

Kingsbridge ITE SCITT Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 29 June 2015

Stage 2: 30 November 2015

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two 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 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

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

Primary and secondary routes

Information about this ITE partnership

- Kingsbridge Education Improvement Partnership (Kingsbridge, or the partnership), established under the Excellence in Cities Programme in 2002, is based in the Excellence Centre in Wigan, which is attached to Rose Bridge Academy.
- In 2003, the partnership developed an employment-based route into teaching with the aim of training outstanding teachers for schools in Wigan.
- The Kingsbridge ITE partnership provides early years (3–5), primary (4–11) and secondary (11–16) school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) for graduates.
- Trainees who successfully complete their training are recommended for qualified teacher status (QTS) and have previously gained a professional and a postgraduate certificate of education in partnership with Edge Hill University. From September 2015, Kingsbridge has been working in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University.
- At the time of the inspection, there were five secondary schools and eleven primary schools in the partnership across Wigan. In addition, associate schools are brought into the partnership as hosts for trainees on their placements, including a group of schools within the Greater Manchester area. Trainees are based in their main school throughout the training year, with a substantial second placement in a contrasting school.
- During stage 1 of the inspection, there were 67 trainees on the programme, 26 on the primary course and 41 on the secondary programme.
- At the start of 2015/16, there were five early years specialists, 19 primary specialists and 24 secondary specialists who commenced their training. Of these, nine are paid a salary for their training year.

Information about the primary and secondary ITE inspection

- Inspectors visited six schools at stage 1 of the inspection, observing 10 trainees teach. They also met with three other trainees to review their evidence of their progress in relation to the teachers' standards.
- At stage 1, inspectors met with members of the board to discuss their work in leading and managing Kingsbridge ITE partnership.
- At stage 2, inspectors visited seven schools and observed eight newly qualified teachers (NQTs) teach. Inspectors considered documentation relating to the transition between the end of training and induction,

including the targets that were set for NQTs at the beginning of their first year in post.

- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the partnership's website, its analysis of outcomes for trainees, the feedback from partnership and non-partnership schools, its self-evaluation documentation and its improvement plan.
- Inspectors made checks to ensure compliance with the initial teaching training criteria and statutory requirements, including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors held discussions with individual trainees and NQTs, course leaders and managers, mentors, trainers, induction mentors and headteachers. Inspectors took into account the responses from the online questionnaire completed in July 2015, the partnership's own trainees questionnaire, the current NQT survey and the actions taken by leaders and managers to improve training and outcomes between the two stages of the inspection.

Inspection team

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Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

The key strengths of the primary and secondary partnership are:

- The Kingsbridge partnership has a clear vision for 'growing our own outstanding teachers'; it demonstrates a strong commitment to recruiting and training those who have a strong aptitude for teaching, who matriculate to become excellent teachers and who are employed in the local area and region.
- The course leaders have designed, and continually strive to improve, a highly effective programme of centre- and school-based training. This cohesive approach draws upon the expertise of school-based colleagues, who model outstanding practice and set high expectations, which trainees are motivated to emulate, and the clear guidance provided by course

leaders. As a result, a high proportion of trainees are exceptionally well prepared for employment.

- The quality of mentoring is of a high standard. School-based and subject mentors work closely with trainees to develop their subject knowledge and teaching skills. They skilfully coach and develop trainees' skills in a systematic way, through the setting of short-term targets. By the end of their training, trainees are highly accomplished practitioners in all aspects of the teachers' standards. Trainees feel supported in their work, which is why completion rates have been consistently above average over time.
- Trainees are highly reflective about their practice and the extent to which their teaching is having a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and progress. They are constantly striving to improve the quality of their work, demonstrating an ambition to succeed. Trainees and former trainees demonstrate strong professional and personal qualities, which hallmark them as Kingsbridge trainees. Trainees secure high levels of attainment. Consequently, they are very much sought after, which is the reason why employment rates are consistently high.
- All trainees demonstrate excellent subject knowledge. As a result, primary trainees are very well prepared to teach phonics (the sounds that letters make), English and mathematics. Secondary trainees' high levels of subject expertise and curriculum knowledge enables them to motivate and fully engage pupils in their learning.
- Trainees and NQTs have developed a strong understanding of how to assess pupils' attainment accurately and to plan lessons that build upon their prior knowledge. As a result, they are able to meet the needs of the groups of pupils with different prior attainment. This is helping to improve outcomes for pupils in schools and across the local area.
- Senior leaders have established a robust system for quality assuring the work of mentors and the progress and attainment of trainees. This is underpinned by clear documentation that everyone understands and uses. There are well-established systems for moderating judgements to ensure that there is consistency across the partnership. As a result, the partnership is able to ensure that individual trainees are very well supported and achieve highly by the end of their training.
- The clear leadership and management structures and the involvement of headteachers on the partnership board ensures that course leaders receive high levels of support as well as robust challenge to ensure that the quality of training remains strong. Systems for self-evaluation and improvement planning are robust; the partnership is highly committed to continuously improving the quality of its work in successfully sustaining and improving the outcomes for trainees. As a result, they demonstrate outstanding capacity to improve further.

