

Colchester Teacher Training Consortium ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 26 June 2017 Stage 2: 13 November 2017

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors at each stage, 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 each phase and separate route 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

- Colchester Teacher Training Consortium (CTTC) is a school-based initial teacher training (ITT) scheme based in Colchester. Trainees undertake their training in Essex schools. Central training is provided in the partnership's new accommodation based at Colchester County High School for Girls.
- The partnership has been established for 14 years. In September 2016, Colchester County High School for Girls took over responsibility as the lead school for the partnership. The consortium works with 14 secondary and 30 primary schools.
- From September 2017, the partnership offers a total of 66 places across the primary and secondary phases on both the School Direct salaried and unsalaried training routes. The partnership offers training in 14 subjects in the secondary phase.
- Upon successful completion of the course, trainees are awarded qualified teacher status (QTS) and, in the large majority of cases, a post-graduate certificate in education (PGCE). The awarding body for the PGCE is the University of Greenwich.

Information about the primary and secondary ITE inspection

- During stage 1 of the inspection, inspectors observed the teaching of nine trainees, in six schools. At stage 2, inspectors observed the teaching of eight newly qualified teachers (NQTs), in seven schools.
- At stage 1, inspectors met with two groups of trainees and, in stage 2, one group of NQTs and one group of trainees. Inspectors also met with members of the steering group, course directors, lead subject mentors, professional tutors, subject mentors, trainers, the training manager and headteachers on both stages of the inspection.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentary evidence, including trainees' files, course handbooks, development plans, data on trainees' progress, and completion and employment rates. Inspectors also reviewed the partnership's self-evaluation, information on recruitment and selection, statutory safeguarding requirements and compliance with the initial teacher training criteria, tracking, assessment and summary reports, and evidence of how well trainees' teaching meets the teachers' standards.
- Inspectors took account of 59 responses to the most recent NQT surveys and to Ofsted's online questionnaire. They also reviewed the partnership's own surveys of trainees' evaluations of the programme.

Inspection team

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Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

Key strengths of the primary and secondary partnership

- Partners in CTTC willingly embrace the vision of 'inspiring tomorrow's teachers'. Stakeholders' wholehearted commitment is helping to secure high-quality training and, in turn, meet local recruitment needs very well.
- Communication of the partnership's high expectations of trainees is initiated at the time of interview and consistently maintained throughout the duration of the course.
- A rich programme of training, combined with high-quality complementary school placements, equips trainees with the skills and knowledge to become successful, thoughtful teachers.
- As a result of the highly effective recruitment, induction and training of mentors, trainees receive excellent support, advice and guidance over the course of their training.
- Employment rates are consistently high. Local schools are keen to employ trainees from the partnership. Once in employment, many NQTs and former trainees move quickly into leadership and management roles.
- Careful and accurate monitoring and assessment of trainees' practice ensure that they complete the course successfully and enter the profession as confident and appropriately skilled teachers.
- The pastoral care the partnership provides is exceptional. This enables trainees and NQTs to complete their training successfully and thrive in the profession. As one NQT commented, the partnership 'looked after my personal welfare as much as my development as a teacher'.
- Trainees and NQTs are skilled at developing purposeful working relationships in the classroom. They demonstrate exemplary professional conduct. They are highly reflective, resilient and seek every opportunity to improve their practice.

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

The partnership should:

- monitor closely the proportion of male trainees who complete the training with the highest outcomes, especially in secondary subjects in which the number of trainees has recently increased.

Inspection judgements

1. The quality of provision is outstanding. Under the clear guidance of the steering group and the knowledgeable leadership of the course directors, the partnership is successfully fulfilling its vision of 'inspiring tomorrow's teachers'. Trainees become very effective, reflective NQTs who display an infectious enthusiasm for teaching. Trainees and NQTs are keen to receive feedback and they respond exceptionally well to it. In the words of one headteacher, each trainee is 'an excellent ambassador for the profession'.
2. Inspection evidence fully endorses the views expressed by school representatives that 'schools work together rather than competing, to produce a good pool of trainees for the local area'. Schools are integral to the partnership's strategic planning and operational efficiency. At every level, there is mutual respect and trust evident in collaborative working, which stems from the transparency with which decisions are made. As one headteacher commented, 'They [the partnership] work hard to meet our needs and are very fair in doing so. There is no cherry-picking of trainees.'
3. The very high levels of collaboration and commitment are evident in the time headteachers and their staff freely dedicate to the leadership, training and mentoring of trainees. There is a palpable desire to meet trainees' needs over the duration of their training. Partnership leaders work hard to ensure that this continues when CTTC graduates embark on their careers as NQTs. As a result, CTTC meets the recruitment needs of local schools exceptionally well.
4. Partnership leaders rightly place a high priority on recruiting trainees with not only appropriate academic qualifications, but also with the 'commitment, resilience and drive to have long and successful careers in teaching'. School leaders play an active part in the exacting and carefully planned recruitment process that is ensuring that the partnership is successfully achieving this priority. One example of the partnership's determination to ensure potential trainees are fully aware of the rewards and challenges of teaching is the 'Talent Pipeline' initiative. As part of this, undergraduates are able to experience time in schools, before making their decision about their future career. As a consequence of these processes, trainees recruited to the programme are dedicated to their training and keen to improve, and very high proportions successfully complete the training.

