and to make good progress. However, in a few cases, the targets that tutors

and mentors set trainees in their individual learning plans are not sufficiently detailed or helpful for them to identify specifically how to improve their practice. This was also the case with a few of the developmental targets which tutors set for former trainees in their first year of teaching.

83. The course places a strong emphasis on reflective practice, with trainees required to complete a reflective log. This was one of the aspects of the course that former trainees valued highly and one that they continue to use well, critically reflecting on their teaching and adjusting and amending their practice accordingly to improve their teaching further.
84. The course prepares most former trainees well for the diversity of provision within the further education sector. However, in a few instances trainees did not have sufficient exposure to a wide enough range of groups, levels, subjects and settings.
85. Trainees also benefit from good support within the course. Those trainees with identified additional learning needs are swiftly provided with the support they need. Trainees without an academic background have access to, and make good use of, the university's study skills support to help them succeed.
86. The university and their partner colleges have a positive working relationship, communicate effectively and provide a forum for the sharing of good practice. The university and partners have rigorous recruitment and selection practices to ensure that most learners understand the demands of the programme and complete their course. Additionally, the partnership encourages colleges to identify ways to attract new trainees into the profession. As an example, volunteer teachers have progressed to becoming trainees in a number of partner colleges.
87. The self-evaluation report is not sufficiently evaluative and does not identify clearly enough the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership. Managers ensure that partners reviews are incorporated well; however, not all partner colleges are aware of the outcomes in the SED or are clear about how their actions will contribute to the partnership's improvement plan.
88. Managers and staff within the partnership have high aspirations and ambitions for the partnership; they demonstrate a commitment to continue to improve the quality of their provision. Managers took the emerging areas for improvement at stage 1 of the inspection very seriously and have developed most appropriate and detailed action plans to address each one. Because of their desire to develop the provision quickly, they have already made good progress in introducing new systems. It is, however, too early to judge the impact of these changes on trainees' development.

89. The partnership meets the statutory requirements for initial teacher training in education and training. It promotes equality and diversity well and the safeguarding of trainees and their learners is a priority. The training promotes British values and the prevention of extremism and radicalisation well.

Annex: Partnership colleges

The partnership includes the following colleges:

Ashton Sixth Form College
Newcastle and Stafford Colleges group
North Shropshire College
Riverside College
South Staffordshire College
Stoke-on-Trent College

ITE partnership details

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Inspection number	10010260
Inspection dates	25–27 April 2016
Stage 1	
Stage 2	21–23 November 2016
Lead inspector	William Baidoe-Ansah HMI
Type of ITE partnership	Higher education
Phases provided	Early years, primary, secondary, post-compulsory education and training (FES)
Date of previous inspection	22–26 November 2010
Previous inspection report	https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/files/1446653/urn/70068.pdf
Provider address	University of Staffordshire School of Education Brindley Building Leek Road Stoke-on-Trent Staffordshire ST4 2DF



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