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

The partnership should

- Refine the support strategies that are provided to trainees to further reduce the proportion of trainees who withdraw from the course prior to the completion of their training.
- Strengthen further the transition from training to induction by ensuring that trainees are involved in the setting of more precise targets, which will sharpen their focus upon key areas of development during their first year in school.

Inspection judgements

1. The overall effectiveness of Kingsbridge ITE partnership is outstanding. The close working relationships between the headteachers of partnership schools and the course leaders ensure that there is a strong commitment to recruiting and training those who have a strong aptitude for teaching. Trainees receive high-quality training and become reflective practitioners who are highly sought-after to work in schools in the local area and region.
2. The partnership has refined its approach to recruiting and selecting trainees. It has a clear recruitment strategy that is based upon the needs of schools in the partnership and the local area. Consequently, trainee numbers vary year on year due to demand. The partnership is sharply focused on recruiting trainees who demonstrate the potential to become outstanding teachers.
3. The partnership has introduced the expectation that applicants have spent time in schools before interview so that they are able to articulate the reasons why they want to become a teacher. Candidates undertake a formal interview and complete an audit of their subject knowledge as part of the recruitment process. For those who are successfully recruited, the partnership has a very clear understanding of their starting points and is able to develop a personalised plan for the training year in order to meet their individual needs. Trainees are expected to quickly apply their knowledge from centre-based training and to develop their teaching skills during their first term in school.
4. The training provided to trainees through professional school-based mentors, subject coaches, literacy and numeracy consultants, link consultants, and through the professional studies programme (centre-based training) ensures that they receive bespoke support throughout their training year. Trainees complete reflective journals on a weekly basis in relation to how well they are progressing and how they have drawn upon their training to improve their

practice. Mentors use this information to set short-term achievable targets, which helps to sustain trainees' motivation and develop their confidence as they navigate their way through the training year. Given the high quality of personal and professional training and support, most trainees complete their training by the end of the year.

5. All the professionals who are involved in working with a trainee contribute to the ongoing and regular checks on the trainee's progress in meeting the teachers' standards. This ensures that trainees are provided with sufficient levels of challenge and support during their training. Consequently, all trainees exceed the minimum level of practice expected by teachers at the end of the training year; the large majority of primary trainees and the majority of secondary trainees achieve outstanding levels of attainment.
6. The partnership draws upon the expertise of outstanding teachers who act as professional school-based mentors. As a result, trainees observe highly effective practice; they are motivated to develop their skills so they can emulate the quality of practice displayed by their mentors. One NQT identified 'real practice and real practitioners' as the root cause for the high quality of training. A clear strength of the trainees' and NQTs' practice is the establishment of high-quality and stimulating learning environments, which celebrate the quality of pupils' work as well as providing interesting displays which help pupils in their learning. These high expectations are also reflected in the way in which trainees and NQTs have developed good relationships with pupils. Consequently, pupils in their care behave well, are engaged in their learning and work hard.
7. Headteachers who have employed former trainees as NQTs speak highly of their good levels of subject knowledge. This is used to good effect, as NQTs present learning to pupils in interesting and creative ways. As a result, pupils are keen to learn, and effective use is made of lesson time. Primary trainees commend the high-quality training that they have received, which has helped them to become confident and highly skilled in the teaching of phonics, English and mathematics. Secondary trainees are similarly well equipped to teach their main subjects as well as to develop pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy during lessons.
8. Trainees and NQTs have quickly become accustomed to using the school's systems for assessing pupils in order to identify the prior knowledge and skills of pupils. They use this information to plan a series of lessons, which supports the needs of different prior attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. This is helping these pupils to make good rates of progress.
9. Trainees and NQTs undertake frequent checks on the quality of learning and the rates of pupils' progress during lessons. This helps them to identify where

pupils have developed misconceptions, so they can reshape tasks or provide more detailed explanations to support pupil's understanding. Very occasionally, when it was clear that pupils had already acquired knowledge or had mastered a particular skill, NQTs did not move learning forward quickly enough.

10. Trainees and NQTs ensure that they follow the school's policy for marking and feedback. Pupils are provided with detailed feedback on how well they have done and it is made clear what they have to do next to improve their work. Pupils are expected to respond to feedback to show how they are developing their skills or deepening their understanding of a particular concept.
11. Headteachers, both from partnership and non-partnership schools, cite the high standards of professional and personal conduct of trainees and NQTs as a key factor in employing them as teachers in their schools. They are impressed with the way in which trainees and NQTs reflect upon their teaching and the extent to which this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. Trainees and NQTs are often able to pinpoint how they would improve their practice even prior to feedback from mentors. As a result, they are accustomed to taking responsibility for their professional development and are keen to improve.
12. Trainees and NQTs are able to engage and communicate effectively with parents and carers to help support their child's development and learning. Headteachers say that trainees and NQTs make a positive contribution to the life of the school, for example, by leading before- and after-school clubs, and by sharing their practice with others.
13. Trainees and NQTs say that the high-quality training received during their time at Kingsbridge has made them exceptionally well prepared to commence their teaching careers. While there were some concerns raised by primary trainees during stage 1 of the inspection in relation to the relative lack of opportunities to develop their skills in the teaching of physical education, these have been remedied by the course leaders. From September 2015, all primary trainees are expected to either observe or team teach in every physical education lesson during their placements, irrespective of whether this is delivered by their mentor or external sports coach. Additional training has also been incorporated into the curriculum and the expectation added that no trainee can be awarded the grade of 'good or better' unless they have been observed delivering practice commensurate with such grades. This is indicative of the responsiveness of the partnership and its determination to secure continuous improvements in the quality of their work.
14. During stage 1 of the inspection, a few trainees raised concerns about the quality of their second placement, which is designed to provide them with an experience of schools in contrasting circumstances to the one where they undertake the majority of their training. Since then, course leaders have

