

Prestolee SCITT Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 19 June 2017 Stage 2: 20 November 2017

This inspection was carried out by one of 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 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 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

Information about the primary partnership

- Prestolee school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) provides primary teacher training for graduates. Trainees who successfully complete their training are recommended for qualified teacher status (QTS) and gain a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) from the University of Cumbria.
- The SCITT has provided initial teacher training (ITT) since September 2015. The partnership was inspected for the first time at the end of its second year as an accredited provider of QTS. The SCITT is based at Prestolee Primary School, which had provided primary School Direct training prior to accreditation as a SCITT.
- The SCITT works in partnership with 17 partner schools in the Greater Manchester area. A number of these schools are situated in areas of socio-economic challenge and some are schools that were judged as being less than good at their last inspection.
- During stage 1 of the inspection, 13 trainees were being trained. All of them were on a provider-led route, with one focusing on the three to seven age range and the rest on the five to 11 age range.
- During stage 2 of the inspection, 29 trainees were being trained. Again, all were on the provider-led route, with six focusing on the three to seven age range and 23 focusing on the five to 11 age range.

Information about the primary ITE inspection

- The inspector visited three schools at stage 1, observing three trainees teach. The inspector also met with school-based mentors during these visits and reviewed trainees' teaching and standards files and evidence, subject knowledge development records and training tasks.
- The inspector met with a group of trainees and held telephone discussions with others. He also met with subject and professional mentors, including the SCITT's lead mentors, those responsible for delivering training, senior leaders of the SCITT and members of the SCITT's governing body. The inspector also had a telephone conversation with the executive headteacher of one of the placement schools.
- The inspector checked that the partnership was compliant with statutory requirements, including the ITT criteria. He also reviewed a wide range of evidence about the work of the partnership. This included a self-evaluation document, improvement planning, details of recruitment and selection procedures, training plans and evaluations, trainee tracking and grading information, reports from the external moderator, the partnership agreement and the SCITT handbook.
- The inspector considered 13 responses to the trainee online questionnaire received in the summer term 2017.

- At stage 2 of the inspection, the inspector visited three schools, observing three newly qualified teachers (NQTs) teach. He looked at work in pupils' books and had discussions with both the NQTs and their mentors. The inspector also held telephone discussions with the headteacher of a school where two other NQTs were employed and with one other NQT. He also met with an NQT currently working in the lead school and with a group of trainees from the 2017/18 cohort.
- The inspector looked at final assessment and tracking information for the 2016/17 cohort and reviewed NQTs' career-entry profiles. He also looked at evidence of action taken by leaders and managers to improve the quality of training and outcomes between the two stages of the inspection.

Inspection team

Neil Dixon HMI (lead inspector)

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

Key strengths of the primary partnership

- Leadership of the partnership is outstanding. Leaders are relentless in their drive for excellence and are highly ambitious for the success of both their current and former trainees, and for the schools in their partnership. Their excellent leadership has been instrumental in securing outstanding outcomes for trainees and NQTs.
- Leaders have established a strong culture of continuous improvement and make excellent use of their detailed and accurate self-evaluation. Their swift and comprehensive response following stage 1 of the inspection added additional value for current trainees and NQTs.
- Communication at all levels within the partnership is outstanding, and is seen as a significant strength by all stakeholders.
- The partnership is extremely successful in meeting the needs of individual trainees, through personalising their training programme. This ensures that trainees have the skills, knowledge and resilience needed to teach successfully in schools within the partnership and beyond.
- Excellent training provides trainees with high levels of subject knowledge, an impressive range of teaching skills and highly effective strategies to manage behaviour very successfully across a range of schools. Consequently, by the time they complete the programme, the majority of trainees demonstrate outstanding practice in their teaching.
- The partnership provides trainees with excellent, individualised mentor support which encourages them to become highly reflective and thoughtful

practitioners. This high-quality support also extends to exemplary pastoral care for trainees.

