

The Arthur Terry School SCITT

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

24–27 March 2014

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 each separate programme 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	1

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The secondary phase

Information about the secondary partnership

- The Arthur Terry School SCITT is based in Sutton Coldfield and has been operating as a training partnership since 2012. It provides school-centred initial teacher training in the secondary phase.
- The partnership offers training that consists of a full-time, one-year post-graduate certificate of education (PGCE), leading to the award of qualified teacher status (QTS). The PGCE award is validated by Birmingham City University. Current trainees are training in one of three subjects: drama, mathematics and science. Training for all subjects focuses on the 11–16 age range with enhancements at post-16. At the time of the inspection, there were 24 trainees on the core programme and two on the School Direct funded programme.
- Central training takes place mainly at The Arthur Terry School, which holds Teaching School status. The partnership comprises 12 secondary schools and works across five local authorities.

Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- Inspectors observed the teaching of one newly qualified teacher (NQT) and four trainees (known within the partnership as associate teachers). They held individual or paired discussions in schools with one NQT and six trainees, and one group interview, involving a further three trainees.
- Inspectors held meetings with the partnership's managers, subject route leaders, school-based ITE coordinators (known within the partnership as professional coaches) and subject mentors (known as learning coaches).
- One of the inspectors held telephone conversations with senior staff in three schools to discuss their schools' experience with former trainees currently in their NQT year. Inspectors also discussed with senior leaders the progress of former trainees in the schools visited.
- Inspectors scrutinised evidence relating to trainees' progress and how it is monitored, together with a wide range of documentation supplied by the partnership's managers.
- Inspectors took account of the responses of current trainees to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection Team

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Overall Effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the secondary partnership are:

- the excellent selection procedures that contribute to high employment rates for trainees
- the outstanding success of leaders and managers in rapidly establishing good training and improving outcomes
- very effective training for mentors that ensures they assess trainees accurately and are skilled at providing high-quality oral and written feedback on trainees' teaching
- training that equips trainees with the skills to analyse what aspects of teaching contribute most effectively to pupils' learning
- trainees' thorough planning of well-structured lessons that focuses on developing key aspects of pupils' learning
- trainees' strong personal qualities that enable them to make a full contribution to the life of the schools they work in.

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

The partnership should:

- improve the quality of target setting for trainees at weekly meetings with mentors by;
 - ensuring that targets are more focused on strengthening teaching than completing tasks
 - ensuring that reviews of targets achieved always give sufficient emphasis to the impact of trainees' teaching on pupils' learning.
- increase the proportion of trainees who demonstrate the Teachers' Standards at an outstanding level.

Inspection Judgements

The outcomes for trainees are good

1. All trainees who completed the training in 2013 exceeded the minimum standards required for QTS. One third of them were judged to meet the standards at an outstanding level. Leaders and managers have rightly identified the need to have a greater proportion of trainees judged outstanding. The partnership's records indicate that current trainees are on course to achieve this, based on tracking evidence and comparison with the performance of the previous group at a similar stage in their training.
2. Of the 14 trainees who started the training in the 2012/13 academic year, 12 completed it successfully. This represents a slightly higher proportion than nationally for the three subjects covered. In the current year, almost all who started are still on the course, which suggests that the completion rate is set to improve.
3. Employment rates are high. Partnership data show that all those who completed the course in 2012/13 gained employment in teaching. At the time of the inspection, roughly two thirds of the way through the training year, high proportions of mathematics and science trainees had already gained employment for September 2014.
4. Much of the trainees' teaching is predominantly good, and some is outstanding. Trainees and NQTs show good skills in planning well-structured lessons that focus on key aspects of learning and actively engage pupils. Trainees value highly the training in using assessment as an aid to learning. Inspection evidence, including from employing schools, indicates that this has had a positive impact on trainees' and NQTs' teaching. Science trainees seen during the inspection showed strong subject knowledge and were keen to use experiments as an effective approach to developing pupils' learning.
5. Trainees show strong personal qualities, such as responding to advice and feedback from colleagues. NQTs show particular strengths in fulfilling their wider professional responsibilities through making a positive contribution to the wider life of the school. Trainees and NQTs are less consistently effective in providing further challenge for the most able pupils, and in questioning pupils to promote their learning and assess their deeper understanding.
6. Trainees are aware of the different forms of bullying that can take place and are developing skills to combat bullying appropriately. All benefit from an opportunity to teach a part-lesson on cyber-bullying to a Year 7 class. Trainees know the key aspects of their role in safeguarding pupils.

7. Outcomes are good for both those on the core programme and those on the School Direct route. To date, drama trainees have achieved at a higher level than those in mathematics or science. There are no clear differences between the achievement of other groups such as males and females, or different ethnic groups; the same applies for completion rates and employment rates.

The quality of training across the partnership is good

8. Trainees on both the core programme and the School Direct route benefit from the same good-quality training. The course is very effectively structured so as to promote coherence between the different elements. For example, in any particular week, the content of the professional studies training is, where possible, followed up in the subject training and in placement schools. The continuous focus on the Teachers' Standards provides a unifying theme as trainees collect and submit their evidence during the year. Trainees' responses to the online questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the quality of the training.
9. Trainees in all subjects understand their role in developing pupils' reading, writing and communication skills. For example, a drama trainee explained how she guides pupils in how to summarise their learning in the lesson and insists that the writing is done using full sentences. A mathematics trainee not only shows pupils the key words for the lesson but, where appropriate, discusses how the word is made up from different parts and how it is related to similar words. The promotion of mathematical skills is not confined to mathematics and science trainees: drama trainees have discussed how they can develop mathematical skills in their lessons through, for example, using mathematical vocabulary associated with shapes.
10. Trainees benefit from good-quality training in behaviour management, including additional sessions provided by the subject leader in response to requests from the trainee group. As a result, trainees know a range of strategies that they can employ to promote positive attitudes and behaviour in the classroom and understand the link between good teaching and good behaviour. While a few trainees are still learning to apply their strategies consistently, others are applying what they have learnt to create highly effective learning environments.
11. Trainees are well prepared to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They benefit from the opportunity to follow up the central training by shadowing a teaching assistant, discussing with them their role and learning from their expertise. They gain useful experience of meeting the needs of particular pupils in their

teaching placements. For example, one trainee ensures that a pupil with an autistic-spectrum disorder is clear about the planned structure of a lesson before it starts; another trainee uses word cards to help a poor speaker to communicate more effectively. Although all undertake central training in supporting pupils who speak English as an additional language, some trainees have only limited experience of working with them.