5. Trainees' welfare is of the utmost importance to partnership leaders and mentors, who are committed to providing equality of opportunity for trainees. Leaders are careful, where trainees' individual circumstances require it, to put in place additional pastoral support from the outset of the programme. Trainees and NQTs informed inspectors that 'they [the partnership] made you feel that you are their main priority'. In addition to formal mentor meetings, trainees have access a wide range of professional support. Trainees appreciate the partnership's central team's rapid response when any concerns are raised. Trainees and NQTs provided examples of how well-judged support has helped them through times of significant personal difficulties. Leaders are careful to ensure that this duty of care is extended to NQTs, all of whom praised the ongoing contact and support of the partnership.
6. Employment rates are consistently high. The CTTC trainees are much sought after as local headteachers have high regard for the training provided by the partnership. Large proportions of trainees begin their teaching careers in local schools. Many former trainees go on to leadership and management positions in the schools where they take up their initial teaching posts. Several ex-trainees are mentors to current trainees.
7. From the outset of the programme, leaders are quick to establish information about trainees' strengths and weaknesses and their experience of education. The information gathered in trainees' initial skills audit is used well to select appropriate and complementary school placements. Trainees have the opportunity to train in schools which Ofsted judges to require improvement and also in schools in challenging circumstances. Leaders ensure that these placements are supplemented by visits to schools that specialise in provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or English as an additional language. The NQTs' comments that the partnership 'provided me with very different placements that have prepared me well' and 'I had the chance to experience a wide range of curricula' are typical of their peers' views and supported fully by the inspection evidence. Headteachers informed inspectors how successfully NQTs had adapted to their specific requirements.
8. Leaders have implemented a rich, coherent programme of training that takes into account trainees' starting points and cultivates their knowledge and skills logically and very well. The view of one trainee that training is 'tailored to our needs, we are not just a number' was typical of the views expressed by trainees and NQTs. Training is provided by a combination of external experts and colleagues from within the partnership. Weekly training is followed by school-based tasks which require trainees to put into practice new teaching strategies in a timely way. As a consequence, trainees quickly develop an impressive range of teaching and learning strategies and the confidence to implement them. Leaders carefully scrutinise trainees' feedback on the timing and quality of training sessions. Where appropriate changes need to be made, leaders make them swiftly and to very good effect. Leaders also work with

employing schools to ensure that NQTs have access to the most appropriate training in their first year of teaching, including that offered by North East Essex Teaching Schools Alliance.

9. The quality of mentoring is consistently strong and is underpinned by high levels of mutual respect between mentors and trainees. Trainees and NQTs were fulsome in their praise for their mentors' subject knowledge, concern for trainees' well-being and willingness to give up time to offer support. In the words of one NQT, mentoring is 'not just academic support, it was the whole picture'. Mentors are carefully recruited and trained well, and share leaders' commitment to helping trainees be the best teachers that they can be. Mentors are accurate in their analysis of trainees' teaching. Reflective professional dialogue between mentors and trainees leads to well-judged developmental targets which help trainees make rapid gains in their teaching. Mentors are demonstrably proud to be part of the programme and consider it an important aspect of their own professional development. Comments such as 'it makes me a more reflective practitioner' and 'it refocuses my own thinking and planning' are typical of the sentiments expressed by mentors.
10. Through a combination of extremely efficient communication, systematic quality assurance and well-trained mentors and tutors, leaders have a precise knowledge of the progress that trainees make towards each of the teachers' standards. Trainees' performance is frequently and accurately assessed. Assessments are recorded and verified by at least two mentors, training managers, course directors and also by representatives of other ITT providers. Trainees, through their weekly reflections, are important contributors to discussions about their own progress and next steps. These discussions rightly include an explicit focus on the impact of trainees' teaching on the progress pupils make. Where a trainee needs it, additional support and challenge to improve their teaching is put in place and monitored carefully. This enables trainees to make swift advances in their teaching skills and practice. Once in employment, NQTs continue to be reflective, seek advice and demonstrate a thirst to improve their teaching.
11. Primary and secondary trainees demonstrate excellence in the majority of the standards for teaching. In this small partnership, there are no significant variations in attainment between different groups of trainees over time. As the partnership continues to respond to the recruitment needs of local secondary schools, there are now higher numbers of trainees for mathematics, science and modern foreign languages. In 2017, there was a small fall in the proportion of secondary male trainees awarded an overall grade 1 across the teachers' standards on completion of the programme. While the partnership's accurate assessments indicate this is not likely to be the case this year, leaders rightly continue to closely monitor the progress of male trainees on the recently expanded secondary-subject programmes.