- Leaders have also put in place an innovative and very successful system for providing continuing support for NQTs through the work of a dedicated NQT mentor. This has ensured that the transition from trainee to NQT has been seamless and highly successful.
- The SCITT is developing an excellent reputation for producing NQTs of the highest calibre. Employing schools outside of the SCITT partnership commented on the exceptionally high quality of the NQTs, and in particular their high levels of professionalism and dedication.
- The high-quality training and trainees' high levels of achievement have ensured that all trainees who have completed their training with Prestolee SCITT have been successful in securing employment.

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

The partnership should:

- continue to monitor the effectiveness of strategies being used to improve completion rates
- further sharpen the career-entry targets that NQTs take to their employing schools.

Inspection judgements

1. Exceptional leadership and management underpin all of the work of the Prestolee SCITT and have ensured that it provides an outstanding quality of ITT. All those involved in the partnership share a clear vision for excellence: 'to deliver the highest-quality training, to produce the very best teachers, and therefore give children the first class education they deserve.'
2. Central to the high quality of leadership and management of the partnership is the desire of all leaders to provide the best-possible training programme, and their clear understanding of the partnership's strengths and potential areas for development. Self-evaluation is of the highest quality. Leaders forensically analysed trainees' outcomes for 2016/17 to identify any areas within the teachers' standards that could be further developed. Their response following stage 1 of this inspection was impressively swift and effective. This ensured that learning from stage 1 of the inspection benefited those trainees at the very end of their course as well as influencing the programme for current trainees.
3. Trainees make excellent progress on the training programme and reach high levels of attainment against the teachers' standards. In its two years of operation, the SCITT has successfully increased the proportion of trainees

whose teaching was judged to be outstanding. In 2016/17, the teaching of almost two thirds of trainees was graded as outstanding.

4. Employment rates are extremely high, and all of the trainees who have completed the programme in the last two years have secured employment in schools across the Greater Manchester area. Many of these trainees were employed in one of the partnership schools where they had completed a school experience block, while others are working in schools further afield which are not part of the SCITT's traditional partnership.
5. Leaders have ensured that recruitment and selection processes are suitably robust, and that schools from across the partnership are fully involved in the selection of trainees. Trainees commented that they felt their training programme began the minute they were accepted on to the course. This is because leaders make excellent use of subject knowledge audits completed at interview to set individual pre-course tasks, and this has a highly positive impact on trainees' subject knowledge. This is typical of the SCITT's very effective, personalised approach to meeting trainees' needs.
6. There are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups of trainees on the course. Equality of opportunity is strong. All trainees, regardless of the age group they choose to teach, achieve well against the teachers' standards.
7. The standard of pastoral care for trainees is high and trainees say that they feel extremely well supported by leaders, trainers and mentors. Despite leaders' efforts to support trainees' needs, a small number of trainees in the 2016/17 cohort left before the end of the programme and one trainee deferred completion. Leaders carefully scrutinised the reasons for these departures, confirming that they were for unavoidable and unforeseen personal reasons. Leaders are keen, though, to restore completion rates to the highest possible level, as achieved in 2015/16. To this end, they have introduced further, regular 'resilience' checks as an additional layer of support for trainees.
8. The structure of the training programme is highly effective, and trainees welcome the opportunity that they have to constantly apply their theoretical learning in classroom situations. This approach encourages trainees to become highly reflective and insightful, identifying classroom strategies that work for them and consistently refining their practice to become extremely effective practitioners. The headteacher in one employing school commented that the NQT in his school had teaching skills and levels of reflection 'far beyond what you'd normally expect from an NQT'.
9. NQTs say that their training has prepared them extremely well for the rigours of the classroom. The comprehensive and well-thought-out programme of training provides trainees and NQTs with excellent subject knowledge and a strong

understanding of pedagogy. Leaders make additions and adaptations to training in response to trainees' individual needs. This ensures that all trainees are able to make excellent progress from their very varied starting points.

