

St George's Academy ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 9 May 2016

Stage 2: 10 October 2016

This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Ofsted inspector 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

	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

Information about this ITE partnership

- St George's Academy Partnership provides school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) in the secondary phase. The partnership includes seven schools in central and south Lincolnshire. St George's Academy is the lead school. The range of schools includes schools judged by Ofsted to be good and schools judged to require improvement. Some of the schools in the partnership are located in areas of socio-economic disadvantage. The partnership recruited its first trainees for the academic year 2014/15.
- The partnership provides both core training and training through School Direct. The training provided for both routes is identical and all trainees follow a programme to gain qualified teacher status (QTS) and a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE), awarded by the University of Lincoln. At the time of stage 1 of the inspection, 16 trainees were training through the core route and seven through School Direct.
- The partnership is an accredited 11 to 16 provider though all trainees gain some post-16 teaching experience. At stage 1 of the inspection, training was being provided in art and design, chemistry, English, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages and physical education (PE). In addition, the provider currently offers places in computing, geography and physics.

Information about the inspection

- Over the two stages of the inspection, inspectors met with every trainee from the 2015/16 cohort. During stage 1 of the inspection, they jointly observed 11 trainees teach with the trainees' mentors. They also observed mentors providing feedback to the trainees following the lessons observed. At stage 2, inspectors observed 11 newly qualified teachers (NQTs), including those employed in schools beyond the partnership. In all, of the 22 trainees receiving training at stage 1 of the inspection, 18 had been observed teaching by the end of the inspection. Inspectors also observed subject training during stage 1 of the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with headteachers, other senior leaders, school-based tutors and mentors in the five partnership schools visited during stage 1. They also met with senior staff in the seven schools visited at stage 2, including at the three schools visited beyond the partnership. The lead inspector spoke by telephone to the subject mentors from two employing schools beyond the partnership.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders from the partnership and representatives of the Trainee Progress Board. They reviewed a range of documentation, including the partnership's self-evaluation and improvement plans, the partnership agreement and a report by an external examiner. They also scrutinised the provider's assessment information, records relating to

safeguarding children and the 11 responses to Ofsted's online trainee survey for the year 2015/16.

Inspection team

Daniel Burton HMI (lead inspector)
Emma Hollis-Brown (assistant lead inspector, stage 1)
Jayne Ashman HMI (assistant lead inspector, stage 2)

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the secondary partnership are:

- The outstanding leadership and management of the partnership, which in the two years of operation have secured good and improving outcomes for trainees. The head of the SCITT and the programme leader are rightly held in very high regard by staff and trainees across the partnership.
- The very strong engagement of schools within the partnership, evident in the key role they take in the recruitment of trainees and through their contribution to the partnership's vision, self-evaluation and strategic planning.
- The high completion and employment rates. In the two years since the partnership opened, all but one trainee has completed their training. All those awarded QTS have secured teaching posts.
- The provider's key role in meeting regional needs by providing good-quality teachers, including in shortage subjects, in an area with significant shortfalls in teacher supply.
- The trainees' high standards of professionalism, encapsulated by their rigorous planning, excellent professional conduct and rapid assimilation into the schools they train and work in.
- The high-quality and tailored support that trainees receive in response to their emerging needs. This ensures that trainees experiencing difficulties are identified and then supported quickly and those who are excelling are stretched and challenged effectively.
- The highly practical, school-based nature of the training which is valued by trainees because it means they are quickly able to apply their academic research and training in classroom situations.

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

The partnership should:

- Ensure that assessments of outstanding outcomes for trainees are consistently accurate across the partnership.

- Strengthen trainees' skills in planning and delivering lessons which stretch and challenge all groups of pupils, by:
 - deepening their understanding of the raised expectations in the national curriculum of what pupils should have achieved at the end of Year 6
 - ensuring that mentors consistently evaluate the impact of teaching on the progress made over time by different groups of pupils, including the most able
 - ensuring that all trainees use the detailed information they gather on pupils' prior attainment to inform their planning as effectively as the strongest trainees.

Inspection judgements

1. In the two years since the partnership began training its first recruits, outcomes for trainees have been securely good and are improving quickly. The high regard in which trainees are held by schools is reflected in very high employment rates. Many trainees secure teaching posts in the schools in which they train or in other schools within the partnership. School leaders and NQT mentors from schools beyond the partnership, including those in other regions, report high levels of satisfaction with the quality of NQTs they have recruited from the partnership. There is no difference between outcomes for trainees on the core and School Direct routes.
2. The outstanding leadership provided by the head of SCITT and the programme leader have been key to the partnership's success in producing teachers whose teaching over time is mostly good and sometimes outstanding. Leaders are uncompromising in their drive to continually improve the quality of provision and outcomes for trainees. Their high expectations and determination to produce the best teachers they can reflect well the partnership's stated aim 'to make teacher training in Lincolnshire the best it can be to create and inspire exceptional teachers for our students'. Excellent leadership is underpinned by highly effective systems of quality assurance, forensic and searching self-evaluation, and exceptionally strong improvement planning.
3. The provider's high expectations resonate across the partnership and in trainees' high standards of personal and professional conduct. If ever trainees' standards slip, senior leaders are quick to intervene to reiterate their expectations that trainees uphold the highest standards of ethics and behaviour. Leaders ensure that trainees demonstrate high regard for the policies and practices of the schools in which they train. As a result, they quickly cultivate strong relationships with staff and pupils.
4. Collaboration across the partnership is strong and effective. All partners contribute to decisions about recruitment, with senior staff from partner schools

