

The Sheffield SCITT ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 19 June 2017 Stage 2: 27 November 2017

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and an Ofsted Inspector (OI) 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 and 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

Primary and secondary routes

Information about this ITE partnership

- The Sheffield School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) offers training in the primary and secondary phases. Training in the primary phase is in the age range five to 11. In the secondary phase, training is in the 11 to 16 age range. Secondary subjects include English, mathematics, science (with a specialism in biology, chemistry or physics), geography, history and modern foreign languages.
- In the SCITT's first year of operation, the partnership offered a primary and secondary core training route only. In the second year of operation, the partnership extended provision to include the School Direct route in the primary and secondary phases. The partnership works with three lead schools for School Direct.
- Primary and secondary trainees work towards the award of qualified teacher status (QTS). There is also an option for trainees to complete a 30-credit Masters-level module during their training year and a further 30-credit module during their first year of teaching. This is accredited separately.
- The partnership works with 21 primary schools across four local authorities and 16 secondary schools across three local authorities. The partnership includes schools working in challenging socio-economic circumstances and those judged to require improvement.

Information about the primary and secondary ITE inspection

- During stage 1 of the inspection, inspectors visited three secondary and three primary schools, observing seven secondary and seven primary trainees teach. All observations were conducted jointly with school-based mentors and included an analysis of trainees' evidence towards meeting the teachers' standards. Where possible, inspectors also looked at pupils' work to review the impact of teaching over time.
- At stage 2, inspectors visited four secondary and four primary schools and observed five secondary and five primary newly qualified teachers (NQTs) teach. Inspectors reviewed the quality of work in pupils' books to determine the impact of the NQTs' teaching on pupils' learning and progress over time.
- Meetings were held with trainees and NQTs in both phases, partnership leaders, including leaders for secondary subjects, members of the partnership's management board, school-based mentors and leaders with responsibility for ITT/NQTs in partnership schools.
- Inspectors also took account of the 61 responses to the trainee online questionnaire, which was completed in 2017, and the partnership's own exit survey.

- A wide range of evidence was considered, including the partnership's self-evaluation documents for 2015/16 and 2016/17, action plans, the latest external moderator's report, trainee tracking and assessment information including final grades, and the information about trainees' performance at the end of their training shared with employing schools.
- Inspectors also checked that the partnership was compliant with the statutory requirements of the ITT criteria for primary and secondary QTS and safeguarding.

Inspection team

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Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

Key strengths of the primary and secondary partnership

- The vision and commitment of leaders and partnership schools to providing high-quality teachers for the area, including where recruitment is more challenging, influences all aspects of the partnership's work.
- Leaders' relentless pursuit of continuous improvement and highly responsive approach to feedback have led to a greater proportion of trainees demonstrating excellent practice in the majority of the teachers' standards in the partnership's second year. This reflects the excellent capacity of leaders to drive further improvement.
- Almost all trainees have successfully gained a teaching post in each of the last two years. The very large majority are employed in partnership schools or other schools in the South Yorkshire area, including those judged to require improvement and/or working in challenging socio-economic circumstances.
- The trainees recruited by the partnership are of high calibre. They make strong progress as a result of good-quality training that is closely matched to their needs and very effective support.
- NQTs are well regarded by their employing schools. Most have got off to a flying start in the autumn term because they are highly professional, effective practitioners who are strongly committed to ensuring that their pupils achieve well.

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

The partnership should:

- ensure that all trainees are well prepared to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, particularly where pupils in a class have a wide range of attainment or a greater proportion of pupils with specific needs to be met
- develop training to ensure that all trainees are confident in the use of assessment to adjust their teaching in lessons, are able to provide clear guidance for pupils on how to improve and can adapt their planning for subsequent learning so that pupils make better progress
- make more effective use of the findings of quality assurance to secure consistently high-quality training for all trainees
- continue to check that there are no weaknesses in recruitment, training or support that are contributing to trainee withdrawals or non-completion within the training year.