10. Trainees also benefit from innovative enhancements to their training, such as 'STEAM' week, where trainees are encouraged to make links between English, mathematics, science and the foundation subjects of the national curriculum. This approach is very successful in developing trainees' confidence and skills in planning and delivering sequences of work that very effectively build pupils' learning across the curriculum. Well-planned tasks provide further focus for training activities, again encouraging trainees' self-reflection. For example, 'progress matters' tasks provide trainees with a keen awareness of their responsibilities for pupils' progress and develop their skills in formative and summative assessment.
11. Subject-specific training provides trainees with the skills that they need to teach phonics effectively, and trainees are also very well prepared to build on these key early skills in developing pupils' reading and writing skills. Training for teaching physical education (PE) is comprehensive and trainees welcome the blend of theoretical and practical skills and knowledge that they develop.
12. School visits at stage 2 of the inspection confirmed that NQTs have excellent subject knowledge across the primary curriculum. This was particularly evident in their highly skilful teaching of mathematics and the depth and quality of work in pupils' mathematics books. Highly impressive outcomes were also evident in work across the wider curriculum seen in many books, where a number of NQTs had clearly been teaching subject-specific skills in subjects such as history and geography very effectively.
13. The training programme prepares trainees to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Training for working with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is comprehensive and successfully equips trainees and NQTs with the skills and confidence that they need to work well with these pupils. This was evident in the teaching of NQTs observed at stage 2, who made very skilful use of a range of strategies, including deploying additional adults very effectively, to cater well for pupils in their class who needed extra support.
14. Leaders have responded quickly and decisively to feedback at stage 1 which identified that trainees were less consistently confident in meeting the needs of disadvantaged pupils and most-able pupils. Additional training provided for current NQTs has enhanced their skills and knowledge in this area, and leaders have also made changes to the training programme for current trainees. These have been designed to more explicitly help trainees identify and address the needs of different pupil groups. NQTs confirmed that this additional input had sharpened their focus on the needs of the most able pupils in particular, and

this was evident in the high expectations and significant level of challenge seen in their teaching and in pupils' work.

15. The SCITT provides trainees with a broad range of contrasting school placement experiences, including in schools in challenging socio-economic circumstances and ones judged less than good at their previous inspection. Carefully designed and well-focused tasks ensure that trainees gain the maximum amount of learning from each of their placements. Further, well-chosen school visits enhance trainees' knowledge, for example of key stages beyond those that they are training to teach, and ensure that their school experience has been appropriately diverse. The expertise and specialisms of schools within the partnership, such as in science, PE and modern foreign languages, are very well used to provide further enhancements to the training on offer.
16. Training on behaviour management, including strategies to combat bullying, is very strong. Consequently, trainees and NQTs are extremely well prepared to deal with a wide range of behavioural needs and issues. This was evident in the teaching of all of the NQTs observed. They skilfully managed their classes and had established positive relationships with pupils and very effective classroom routines. Well-focused additional support has further ensured that those trainees who were less confident in classroom management have continued to develop their skills and confidence in that area. NQTs' continuing improvement and capability were confirmed by employing headteachers.
17. The programme also provides trainees with a very good understanding of child protection and safeguarding. Leaders have ensured that the training provided enables trainees both to recognise the signs that there may be a safeguarding issue and to understand how then to proceed if they have a concern.
18. SCITT leaders have the highest possible expectations of trainees and NQTs in terms of their personal and professional conduct. As one SCITT leader explained, 'The minimum expectation is excellence.' This was confirmed by visits to schools employing former Prestolee trainees, where headteachers praised the impressive work ethic and high levels of professionalism being demonstrated by their NQTs.
19. High-quality mentoring provides trainees with excellent support throughout their training year. Mentors know individual trainees very well and so are able to carefully tailor support to build on established strengths and provide additional help in any areas of relative weakness. Trainees at stage 1 commented that mentors were simply 'always there when you need them'. Mentors have excellent subject knowledge and understanding of age-appropriate pedagogy. SCITT leaders' clear commitment to producing high-quality teachers is confirmed by their innovative decision to appoint an NQT transition mentor. In this role, the mentor provides initial support for NQTs'