and staff from the University of Lincoln all playing a key role in determining which trainees are recruited to successfully help meet local needs. The rigour and effectiveness of recruitment contributes to trainees' high completion rates. The Trainee Progress Board, which includes representatives from across the partnership, ensures that all stakeholders play a key role in contributing to self-evaluation and in determining the future direction of the partnership. As a result, the wide range of staff who contribute to the training, including headteachers, subject leaders and mentors, have a strong understanding of the partnership's vision and how this is realised through each component of the training.

5. The quality of training is usually good and some aspects are outstanding. Leaders and managers keep all aspects of training under regular review to ensure that changes can be made where it is judged to be less effective, including through the regular canvassing of trainees' opinions. The head of SCITT and the programme leader ensure that training reflects the latest research with regard to initial teacher education. For example, training has been amended for current trainees to take account of the recommendations made earlier this year by the Independent Teacher Workload Review Group.
6. Trainees value highly the quality of training they receive in behaviour management. They are grateful that training focuses strongly on this aspect of teaching from early in the course and is the subject of the first assignment towards the award of PGCE. As a result, trainees employ a good range of strategies to manage pupils' behaviour from early in the course, quickly getting to grips with their school's behaviour policy and mostly applying it effectively. Many trainees demonstrate outstanding skills in managing pupils' behaviour, combining high expectations with strong interpersonal skills and a good understanding of how best to motivate pupils to work hard. A very small minority of trainees occasionally lack confidence and tenacity in ensuring that all the pupils they teach behave well all of the time. This year's trainees are benefiting from the new 'weekly behaviour surgery' and other refinements to this aspect of training to ensure that those who need additional help receive regular and ongoing support.
7. Trainees also hold in high regard the weekly practical sessions devised and delivered by the programme leader. These build well on the academic sessions provided by the University of Lincoln by enabling trainees to consider how they will apply the findings of educational research in the classroom. Sessions are positioned thoughtfully through the training to ensure that the content reflects the trainees' stages of development as they work towards QTS.
8. Subject-specific training is of very good quality. The subject leaders who devise and deliver this aspect of the training combine excellent curriculum knowledge with excellent teaching. This results in sessions which are engaging, challenging and focused on the practical application of subject-specific knowledge. A

training session in English, for example, was highly effective in helping trainees get to grips with GCSE assessment criteria as they marked a range of scripts selected by the subject leader, including a script from a pupil whose first language was not English. This enabled trainees to understand how to assess the work of the range of pupils in their classes accurately. It also helped them to understand how to prepare their pupils effectively for external examinations. A very effective session in history led trainees to think deeply about how it is their responsibility to promote equality and diversity through their teaching. The trainees evaluated a range of curriculum materials to assess how well they reflected Britain's diverse population and considered how they could be improved to be more inclusive and representative.

9. Leaders and managers recognise that the potential of this good-quality subject training has not fully been exploited because, until recently, the content of the training was not formally shared with mentors. This has hindered the ability of mentors to add their own perspective and experiences to trainees' subject-specific knowledge and, most importantly, to assess the impact of this aspect of training on trainees' teaching. Greater links have now been forged and, in response to trainee feedback, increased time has been provided for the highly popular subject sessions. Nevertheless, subject training has not ensured that trainees have sufficient knowledge of the raised expectations of the key stage 2 national curriculum so that their teaching is sufficiently challenging for pupils in key stage 3.
10. Mentors are well trained and usually very skilled in providing good-quality feedback. Their feedback to trainees generally focuses well on the impact of trainees' teaching on pupils' progress, though not always on the progress of different groups of pupils, including the most able. This contributes to some trainees' teaching not being sufficiently challenging.
11. In discussions, almost all trainees were highly positive about the quality of mentoring they received. They value the good-quality feedback provided and the setting of good-quality, measurable targets accompanied by strong pastoral support. Very occasionally, the effectiveness of the feedback observed at stage 1 of the inspection was undermined by mentors being too quick to share their own ideas about the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching seen. By stage 2 of the inspection, senior leaders had provided additional training for all mentors to strengthen their skills in helping trainees to reflect on their teaching for themselves through probing questioning. It is too early to assess the impact of this improved training.
12. At stage 1 of the inspection a very small minority of trainees said that the quality of mentoring they had experienced had been inconsistent between their placement schools. Most commonly, their concerns regarded inconsistencies in the amount of contact and support they had received from their mentors. Senior leaders were already aware of these concerns and had acted quickly to

remedy these inconsistencies. Robust action has since been taken to ensure that mentoring is consistently of a high standard, including through deselecting less effective mentors, clarifying further the expectations of mentors and reorganising the way in which mentors are deployed.

