

Suffolk and Norfolk Secondary SCITT Programme

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

20–23 May 2013

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors in accordance with the *ITE Inspection Handbook*. This handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from January 2013.

The inspection draws upon 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 judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is requires improvement; grade 4 is inadequate

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

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The secondary phase

Information about the secondary partnership

- This school-centred initial teacher training programme (SCITT) is part of the Suffolk and Norfolk Initial Teacher Training partnership which comprises the primary and secondary SCITT programmes and the primary and secondary graduate teacher programme. The secondary SCITT programme is a full-time, one-year professional graduate certificate of education (PGCE) course leading to the award of qualified teacher status (QTS). Training is offered in one of eight subjects: design and technology, English, information and communication technology, mathematics, modern foreign languages, music, physical education and science. Training in all subjects focuses on the 11–16 age range.
- The partnership includes the University Campus Suffolk, Suffolk and Norfolk local authorities, and around 50 schools. Training takes place in schools and other training venues situated across Suffolk and Norfolk. At the time of the inspection, there were 30 trainees on the programme.

Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons taught by four trainees. They held meetings with individuals and groups of trainees and newly qualified teachers (NQTs) in four schools, observing teaching in three of them; they also met with other groups of NQTs and trainees. Inspectors held telephone conversations with senior managers in three schools where former trainees are completing their NQT year. They held meetings with programme managers, lead trainers, and other school-based trainers. They reviewed a range of documentation, including the partnership's self-evaluation and plans for improvement, internal and external data on trainees' views, and records of trainees' progress.

Inspection Team

Paul Chambers HMI	Lead inspector
Kevin Sheldrick HMI	Assistant lead inspector

Overall Effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the secondary partnership are:

- the regular and frequent monitoring of trainees' progress that helps the programme's leaders and managers to identify where trainees are in need of extra support
- managers' strong personalised support that has a clear positive impact on trainees' progress

- the rigorous selection process which contributes to consistently high employment rates and above-average completion rates
- high-quality training in behaviour management that leads to trainees having a good understanding of the link between good teaching and pupils' behaviour
- trainees' strong commitment to teaching and their wider professional role.

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

The partnership should:

- strengthen the overall training by ensuring that all trainees benefit from good-quality mentoring in their placement schools
- provide schools with more detailed feedback on the quality of training that they provide
- improve outcomes for trainees by ensuring that they take more account of different ability levels within the class in their planning and teaching.

Inspection Judgements

The outcomes for trainees are good

1. Trainees' attainment is good. Most trainees exceed the minimum standards required to meet the Teachers' Standards and those who left in 2012 gained better grades than trainees in previous years. While there are few clear differences in measures of attainment for different groups, more women than men gain the highest grade in their end-of-course assessments. Inspectors' judgements broadly match those of the partnership in assessing both the teaching seen and trainees' overall achievement.
2. Completion rates are above average overall. There is no pattern of differences in completion rates for different gender groups or groups based on age or ethnicity. Employment rates are consistently high. Schools are happy with the quality of trainees and say that typically trainees are committed, have good professional skills and are very employable.
3. Former trainees demonstrate strong subject knowledge and are able to explain difficult ideas clearly; they plan well and are willing to try out different approaches. They show initiative, such as by setting up new activities in their schools or by identifying where they would benefit from further professional development. One NQT has been able to transfer successfully the skills gained training as a physical education teacher to lessons teaching mathematics.
4. Trainees show a keen interest in the progress of the pupils they teach and establish strong relationships that help to maintain a calm working atmosphere. They show strong commitment and respond well to advice and guidance. They show a good understanding of their wider professional role, including their responsibility for keeping pupils safe and for combatting bullying.
5. The strongest trainees plan lessons well, ensuring that pupils experience a variety of different activities. The records they keep in their school progress files help them to become highly reflective and self-critical.
6. The small number of weaker trainees sometimes do not adjust their teaching in the light of pupils' responses or do not take sufficient account of the different ability levels within the class. Where learning is less successful, trainees miss opportunities to develop pupils' thinking through asking probing questions, or through encouraging pupils to explain their reasoning.

The quality of training across the partnership is good

7. The quality of training is good. Trainees speak positively about the central training days noting, in particular, the different styles of delivery used by different contributors. They value the consistently high-quality training on core professional issues and that on subject-specific knowledge and pedagogy.
8. High-quality training in behaviour management enhances trainees' ability to reflect on the reasons for pupils' bad behaviour. Training activities in which different classroom scenarios are considered and possible responses discussed help trainees to develop a good understanding of the impact that their teaching can have on pupils' behaviour. Such training, supported by training in schools, ensures that trainees make good progress in behaviour management: by the end of the course, most trainees are applying a range of behaviour management strategies successfully in their teaching.
9. Trainees have a good understanding of issues related to teaching disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, reinforced by undertaking a case study of a pupil in their placement school. This good-quality training is affirmed by the trainees themselves: all those who responded to the online survey believe they have the knowledge, skills and understanding to meet the needs of different learners, including those with special educational needs. Trainees adapt their teaching appropriately to account for particular pupils' needs. For example, one trainee was able to explain how she adapted her teaching to allow a pupil with identified writing difficulties additional time to rehearse his thoughts verbally before embarking on a piece of writing.
10. Trainees benefit from placements in two contrasting schools. Much of the mentoring in schools, whether from the subject mentor or the professional tutor, is of a high quality. Trainees benefit from regular and frequent feedback on the quality of their teaching. Mentors know what constitutes good teaching and are able to provide accurate lesson evaluations and feedback that helps trainees to improve their classroom practice. The trainees' school progress files provide a helpful structure for the weekly meetings between mentors and trainees; in most cases, mentors set appropriate targets, including some that are subject-specific. There is, however, some variation in the quality of mentoring and this has been identified by the partnership's leaders and managers. Where school-based training is less effective, the professional tutors' contributions are less thorough or mentors' targets do not focus sufficiently on developing teaching and learning. In these cases, trainees' progress slows.
11. Centre-based training, supported in school by school-based trainers, ensures that trainees are fully aware of the need for all subject teachers