transition from being trainees to being fully qualified teachers. Senior leaders in employing schools commented on how helpful this had been in establishing NQTs' training and development needs right at the start of their careers, while NQTs greatly appreciated the continuity that this high-quality transition provided.

20. The NQT mentor is providing bespoke, individual support for NQTs based on an audit of their personal needs and the needs and capacity of their schools in terms of NQT mentoring. As a result, at the time of stage 2 of the inspection, some NQTs were receiving weekly support, including opportunities for activities such as team-teaching, while others were in contact on more of a 'light touch' basis. NQTs commented on how this support has enabled them to 'pick up where they left off,' and one school was quick to highlight how it had allowed an already highly capable NQT to become an even better teacher in a short space of time.
21. Documentation to support the transition from trainee to NQT is detailed and provided to employing schools on a timely basis. However, the career-entry targets identified for individual NQTs are not as consistently sharply focused as they could be. Leaders acknowledge this and are developing a system of moderating targets set to ensure that they are clear, measurable and likely to have a more positive impact on practice.
22. High-quality communication is a feature of the partnership and is recognised as a strength by all stakeholders. Trainees feel fully involved in the programme from the minute they accept the offer of a place because SCITT leaders are in regular contact with them. This excellent communication is carried on throughout the training year, by SCITT leaders and mentors, so that trainees know clearly what is expected of them and can also raise quickly any concerns that they have.
23. Schools receiving trainees comment on the quality and timeliness of information that they receive. Headteachers remarked on the quality and detail of references that they receive when appointing a Prestolee NQT. This outstanding communication continues into the NQT year through the work of the NQT mentor, which ensures that trainees and former trainees alike all feel strongly a part of 'team Presto'.
24. Governance of the partnership is robust and challenging. A governing board, comprised largely of the headteachers of partnership schools, ensures that SCITT leaders are held fully to account for their decisions and for the overall effectiveness of the SCITT's ITT provision.
25. All current trainees and NQTs speak very highly of their experience of training with Prestolee SCITT. They recognise that the high quality of training, excellent mentor support, wide range of school experiences and exemplary leadership of

the partnership have combined to give them an outstanding training experience. All said that they would recommend the SCITT to other people thinking of training to teach, and a number of trainees from the 2017/18 cohort chose Prestolee because of a personal recommendation.

26. The reputation that the SCITT has among its trainees and former trainees is matched by its growing reputation among schools and headteachers across a number of local authorities in Greater Manchester. Headteachers of schools outside of the SCITT partnership who had employed Prestolee NQTs were fulsome in their praise for the exceptionally high calibre of the NQTs that they had been able to appoint.
27. The partnership complies fully with all of the statutory requirements for ITT, including arrangements for safeguarding, and there are suitably strong systems in place to check and confirm this. For example, systems to moderate trainee outcomes are well-thought-out and rigorous, with informal moderation taking place with another local SCITT as well as the formal moderation process involving the SCITT's external moderator.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe trainees' and NQTs' teaching:

Bowness Primary School, Bolton

Chorley New Road Primary School, Horwich

Church Road Primary School, Bolton

Grosvenor Road Primary School, Swinton

Hopwood Primary School, Heywood

St Dunstan's RC Primary School, Manchester

ITE partnership details

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Lead inspector	Neil Dixon HMI
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Phases provided	Primary
Date of previous inspection	N/A
Previous inspection report	N/A
Provider address	Prestolee SCITT Prestolee Primary School Church Road Radcliffe Manchester M26 1HJ



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