

# Leicestershire Secondary SCITT ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 29 June – 1 July 2015 Stage 2: 30 November – 2 December 2015

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

The inspection draws on evidence from 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

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

## Information about this ITE partnership

- The Leicestershire Secondary School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) ITE partnership provided training for its first cohort of trainees in September 2013. The accredited provider is the Rushey Mead Teaching School Alliance and Rushey Mead Academy is the lead school. Central training is delivered in a purpose-built training facility adjacent to Rushey Mead Academy. The SCITT works in partnership with 14 secondary schools in Leicester and Leicestershire.
- Until September 2015, the partnership provided School Direct (salaried and non-salaried) training routes as well as core training leading to qualified teacher status (QTS), with both routes leading to a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE), accredited by the University of Leicester. All trainees currently in training are following the core training route.
- Trainees specialise in one of 11 subjects: biology; chemistry; computer science; design and technology; English; geography; history; mathematics; modern languages; physical education (PE) and physics. In 2014, 29 trainees completed their training and in 2015 the total was 27.

## Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- Inspectors visited five schools during Stage 1 of the inspection and observed 11 trainees teach. They also observed mentors providing feedback to trainees following lessons, which were observed jointly. Inspectors held meetings with trainees, mentors, ITT coordinators and headteachers in the schools visited. They also met with a group of four subject tutors. Meetings were held with leaders and managers of the partnership and the lead inspector held a telephone discussion with the chair of the partnership's steering committee. Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including course handbooks, training materials, assessment information and the provider's self-evaluation document and improvement plan. They checked that the provider met the ITT criteria for the award of QTS.
- At Stage 2, inspectors visited eight schools and observed ten newly qualified teachers (NQTs) teach. They held discussions with the NQTs whose teaching was observed and one other NQT. Inspectors met with headteachers, induction tutors and subject mentors in each of the schools visited. They also met with a group of eight trainees currently in training. Further meetings were held with leaders and managers of the partnership. A range of additional documentation was considered. This included scrutiny of the final assessment grades awarded to trainees against the teachers' standards and the documentation provided to support trainees' transition to induction as NQTs. Inspectors also considered how well the partnership had responded to the emerging areas for improvement identified during Stage 1 of the inspection.

### Inspection team

Daniel Burton, HMI	lead inspector (stages 1 and 2)
Julie Yarwood, HMI	assistant lead inspector (stages 1 and 2)

## Overall effectiveness

**Grade: 2**

### The key strengths of the secondary partnership are:

- The strong contribution that the partnership makes to providing high-quality teachers in schools in challenging socio-economic contexts within and beyond the partnership, including in shortage subjects.
- Trainees' strong understanding of how best to meet the needs of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those whose prior attainment is low.
- Trainees' high standards of personal and professional conduct and the positive relationships that they establish with colleagues and the pupils they teach.

- Trainees' strong understanding of how pupils learn and their effectiveness in devising sequences of activities which build on pupils' prior learning well.
- The quality and accuracy of trainees' reflections about their teaching and their willingness to seek out further opportunities to learn from outstanding teachers.
- The strong leadership provided by the programme manager, who, rightly, is held in high regard by trainees and by leaders and managers of the partnership schools.
- The effectiveness of self-evaluation in bringing about improvements in the proportion of high-attaining trainees in the two years since the partnership opened.

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

### **The partnership should:**

- Ensure that weaker aspects of lower attaining trainees' performance, checked against the teachers' standards, are given greater weight in final assessments of the quality of their teaching over time.
- Provide additional and bespoke support for the very small minority of trainees who do not tackle pupils' low-level off-task behaviour as consistently or effectively as the best trainees.
- Ensure that all trainees implement their good knowledge of how best to meet the needs of disadvantaged students consistently and that school-based mentors provide regular feedback on this aspect of trainees' teaching.
- Strengthen further the high-quality improvement planning by gathering more detailed information from employing schools about the quality of former trainees' teaching so that further improvements to training can be identified and implemented.

## **Inspection judgements**

1. In the short time since it began providing training, the Leicestershire Secondary SCITT has quickly made a strong contribution to the recruitment of high-quality teachers within and beyond the partnership. The large majority of schools within the partnership are set in challenging socio-economic contexts. Some are judged by Ofsted to currently require improvement. As a result, trainees gain good experience of working in these settings and many go on to gain employment in schools where high-quality teaching is needed the most.
2. Completion rates were in line with the national picture for secondary trainees in 2014. In 2015, all trainees achieved QTS. Similarly, while employment rates mirrored the position nationally in 2014, all but one of the 2014–15 cohort have

secured a teaching post this year. All PE trainees have secured employment, often against a large field of applicants, including more experienced teachers.