redesigned their approach to planning the contrasting placements. Trainees now have to select and put a case forward for their preferences for their second placement in order to broaden and deepen their understanding of schools. Clear guidance is given to trainees about the purpose of the second placement. In particular, trainees are given opportunities to work with pupils from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, pupils of different age groups and in schools that have different Ofsted gradings, including those which may require improvement. Course leaders accurately evaluate that the second placement often helps trainees to deepen their understanding of teaching and learning in schools, which helps them to move forward apace in the final stages of their training.

15. Course leaders have responded quickly to amend the course programme to reflect contemporary issues in education. As a result, trainees and NQTs have received additional training on the statutory provisions that underpin school's arrangements to keep pupils safe, e-safety, teachers' use of social media, how to tackle and prevent bullying, and the Prevent agenda relating to radicalisation and extremism. This has helped to deepen the professional understanding of trainees.
16. Trainees receive detailed guidance on how to secure employment. They are given support in applying for positions as well as for interview. Headteachers from partnership and non-partnership schools who have employed Kingsbridge graduates say that they are impressed with their depth of understanding of teaching and learning. It was also evident, through their personal and professional qualities, how well they could make a positive contribution to the life of their school. As a result, in two out of the last three years, all Kingsbridge graduates have secured employment and employment rates are consistently high. Most of the NQTs work in Wigan Schools or in the Greater Manchester area.
17. The partnership ensures that trainees are involved in the identification of targets, which will help to ensure a smooth transition between their training and induction year. While all of the targets that had been discussed with mentors and NQTs were appropriate, in most cases these had already been achieved. This was because the targets were too general and broad. Due to the highly reflective nature of trainees and NQTs, there is scope for them to have greater involvement in the setting of more precise targets, which will help to sharpen their focus on making accelerated improvement during their first year in school.
18. The partnership has established robust procedures for ensuring that their judgements relating to the outcomes for trainees are accurate. Systems for quality assuring the work of mentors and progress of trainees are working well and result in consistent judgements across the partnership.

19. The Kingsbridge partnership is well aware of its duty to comply with the initial teaching training (ITT) criteria as well as statutory requirements relating to promoting equality and diversity, eliminating discrimination and safeguarding pupils. The course leader has responsibility for this and ensures that the partnership is compliant with such requirements.
20. A strength of the partnership is the close working relationships between the board, course leaders, staff and headteachers. As a result of this work, 'The Kingsbridge Way' has been firmly established. There is a shared understanding of the benefits of working with trainees and providing wider professional development for teachers, in pursuit of raising standards for pupils in local schools. The Kingsbridge Board receives detailed information about the progress of each trainee each term to ensure that they are on track to achieve well, and if not, to determine the additional support that is to be provided. The board has clear systems for self-evaluating how well the partnership is doing as well as setting appropriate areas for development. Just as trainees and NQTs are reflective about their work, so are the board. They reflect deeply on the feedback they receive from stakeholders and where required, provide an immediate solution or identify what actions are to be taken in the medium and longer term to strengthen the quality of their work.
21. The course leaders have focused their recent work on addressing all of the relative weaknesses that were identified at stage 1 of the inspection. They have streamlined the documentation that trainees are expected to complete and provide additional time for them to complete their reflections each week during their taught modules. Current trainees find the workload manageable. NQTs say that the expectation for completing paperwork was demanding during their training. Nevertheless, that the detailed planning and the reflections that they undertook helped them to become accustomed to the expectations of schools in relation to the amount and depth of written documentation. The partnership is not complacent; they acknowledge that their completion rates have remained at 93% for each of the last three years and are considering ways in which they can support trainees further to ensure that a higher proportion complete their training. The responsiveness of the partnership to addressing the emerging areas for improvement identified at the end of stage 1, allied to the sustaining of outstanding outcomes, shows that it has outstanding capacity to secure continuous improvement in all aspects of its work.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Bowker Vale Primary School, Manchester

Fred Longworth High School, Wigan

Golborne High School, Wigan

Hawkey Hall High School, Wigan

Marus Bridge Primary School, Wigan

Platt Bridge Community School, Wigan

Rose Bridge Academy, Wigan

St. Mary's Church of England Primary School, Trafford

Walkden High School, Salford

ITE partnership details

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