

# Southend SCITT ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates    Stage 1: 16 May 2016    Stage 2: 14 November 2016

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This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors, and one 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 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<br>QTS |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b><br>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 the secondary partnership

- Southend SCITT (school-centred initial teacher training) was created in 2014. Southend High School for Girls is the lead school for secondary initial teacher training in the Southend-on-Sea area, working as Southend SCITT. The SCITT delivers a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) course in conjunction with Canterbury Christ Church University.
- The partnership trained 31 trainees last year, on courses leading to a PGCE for the 11–16 age range.
- Training is offered in the following subjects: art, biology, computer science, English, geography, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, music and physical education. Most of the subjects had very small numbers of trainees.

## Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- Inspectors observed the teaching of five trainees from three schools during stage 1 of the inspection, and the teaching of six newly qualified teachers (NQTs) from four schools during stage 2. At stage 1, inspectors met with a further 16 trainees in schools and in stage 2, a further 12 NQTs.
- Inspectors met with mentors, subject leaders, headteachers and members of the partnership steering group.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of evidence, including trainees' files, course handbooks, development plans, data on trainees' progress, completion rates and employment rates of trainees, and evidence of the partnership's self-evaluation.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentary evidence on recruitment and selection, statutory safeguarding and compliance with the initial teacher training criteria, tracking, assessment and summary reports, records of trainees' teaching and evidence of how well trainees' teaching meets the teachers' standards.
- Inspectors took account of responses to recent NQT surveys and to Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors also reviewed the partnership's own trainee evaluations of the programme.

## Inspection team

|                               |                          |                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Adrian Lyons HMI              | lead inspector           | Stages 1 and 2 |
| Chris Dick HMI                | assistant lead inspector | Stage 1        |
| Andrew Mayer Ofsted Inspector | assistant lead inspector | Stage 2        |

## Overall effectiveness

**Grade: 2**

### The key strengths of the secondary partnership

- There are high employment and completion rates. Trainees are successful in gaining employment in partnership schools and increasing the pool of effective teachers in Southend-on-Sea.
- Leaders have taken prompt and effective action to tackle aspects of the partnership's work that were identified as emerging areas for improvement at stage 1 of the inspection.
- The range of high-quality training experiences gives trainees an effective introduction to the role of the teacher. Trainees and NQTs exude a strong commitment to becoming effective teachers with drive and determination to proceed.
- Trainees' and NQTs' subject knowledge often gives marked confidence to their teaching and earns the respect of pupils. Working relationships between trainees and pupils are effective.
- The second school placement is effective in broadening the trainees' experience of teaching in a range of contexts, together with opportunities for trainees to observe outstanding practice. This works well because of the detailed planning and communication around the second school placement.
- There is a strong focus on the assessment of pupils' progress and an equally strong focus on the impact of teaching and learning over time.

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

#### The partnership should:

- ensure that the recently improved systems that provide an increased focus on the quality assurance of placements, the consistency of mentoring and the enhanced role of subject specialists, have a strong impact in strengthening outcomes for trainees.

## Inspection judgements

1. Outcomes for trainees across the partnership are good. All trainees who complete the course meet the teachers' standards and in most cases exceed the minimum requirements.
2. The partnership has judged that the outcomes for the overwhelming majority of its trainees are good by the end of the programme. Over the last two years, over half have been assessed as outstanding. Inspectors agreed with the partnership's judgements, finding the assessment of trainees to be rigorous and robust. The partnership is gaining a well-deserved reputation for training high-quality NQTs that local schools are keen to employ. As a result, employment rates are very high, with 100% of trainees securing employment in 2016, mostly in local schools. The confidence of local schools is encouraging schools from the neighbouring local authority area of Essex to join the partnership.
3. Ensuring a high-quality supply of teachers to local schools begins with the strong and robust recruitment and selection processes. As part of the selection process, potential trainees make a presentation, have a structured interview and are observed teaching a class for half an hour. Trainees and NQTs told inspectors that they found this very challenging. It is clear that rigorous recruitment and selection procedures ensure that high-quality trainees are admitted to the course with the potential to become effective teachers.
4. One result of these selection procedures is that completion rates are very high. Just one trainee left the course in 2015/16. Once trainees are on the course, the pastoral care is high quality. NQTs were unanimous in their view that the best thing about the course is how well supported they were by a wide range of people.
5. By the time trainees become NQTs, their teaching demonstrates strong subject knowledge and great enthusiasm for their subject, which lead to very confident performance in the classroom. Owing to the effective training they receive, NQTs are confident in promoting equal opportunities and in promoting literacy in the teaching of their subject. A common feature is that NQTs have high aspirations for their pupils. Another common feature is highly detailed planning. Occasionally, however, this was so detailed that it constrained pupils' opportunities to learn, or would prove impossible to maintain with an increased teaching load.
6. NQTs have the confidence to ensure good behaviour. They are adept at establishing highly effective professional relationships very quickly. Trainees were acutely aware of the need to assess pupils' learning over a period of time and use assessment information well to do this.