3. By the end of their training, almost all trainees teach to a consistently high standard. In 2015, the proportion of trainees demonstrating excellent practice against all or most of the teachers increased. However, the final assessment of the very small minority of trainees who taught less well was overgenerous. This is because, in coming to an overall judgement, not enough weight was given in final assessments to weaker aspects of those trainees' teaching against the individual teachers' standards.
4. The overwhelming majority of trainees become highly effective teachers, consistently demonstrating impressive strengths against each of the teachers' standards. These trainees are highly creative in devising lessons which meet pupils' differing needs extremely effectively and make a strong contribution to the progress they make over time. During both stages of the inspection, many examples were seen of highly effective teaching. For example, in a design and technology lesson seen during Stage 1, the trainee's teaching was characterised by her extremely high expectations of what pupils could achieve as they studied food and nutrition. High-quality planning, informed by strong analysis of pupils' prior attainment, superb behaviour management and a brisk pace ensured that all pupils made excellent progress. The regular references that the trainee made to opportunities for further study at university contributed to a strong culture of high aspirations in the lesson. This practice was typical of other strong teaching seen by the highest attaining trainees.
5. A key strength of all the trainees is their understanding that all groups of pupils need to be challenged well to meet and exceed their potential, including lower attaining pupils and those placed in lower ability sets. The most effective trainees are also highly skilled in providing good levels of challenge for all groups of pupils, including higher attainers. For example, in a Year 7 history lesson seen during Stage 2 of the inspection, the former trainee challenged all pupils to think hard as they considered the range of punishments used to tackle crime in the Roman Empire. The teaching was characterised by the positive and energetic approach, rooted in the former trainee's strong understanding of pupils' starting points, and higher attainers were challenged particularly well through targeted questioning. As a result of this strong teaching over time, many of the class were exceeding their target grades.
6. Trainees are resourceful in finding opportunities to observe more experienced teachers. They are skilled in reflecting effectively and accurately on the strengths and weaknesses of their own teaching. They use this and their mentors' feedback from lesson observations to identify not only how they can improve, but also where they can observe practice which will help them to do so.

7. Most trainees plan very effectively to improve pupils' literacy skills. For example, in PE lessons seen, regular references were made to technical, subject-specific, vocabulary. As a result, the pupils were skilled in applying this language in their assessment of their own and each other's performance. In other lessons, trainees across a wide range of subjects made good use of additional resources to promote and secure improvements in pupils' literacy.
8. All trainees are skilled in sequencing lessons which build well on pupils' previous attainment and secure the necessary gains in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Trainees and former trainees use these skills and their strong subject knowledge very effectively to plan lessons which often include a wide range of well-crafted, appropriate activities. For example, in an English lesson seen during Stage 2, the range of engaging and varied activities used was highly effective in building lower attaining pupils' confidence as they prepared to write an informal letter. Lots of opportunities were provided for pupils to share their ideas, questions and concerns as they prepared for the written task. As a result, they made strong progress in developing their writing skills.
9. Most trainees and former trainees mark pupils' work effectively and conscientiously. Many examples were seen of high-quality marking and feedback, which secured notable improvements in the quality of pupils' work. Almost all trainees insist on high standards of presentation in pupils' books.
10. Trainees are skilled in cultivating very effective working relationships with more experienced colleagues and each other. All exhibit very high standards of personal and professional conduct, and staff in schools report that they enjoy working with them. Many make a strong contribution to the schools they train in, for example, by running extra-curricular clubs or by producing high-quality resources and schemes of work that can be used by more experienced teachers.
11. Despite these many strengths, outcomes for trainees are not outstanding because a small minority of former trainees do not teach consistently to this high level. Where this is the case, it is because the former trainees do not challenge low-level, off-task behaviour consistently well. This hinders the progress of some of the pupils they teach. While trainees from the 2014–15 cohort commented favourably on aspects of the training they had received in behaviour management, they also said that they would value more practical advice to accompany the strong theoretical training. Since Stage 1 of the inspection, this aspect of training has been strengthened significantly, drawing on the expertise and skills of a highly regarded external trainer. The current trainees who met with inspectors reported very favourably on this training because of the wide range of effective strategies they had learned.
12. Linked to this, the partnership's assessment arrangements have not been effective enough in identifying the very small minority of trainees who, while

teaching well overall, were not sufficiently assertive in tackling low-level, off-task behaviour during their training. Leaders and managers recognise the need to tailor this aspect of training more sharply to meet the needs of less confident and assertive trainees to better prepare them for the diverse challenges they face in their employing schools.