13. Good-quality training ensures that trainees' planning is extremely thorough, reflecting well the provider's high expectations of the trainees and the trainees' professionalism and diligence. Trainees consistently produce high-quality resources which are subsequently drawn on by the experienced teachers they work with, to the benefit of pupils beyond the classes they teach. Trainees understand well their responsibilities to contribute to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. For example, most trainees promote consistently the high standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar they expect from pupils, highlighting work which needs correcting.
14. Trainees have a very good understanding of the importance of using accurate assessment to inform their planning, to check pupils' understanding and to evaluate their progress. They routinely draw on a wide range of data so that they understand the needs of the individual pupils they teach well. However, not all trainees make use of this information well enough to plan lessons which are sufficiently stretching, especially for the most able pupils.
15. Trainees' marking is mostly of very good quality, reflecting well their understanding of the importance of feedback in contributing to pupils' achievement. It also demonstrates their knowledge of the assessment policies of the schools they train in. Some of the trainees' marking is highly effective in helping pupils to improve their work. Particularly effective marking was seen in art and design and in English. Trainees are well informed about the changes made nationally to how pupils are assessed and how schools are held accountable.
16. The provider's commitment to equality and diversity is reflected in trainees' strong understanding of how best to promote good achievement for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. All trainees speak confidently about research findings on how best to tackle disadvantage through education and are able to apply this learning in practice. In addition, trainees are skilled in meeting the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They benefit from very good quality training, provided centrally and in their schools. Trainees are skilled in producing resources which ensure equality of access.
17. Trainees benefit from opportunities to teach in a range of contrasting schools, including schools requiring improvement and those in challenging socio-economic circumstances. The provider plots trainees' school experiences very carefully to ensure that they have opportunities to teach pupils from different backgrounds while being realistic about travel arrangements across rural Lincolnshire. A key strength of the training is the way in which it is routinely

adapted in response to trainees' emerging needs. For example, an art trainee's placement was tailored specifically to enable her to gain practical experience of teaching photography; a mathematics trainee had her placement in a selective school extended to build her expertise in teaching academically very able pupils. Similarly, trainees in need of additional help have received tailored support and, where necessary, had their programmes amended to help them tackle weaknesses in their teaching or to overcome personal difficulties.

18. Leaders and managers are well aware of their responsibility to equip trainees with the skills necessary to teach pupils from diverse backgrounds. While it is difficult to ensure that all trainees regularly have opportunities to teach pupils who speak English as an additional language in the partnership schools, the provider ensures that all trainees gain some practical experience as part of their training. This aspect of provision has been strengthened for current trainees through the brokering of additional training from a specialist provider and through improved planning to ensure that all trainees gain sufficiently rich experiences.
19. Trainees have a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and are vigilant to signs of potential abuse. They are well informed about the procedures they must follow if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being. They are alert to the signs of possible bullying and intervene or seek advice if they have any concerns. Trainees also receive good-quality training in the risks associated with their own use of social media and their duties to uphold public trust in the teaching profession.
20. At stage 1 of the inspection, inspectors agreed with the provider's assessment of trainees, including those trainees judged to be teaching at a high level. However, lesson observations and other evidence gathered at stage 2 showed that some of the trainees judged to be achieving at a high level by the end of their training had not sustained this outstanding quality of teaching as NQTs. In discussions, it became clear that while assessment criteria is shared and understood across the partnership, there are some discrepancies in how staff interpret the criteria for judging outstanding outcomes, with some focusing too much on trainees' potential rather than their attainment. Hence, while assessments at stage 1 appeared to be accurate, they have not in all cases proved to be reliable indicators of the likely quality of an NQT's teaching.
21. It is much to the provider's credit and indicative of its excellent leadership that, prior to stage 2 of the inspection, senior leaders had already considered how to improve the accuracy of final assessments by adjusting the curriculum in term six. Plans are now in place for current trainees to be given a greater teaching load towards the end of the course, with every day spent in school and increased responsibilities allocated, in order to prepare them even more effectively for challenges they will face as NQTs.

22. The provider complies fully with the statutory criteria which all providers of initial teacher training must meet.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Banovallum School, Horncastle
 Bourne Grammar School, Bourne
 Carre's Grammar School, Sleaford
 Cordeaux Academy, Louth
 St George's Academy, Sleaford
 Lincoln Christ's Hospital School, Lincoln
 The Deepings School, Peterborough
 University Academy Holbeach, Holbeach

ITE partnership details

Unique reference number	70291
Inspection number	10010236
Inspection dates	9–11 May 2016
Stage 1	
Stage 2	10–12 October 2016
Lead inspector	Daniel Burton HMI
Type of ITE partnership	SCITT
Phases provided	Secondary
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Provider address	St George's Academy Partnership St George's Academy, Westgate, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 7PP



The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016