7. Trainees and NQTs observed are mostly reflective and demonstrated a hunger for advice on how to improve. Trainees' and NQTs' professional conduct is invariably excellent. Their training prepared them well for participation in the wider life of schools, such as engagement with parents and the role of the form tutor.
8. The secondary education system in Southend-on-Sea gives trainees good opportunities to experience a range of different types of school. The expertise found in schools that had improved in recent years was used effectively in the training. One trainee, for instance, referred to having one placement in a school in very challenging circumstances and the other placement at a school rated as outstanding. In such instances, the trainee was very positive about one placement giving great opportunities to develop behaviour management skills and the other requiring him to provide stretch and challenge for the most able. He felt that this combination prepared him well to teach as an NQT in another part of the country.
9. The partnership contains a range of single-gender, mixed, selective, faith and comprehensive schools. Additionally, although the partnership operates in a small geographical area, the range of socio-economic contexts across different schools is large. In all instances, the partnership plans the second placement carefully to ensure that trainees are exposed to a different type of school. Usually, contrasting school placements are used well to extend trainees' range of experiences, although some NQTs felt that the second placement was not long enough to be as useful as it might be. In response, the SCITT has adapted the programme slightly so that current trainees have an additional week in the second placement. It has also increased considerably the importance of the placement by formalising the assessment of trainees' teaching in the second placement.
10. The transition points between placements are planned effectively. It is even better for current trainees, as trainers from both of each trainee's placement schools are to carry out joint observations. Information from the previous school experience is used well to plan for transition to the next. Most NQTs are known to their employing school because they have done part of their training there.

11. Support for the transition from the training programme to the NQT year is usually good. Headteachers employing NQTs receive information on their new employees' strengths and areas for further development. Information is used well by the receiving school. Targets are used to good effect to inform the career development priorities, continuing professional development and mentoring in the employing schools. However, in some instances, the targets were not sharp enough and were too vague to be of best use.
12. Trainees are well prepared to support the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils who are disadvantaged and to provide challenge for the most able pupils. For example, an NQT explained to inspectors why she had planned a lesson in a way that supported pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, in the NQTs' lessons observed by inspectors, there was little evidence of their adapting planning to provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils. There is effective training for supporting pupils who speak English as an additional language.
13. NQTs have a good knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities under the government's anti-radicalisation 'Prevent' duty. They are less clear about how to promote fundamental British values positively through their teaching.
14. Centrally based training aims appropriately on developing the full potential of trainees. It is increasingly well planned. Subject-specific central training has been enhanced for current trainees in response to feedback from last year's trainees and from inspectors. In 2015/16, the central programme improved in its coherence and quality and, overall, was well regarded by NQTs.
15. The NQTs felt that their academic assignments were useful and enhanced their training, because the written work was closely aligned to and relevant to their school-based practice. For example, one said, 'the assignments required a lot of research and background reading,' which had informed his practice.
16. School-based training is the key feature leading to trainees' success. NQTs reported that they were well supported with regular and protected time with their mentors. However, they reported that the quality of mentoring was not consistently good. As one NQT told inspectors, 'my own experience was very positive' but her perception, and that of other NQTs, was that this was not universal. This was confirmed by inspectors' reviews of trainees' files, where the quality of target-setting was variable. Although the overall quality of mentoring was good, it ranged from acceptable to excellent.

17. Assessment of trainees' attainment is rigorous and accurate. Inspectors agreed with the partnership's assessment in all cases. Skilled and experienced assessors are employed centrally to ensure the accuracy of assessment. Effective benchmarking with another SCITT is developing.
18. The leadership and management of the partnership are very effective. The pursuit of excellence is central to the partnership's activities. NQTs and training staff in partner schools are very positive about the management of the SCITT and its efficiency. There have been effective responses to the issues raised at stage 1 of the inspection. Leaders have a very good overview of the programme's effectiveness and a proven track record of taking decisive and effective action to improve it. The inspection found nothing that leaders were not already acting on. This demonstrates a strong capacity to improve further. Evidence from current trainees confirms the improvements claimed by leaders.
19. Leaders and managers base their actions on a deep and accurate understanding of local and regional needs because of the highly effective partnership that exists with local schools. One headteacher told inspectors that the SCITT was 'fundamental to the school's improvement journey.' While the commitment of local headteachers to the partnership is strong in principle, there were a few instances in 2015/16 where school leaders did not give sufficient priority to consistently meeting their obligations to the partnership and to their trainees. For example, sometimes when there was a clash between the demands of the school and a commitment to SCITT mentor meetings that had been in the diary for some time, the school's demands took priority. The partnership has put in place procedures to address this, but it is too soon to fully demonstrate the impact.
20. ITE leaders in schools are very complimentary about the speed of communication. 'Dates are set well in advance,' commented one leader, and 'having one point of contact is a real advantage,' said another. This approach supports the progress of trainees through the programme.
21. In a few instances, issues or problems arose within partnership schools that were not identified quickly enough. Increased rigour in the quality assurance of placements and checks to ensure that schools are fully compliant with the partnership agreement have minimised problems for current trainees. More generally, there has been a rapid and effective response to resolving issues once identified.
22. The partnership has taken very seriously all requirements around the checking of trainees' qualifications and their suitability to work with children, in line with current requirements. All statutory requirements and ITT criteria are met.

## Annex: Partnership schools

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

Belfairs Academy, Southend-on-Sea

Hall Mead School, Upminster

Palmer's College, Thurrock

Shoeburyness High School, Southend-on-Sea

Southend High School for Girls, Southend-on-Sea

The Chase High School, Southend-on-Sea

The Eastwood Academy, Southend-on-Sea

## ITE partnership details

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Unique reference number     | 70278   |
| Inspection number           | 10010232  |
| Inspection dates            | Stage 1<br>16–18 May 2016   |
|                             | Stage 2<br>14–16 November 2016  |
| Lead inspector              | Adrian Lyons HMI  |
| Type of ITE partnership     | SCITT   |
| Phases provided             | Secondary   |
| Date of previous inspection | N/A   |
| Previous inspection report  | N/A   |
| Provider address            | Southend High School for Girls<br>Southchurch Boulevard<br>Southend-on-Sea<br>SS2 4UZ |





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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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