12. Trainees benefit from placements in schools that provide contrasting experiences. Subject mentors, and others who observe teaching, provide trainees with good-quality and comprehensive feedback that includes aspects of subject-specific pedagogy. Inspectors saw examples of excellent oral feedback, where skilled mentors ensured that trainees reviewed pupils' learning in the lesson so that they understood for themselves which aspects of the teaching were strong and which could be improved. While, overall, trainees are trained in good-quality partner schools, not all trainees who responded to the online questionnaire say their placement experiences are of high quality.
13. Trainees gain extensive experience of analysing teaching through observing lessons and this forms a key thread in their training. A distinctive and valuable part of the course is the trainees' two-week observational school placement, which takes place in addition to their principal and solo placements. As part of this placement, trainees develop their understanding of effective teaching through jointly observing a series of lessons and discussing the impact of the teaching on learning with an experienced observer.
14. Trainees meet with subject mentors weekly to discuss emerging strengths in their teaching, to set targets and useful tasks for the week and to review progress since the previous week. Currently, some meeting records show a bias towards tasks to complete rather than targets that focus on improving the quality of trainees' teaching. Weekly reviews of targets do not always give enough emphasis to the impact of trainees' teaching on pupils' learning.
15. The assessment of trainees is detailed and accurate, and has a clear focus on evaluating performance against each of the Teachers' Standards. The system for monitoring trainees' progress allows managers to identify quickly where additional support may be required.
16. Training on the impending changes to the National Curriculum is good. Subject training helps trainees to compare the existing curriculum in their subject with the revised curriculum. They demonstrate their knowledge as part of a written assignment. Drama trainees understand how the curriculum changes for English or personal, social and health education could have an impact on teaching their subject. Mathematics

and science trainees know the key changes to the curriculum and assessment arrangements for their specialist subjects.

17. Within the context of its focus on the 11–16 age range, the training devotes appropriate time to preparing trainees to teach post-16. All subject training includes a consideration of the subject knowledge needed to teach at post-16, as well as the relevant curriculum and assessment arrangements. Trainees have the opportunity to observe or teach lessons at post-16. However, at the time of the inspection, some key aspects of this training had not taken place so it is not possible to judge its impact.

The quality of leadership and management across the partnership is outstanding

18. While it has not had time to establish consistently outstanding outcomes for trainees, excellent leadership and management has led to the rapid establishment of good training and improving outcomes. Leaders and managers demonstrate a very clear vision for the future of the partnership. They have been highly effective in developing the partnership over a short time frame and maintain a relentless focus on continuing to improve both provision and outcomes.
19. Partnership schools were fully involved in setting up the programme and retain involvement in shaping its strategic direction. Their strong commitment is demonstrated by high attendance at mentor meetings, familiarity with the partnership's aims and priorities, and the involvement of specialist leaders of education in the training. High-quality, extensive and consistent training for all subject mentors contributes to the generally strong support that they provide for trainees in schools.
20. Selection processes, including for School Direct applicants, are rigorous and extensive. This year, the partnership increased successfully the number of trainees recruited, including in the shortage areas of mathematics and science. Trainees selected have a strong aptitude for teaching and most have excellent subject knowledge. The recruitment profile includes an above-average proportion of minority ethnic trainees.
21. Quality assurance procedures are extensive and rigorous. Managers monitor the quality of training in schools through joint observations and visits from subject route leaders; in addition, schools perform their own quality assurance to check that subject mentors are making accurate judgements. Communication across the partnership is strong and managers ensure a full exchange of information when trainees move from one placement to another. This helps mentors to tailor their support and, consequently helps trainees to adapt quickly to the

demands of a different school. Because they know the partnership schools so well, managers are able to put together a profile of subject mentors which records their strengths and possible development needs. This is helping managers to plan for further training which may be needed in the future.

22. Improvement planning identifies the key aspects of provision and outcomes where further improvement can be made. Self-evaluation takes account of a range of internal and external views. The external examiner provides helpful comments not only on the quality of provision and trainees' written work but also on the teaching skills of a sample of trainees.
23. The partnership is fully compliant with initial teacher training criteria and all statutory requirements.
24. The partnership has excellent capacity to improve. From a starting position where it was only possible to recruit over four months, managers ensured that all those recruited were sufficiently strong to exceed the minimum standards for QTS, and for all to gain employment. There are strong indications of improved outcomes for current trainees. Leaders and managers have shown the capacity to identify where improvements can be made and to implement changes rapidly and effectively. For example, a thorough review of lesson observation feedback, in the partnership's first year, found too great an emphasis on behaviour management. Subsequently, additional training for mentors and a redesigned form have led to a substantial rise in the quality of written feedback to trainees on the quality of their teaching.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe teaching:

Erasmus Darwin Academy, Burntwood
Great Barr School, Birmingham
The Arthur Terry School, Sutton Coldfield
The Coleshill School, Coleshill
The Streetly Academy, Sutton Coldfield

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