Inspection judgements

1. Leaders' vision and commitment to providing high-quality training and securing the best possible outcomes for trainees is unrelenting. Their ambition is embraced by partnership schools and, as a result, the quality of training is going from strength to strength over time. The SCITT manager, with her boundless energy and enthusiasm, has been a driving force in securing the partnership's success to date.
2. There is excellent capacity for improvement within the partnership. Self-evaluation is exacting, actions are well thought through and their impact is carefully checked. There is a strong focus on seeking out best practice both within and beyond the partnership, and using this to secure improvement. For example, training for current primary trainees in the foundation subjects is now being delivered by specific individuals or schools selected as having the highest-quality practice in the partnership. Consequently, all trainees now have equal access to training identified as being of the best quality.
3. Trainees are well equipped with the skills needed for success in their NQT year and beyond. By the end of their training, trainees teach well, ensuring that pupils typically make good progress. All trainees demonstrate excellent practice in relation to some of the teachers' standards and many show excellence in all. There is a clear focus on evaluating the impact of trainees' teaching on pupils' progress and ensuring that evidence in relation to each of the teachers' standards is robust. The assessment of trainees' attainment is carefully moderated and inspectors found it to be accurate in almost all cases. Attainment for primary trainees was much stronger in the partnership's second year, reflecting the positive impact of improvements to training.

4. Many trainees and NQTs who spoke to inspectors feel their school-centred approach to teacher training has really made a difference to how confident and well prepared they feel for their new teaching roles. The views of employing schools largely confirm that NQTs have 'hit the ground running' and have quickly become valued members of staff.
5. Most NQTs have quickly established themselves in their employing schools and built positive relationships with the pupils they teach. Support for transition into the NQT year is very effective. Information shared with employing schools is seen to accurately reflect the NQTs' strengths and areas for development. The opportunity for most trainees to spend two weeks in the school where they have been appointed as an NQT towards the end of the summer term has contributed effectively to their transition from trainee to NQT. The partnership's ongoing support for NQTs is valued. Visits to employing schools to see how well NQTs are progressing, and the provision of NQT training in the autumn term, attended very recently by almost three-quarters of last years' cohort, are contributing effectively to NQTs' continuing professional development and well-being.
6. Training provides a coherent balance of theory and practical experiences. It takes into account the core content for ITT and is also highly responsive to the needs of individual and groups of trainees. Leaders draw on initial trainee audits, frequent trainee feedback and the assessment of trainees' progress throughout the year to ensure that training is adjusted where needed. As a result, trainees' development needs are well met and trainees are resoundingly positive about the support they receive from SCITT leaders.
7. Contrasting placements and shorter enhancement experiences are used well to enable trainees to develop a wide range of teaching skills and curriculum knowledge. All trainees have the opportunity to learn from good and outstanding practice. Mentoring and school-based training is praised highly by most trainees. Training for mentors is valued and well attended. However, at times, in-school support falls short of leaders' high expectations. Where this occurs, leaders are quick to intervene and provide additional help so that trainees can continue to make progress. Where leaders do not have the confidence that a school will provide high-quality training, it is no longer used for placements.
8. Quality assurance visits are used to check that all trainees are receiving their entitlement. At stage 1, inspectors found the focus was more on checking provision was in place rather than its quality. Since stage 1, the review and amendment of documents to support quality assurance visits have been completed and capacity within the partnership for carrying out this work has been increased. As a result, the partnership is potentially much better placed to ensure that any variation in the quality of school-based training is identified and addressed.