to develop pupils' language and communication skills. Responses to the online survey show that trainees believe this training is effective. Other inspection evidence shows that, while a few trainees limit their focus to developing pupils' understanding of key words, others can give a detailed explanation of how they are developing pupils' speaking and writing skills through their questioning or choice of task. For example, in one observed science lesson, pupils developed their writing skills when, in the role of 'agony aunts', they had to respond to readers' concerns about global warming.

12. Trainees also appreciate the need to develop pupils' mathematical skills in their subject teaching but are less confident in this aspect of their role. Mathematics trainees have suitable subject knowledge but not all are sufficiently aware of some of the common misconceptions that pupils acquire. While the visit to a primary school helps trainees to understand progression in their specialist subject, it could be usefully extended to allow trainees to add to their understanding of how pupils learn to read.
13. Training includes a focus on developing trainees' subject knowledge. All complete an audit of their knowledge at the beginning of the course and draw up an action plan to address identified areas of weakness. While mentors monitor the action plan well in the early weeks of the course, not all maintain a focus on it for the rest of the year.
14. The training in science is rated highly by trainees and by schools. Trainees appreciate the wide variety of approaches they experience during their training and this good-quality training leads to good outcomes overall. Trainers adapt the training where necessary to ensure that it meets the needs of all trainees very well. By the end of the course, science trainees have good subject knowledge because the rigorous identification of strengths and weaknesses early in the training year and regular checking ensures that any weaker areas are addressed.
15. Science trainees use demonstrations well to stimulate pupils' interests. For instance, in one observed lesson, pupils were highly motivated to investigate why jelly babies 'screamed' when added to a molten oxidising agent. Trainees link lesson content to everyday contexts well: for example, pupils' learning about electrical conductors was made more relevant through them having to visualise a world without electricity. Although trainees know the common misconceptions in science, they do not always take sufficient account of pupils' possible errors and misconceptions when planning practical activities.
16. The assessment of trainees is consistent and accurate. Trainees collect appropriate evidence during the year to demonstrate meeting the Teachers' Standards. Joint observations, such as those shared by lead school representatives and subject mentors, help managers to be

confident about the accuracy of lesson evaluations and the quality of feedback on trainees' teaching.

The quality of leadership and management across the partnership is good

17. Forward-looking leaders and managers are responding appropriately to the changing national context. They work closely with partner schools in developing and managing the programme and take full account of the views of trainees. Schools are aware of the direction the partnership is going and know the key priorities. The good attendance at mentor training events suggests that schools value their involvement in the partnership highly.
18. The partnership shows good capacity to improve. Attainment data have improved and employment rates have been maintained at a consistently high level. Although the NQT survey responses give only mixed evidence of improvements in the training, data from the partnership's trainee evaluations indicate that provision is improving. For example, an increased emphasis in the training on how to teach pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language has led to more positive feedback from trainees.
19. The SCITT improvement plan is comprehensive and identifies key issues for improvement, including important areas of focus such as improving mentoring and particular aspects of the training. The plan includes areas that focus appropriately on trainees' outcomes and measurable targets but makes too little reference to the NQT survey results. Recent external examiners' reports include examples of excellent detailed feedback to the SCITT's managers, including points raised from observing trainees teach.
20. The high-quality and personalised support provided by the programme's managers contributes strongly to good outcomes for trainees. The training is sufficiently flexible to allow adaptations for individual trainees. Strong systems for monitoring trainees' progress mean that managers can identify quickly where additional support may be needed or where mentoring is less effective. Where a need for additional support is identified, it is quickly provided and has a positive impact.
21. Schools feel well supported; when they identify a problem, they can easily contact the senior trainer, who responds quickly and effectively. Some schools are strengthening the coherence of the training by taking up the guidance to have mentors from placement B observe the trainee in placement A as part of the transition process, but this is not universal practice. While lead school representatives and cluster supporters provide schools with verbal feedback on their provision, managers could

strengthen quality assurance by giving schools more formal feedback on the quality of the training they provide.

22. Rigorous selection procedures that involve fully school-based staff contribute to the course's above-average completion and employment rates. The interview includes an assessment of candidates' subject knowledge as well as their spelling and mental arithmetic. A presentation to pupils and a written task help to ensure that successful candidates have the necessary communication and reflection skills to make successful teachers. Where weaknesses are identified at interview, candidates attend additional subject-specific training before or during the training year. The programme is recruiting a growing proportion of candidates with first and upper second class degrees.
23. The programme is compliant with the statutory criteria and requirements.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe teaching:

Copleston High School
Notre Dame High School
Thurston Community College

ITE partnership details

Unique reference number	70147
Inspection number	408583
Inspection dates	20–23 May 2013
Lead inspector	Paul Chambers HMI
Type of ITE partnership	SCITT
Phases provided	Secondary
Date of previous inspection	10–14 May 2010
Previous inspection report	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/70147
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