12. As a result of weekly subject-specific training, trainees and NQTs develop excellent subject knowledge and phase expertise. Primary trainees demonstrate a strong understanding of, and skills in, the teaching of subjects across the curriculum. Inspectors' lesson observations, discussions and scrutiny of the progress made by pupils confirm that this includes the teaching of phonics in early reading, mathematics and physical education. Primary trainees confidently discussed how the training had equipped them with the knowledge and skills to teach a range of foundation subjects. This was endorsed by inspection evidence.
13. Secondary trainees seek appropriate opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. For example, due to an NQT's skilful design of learning, pupils in a secondary geography lesson were able to apply their mathematics skills well as they established the correlation between life expectancy and the wealth of countries. Supported well by subject-specific mentors, secondary NQTs and, in some cases, trainees are already willing and valued contributors to the development of schemes of work and wider curriculum improvement in the schools in which they work.
14. Trainees develop into increasingly accomplished and confident teachers, who have high expectations of themselves and the pupils they teach. They understand the importance of planning and delivering relevant, stimulating lessons and do so well. They consider the training to have prepared them to 'look at all pupils' needs and attributes, and plan well'. Trainees and NQTs are also skilled at implementing the learning they have planned. For example, pupils in one key stage 4 science class informed the inspector that the NQT 'talks to us as individuals and targets tasks to meet our needs'. Trainees and NQTs are alert to the pace at which pupils learn and were observed routinely making appropriate adjustments to learning activities within lessons to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
15. As a result of high-quality training and strong mentoring, trainees rapidly acquire strategies to motivate and engage pupils in their learning, including those who find making the correct behaviour choices difficult. Trainees and NQTs are skilled in establishing respectful, purposeful working relationships with the pupils they teach. Pupils respond well, are keen to learn and make good or better progress as a result. Several headteachers and mentors commented on the confidence and success with which trainees and NQTs manage pupils' behaviour.
16. Trainees acquire a detailed understanding of potential barriers to learning that can leave pupils, including the most able, vulnerable to underachievement. The NQTs and trainees successfully employ strategies to accelerate the progress of pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. At stage 1 of the inspection, inspectors noted that some trainees were less confident in furthering the progress of the most able pupils.

Evidence seen at stage 2 demonstrated that, as a result of leaders' amendments to training, trainees and NQTs are increasingly proficient in challenging most-able pupils to achieve the high standards of which they are capable.

17. High proportions of trainees undertake the post-graduate certificate in education as part of their training. All complete this successfully, with the large majority completing it at Level 7 and gaining 60 credits towards a Master's qualification. Trainees are guided to complete action research assignments that align closely to their individual needs and to those of the schools in which they are placed. The impact of this work is evident in their classroom practice and, in some cases, in that of the departments and schools in which trainees and NQTs teach.
18. The partnership offers many chances for stakeholders to share best practice. Trainees welcome these opportunities provided through the partnership's directory of excellent practice, teaching and learning fairs, weekly meetings and visits to each other's schools to swap ideas on what works well and what does not. Mentors are similarly appreciative of the breadth of activities through which they can improve their practice and that of their trainees. This open, developmental culture is a significant factor in building the mutual respect and harmony with which trainees, NQTs and mentors are able to work and learn. This ethos was captured in the words of one mentor: 'We know what we are doing and we are doing it together.'
19. In their pursuit of excellence, leaders constantly and successfully strive to improve the quality of provision. Trainees, mentors, headteachers and course directors contribute to accurate self-evaluation. This informs well-chosen priorities contained within the partnership's development plan. These priorities rightly reflect the quality of provision and the changing needs of local schools. Where evidence indicates that provision is not of the highest standard demanded by the steering group, course directors bring about swift, effective change. Consequently, the development areas identified at stage 1 of the inspection are now strengths of the partnership, such as: collaboration between schools and across the primary and secondary phases; and precise, well-informed secondary subject planning which is leading to even stronger provision across the partnership.
20. Leaders have ensured that the partnership is fully compliant with the criteria for ITT. The partnership meets all its statutory requirements in relation to safeguarding pupils, the promotion of equality and diversity, and the elimination of discrimination. As a consequence of rigorous safeguarding training, trainees and NQTs are alert to, and have a detailed understanding of, signs that pupils may be at risk, vulnerable or being bullied. Trainees and NQTs know what to do if they have a concern about pupils, demonstrating the highest levels of professional conduct, and are acutely aware of the importance of doing so.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Secondary schools

- City Academy, Norwich
- Colchester County High School for Girls, Colchester
- Manningtree High School, Manningtree
- St. Benedict's Catholic College, Colchester
- The Philip Morant School and College, Colchester

Primary schools

- Home Farm Primary School, Colchester
- Kelvedon St Mary's Primary School, Colchester
- Montgomery Infant School, Colchester
- Montgomery Junior School, Colchester
- St John's Green Primary School, Colchester
- St Michael's Primary School, Colchester

ITE partnership details

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Previous inspection report	https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/70156
Provider address	Colchester County High School Norman Way Colchester CO3 3US



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