13. Most other aspects of training are very strong and much is outstanding. Trainees benefit from a week-long range of placements in alternative settings, including in special schools, primary schools and sixth form colleges. Trainees who met with inspectors spoke of the profound impact their placements in special schools had on their commitment to and understanding of inclusion. This helps explain why trainees are so effective in meeting the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
14. Trainees are equally skilled in meeting the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Almost all trainees benefit from placements in schools with high proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and many who are from families where English is not the first language. This experience combines well with core training to equip trainees with a good range of strategies to cope well with the challenges presented when teaching pupils with low levels of English language acquisition.
15. Trainees have a strong understanding of their duties to protect pupils from harm, and can identify and describe possible symptoms of abuse. They understand their duties to report any concerns and how to do so. Training is provided at the start of the course in how to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism. However, trainees were not equally confident in articulating their learning from this training at the end of their training. Plans are now in place to revisit this aspect of training regularly throughout the course to ensure that it remains fresh in current trainees' minds.
16. Most aspects of training are tailored very well to meet trainees' differing needs. For example, last year, a modern languages trainee was able to divide her teaching between two schools throughout the programme to ensure that she gained sufficient experience of teaching two languages. Support for trainees with particular needs is strong, with additional bespoke provision put in place, for example, for trainees who are disabled or have special educational needs. Similarly, trainees who exhibit difficulties early in the course are quickly identified and supported through well-focused and effective action plans. The provider ensures that no trainees who fail to meet the teachers' standards are awarded QTS and, where appropriate, extends training into the following year for trainees who need additional time to meet the teachers' standards sufficiently and consistently well.
17. Trainees benefit from high-quality mentoring. Mentors are well trained and have a strong understanding of the provider's policies and practice. Training is

tailored to respond to mentors' differing levels of experience with additional quality assurance procedures in place to support mentors new to the role or the partnership. Leaders and managers check the training provided by mentors very effectively and provide additional support and challenge, for example, when feedback from lesson observations does not focus sharply enough on the impact of trainees' teaching on pupils' progress.

18. While trainees have a strong understanding of how best to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils in their teaching, not all make routine use of this information to tailor their teaching to these pupils' particular needs. Mentor feedback from lesson observations does not always include sufficient analysis of this aspect of trainees' teaching.
19. Trainees commented very positively on the way in which the core training in generic teaching skills is followed up closely by the subject-specific training they receive from their lead subject tutors. They value the way that the training ensures that their understanding of how to apply generic teaching skills is deepened and enriched through the subject training. Trainees' academic assignments are rooted in the application of theory into practice, though, very occasionally, the topics chosen by individual trainees do not vary enough.
20. Leaders and managers have been highly effective in devising a programme which ensures that almost all trainees consistently teach highly effective lessons by the end of their training. Good quality improvement planning has led to an increase in the proportion of higher attaining trainees, as well as improvements in trainees' teaching against particular teachers' standards where previous assessment information identified weaker aspects of practice.
21. Recruitment procedures are extremely rigorous, and include a wide range of challenges for potential trainees, including written assignments, a teaching task and a group task which tests trainees' understanding of the duty on teachers to promote fundamental British values. The proportion of trainees recruited who have first class university degrees has increased each year and is above the sector average.
22. Transition to NQT induction is generally strong and benefits from the clear and appropriate targets that trainees set, with support from their trainers, to inform their professional development as teachers. Target-setting is enhanced because trainees are required to identify the types of activities that they will pursue and the actions that they will take to tackle their development needs. School staff reported that they appreciate the simple but effective way this documentation is set out.
23. The partnership benefits from highly effective leadership by the programme manager. In discussions, trainees reported on how the programme manager's strong personal qualities had strongly influenced their decisions to train at the



Leicestershire Secondary SCITT. Partnership schools engage well with the programme and contribute effectively and willingly to the provider's good quality self-evaluation and improvement planning. The provider has responded, quickly, effectively and strategically, to tackle the emerging areas for improvement identified during Stage 1 of the inspection. This, together with the improvements made in the second year of provision, provides strong evidence of the partnership's strong capacity to improve further. Leaders and managers recognise the need to strengthen improvement planning further by engaging more extensively with staff from employing schools to identify where improvements to the quality of training might be needed.

24. The partnership complies fully with the requirements for ITT.

## **Annex: Partnership schools**

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

Babington Community College, Leicester  
Brockington College, Leicester  
Brookvale High School, Leicester  
Countesthorpe Community College, Leicester  
Crown Hills Community College, Leicester  
Fullhurst Community College, Leicester  
Hamilton Community College, Leicester  
Leysland High School, Leicestershire  
Manor High School, Leicester  
Rushey Mead Academy, Leicester  
Soar Valley College, Leicester  
Wigston Academy, Wigston  
Wreake Valley Academy, Leicester

## ITE partnership details

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Inspection dates	Stage 1 29 June–1 July 2015
	Stage 2 30 November–2 December 2015
Lead inspector	Daniel Burton, HMI
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Phases provided	Secondary
Date of previous inspection	<b>N/A</b>
Provider address	Rushey Mead Academy Melton Road Leicester LE4 7AN



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