9. Primary trainees benefit from very effective training in the teaching of phonics and early reading. This, combined with their school-based experiences, mentor feedback and self-reflection, ensures that they feel confident teaching these aspects of the curriculum. Their skills in teaching primary mathematics are similarly strong, underpinned by a clear understanding of the national curriculum and its principles.
10. All primary trainees gain a secure understanding of teaching the wider curriculum through taught sessions and their placement experiences. Where feedback indicates that trainees feel less well equipped, additional training is provided to boost trainees' skills and confidence. Many trainees and NQTs use this knowledge of the wider curriculum to good effect, for example making creative links between subjects that successfully enhance pupils' learning and engagement. However, a few remain less confident in teaching some subjects, such as physical education. Changes to training for current trainees and clearer expectations of how placements can be used to maximise trainees' experience and understanding of teaching the wider curriculum show leaders' determination to improve this aspect of provision further.
11. The subject knowledge of secondary trainees and NQTs is a strength. Good attention is given to helping trainees develop their understanding of the curriculum, including subjects beyond their immediate specialism, for example in science. Hub sessions, specialist mentoring, support from host teachers, placement experiences and peer support all combine well so that NQTs have the subject and pedagogical knowledge required to teach effectively. Where the need for additional input is identified, trainees also complete subject knowledge enhancement as part of their training, ensuring that all have an appropriate depth of subject knowledge to teach successfully by the end of the course. Many are already putting their subject and curriculum knowledge to good effect to make a valuable wider contribution to their department through the development of long-term plans and schemes of work.
12. The professionalism of trainees and NQTs is clearly evident. They are fully committed to their role in supporting pupils' academic progress but equally their personal development and welfare. Trainees and NQTs are well prepared in relation to safeguarding matters, including the 'Prevent' duty, and recognise the importance of promoting values such as tolerance and respect. They are confident in dealing with bullying, including cyber bullying, and are fully aware of their own social media presence.
13. Trainees and NQTs quickly get to know the pupils they teach and use these relationships to create a positive climate for learning in their classroom. They are keen to develop their understanding of how to address any potential barriers to learning that pupils may have. Training ensures that trainees are equipped with a broad range of strategies to help them plan to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or those who

speaking English as an additional language. However, a few trainees have more limited first-hand opportunities to apply these strategies during their placements and are finding the context of their employing schools more challenging.

14. Most trainees are skilful in the use of assessment to check pupils' learning and can use this information effectively to guide pupils on how to improve or adjust their teaching to promote better learning. However, some are less adept at planning or adapting their teaching when there is a wide range of needs, for example within a mixed ability class. Similarly, where grouping is by ability, a few trainees and NQTs are not successful in challenging the most able or supporting lower-attaining pupils as well as they should.
15. Recruitment is rigorous in selecting trainees with the potential to be good or better teachers. Partnership schools are fully involved in the recruitment and selection process and, where considered necessary, potential recruits are required to complete more school-based experience to check they understand fully the demands of the role.
16. In the partnership's first year, completion rates were in line with the national picture but rates have dipped slightly in 2016/17. Largely, this is due to trainees' personal circumstances, which have prevented them from completing the course on time. Of those that have taken a break in their training during 2016/17, most are on track to return and complete during the current academic year. Seeking to improve recruitment further, leaders have sought out best practice from another partnership to ensure interviews are as thorough as they can be in testing out the resilience and well-being of potential trainees.
17. Leaders and partnership schools are fully committed to the vision of providing highly skilled teachers to meet the recruitment needs of the local area. Over half of trainees from the most recent cohort took up posts in partnership schools and most NQTs are employed in schools in South Yorkshire, including almost one-fifth in the opportunity area of Doncaster. Of those that completed in 2015/16, all are still in a teaching post and a number have already taken on leadership responsibilities in their schools.
18. Schools, including those that work in challenging socio-economic circumstances or judged to require improvement, make a valuable contribution to the strategic leadership of the SCITT. For example, all partnership schools are represented on the SCITT management board and play a key role in contributing to the evaluation and development of training. Feedback, including external moderation of the partnership's work, is seen as vital to supporting continuous improvement in provision and outcomes for trainees.
19. Communication across the partnership is strong and expertise in partnership schools is used very effectively to enhance training and ensure trainees' needs

are met well. There is a sharp focus on trainees' well-being and supporting trainees in developing the skills and strategies that will help them manage their workload as teachers.

20. The partnership is fully compliant with the criteria for ITT. There is a clear focus on promoting equality of opportunity and enabling wider access to teacher training for candidates who have had other careers and/or experiences since completing their degree. While attainment for primary trainees was not quite as strong in the first year of the partnership, there are now no significant differences in outcomes for different groups of trainees.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

High Storrs School, Sheffield

Hungerhill School, Doncaster

Hunters Bar Infant School, Sheffield

Mundella Primary School, Sheffield

Netherwood Academy, Barnsley

Notre Dame High School, Sheffield

Oakwood Academy, Sheffield

Sacred Heart School, Sheffield

St Marie's School, Sheffield

St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Sheffield

St Thomas of Canterbury Primary School, Sheffield

St Wilfred's Catholic Primary School, Sheffield

ITE partnership details

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Lead inspector	Katrina Gueli HMI
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Phases provided	Primary/Secondary
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Previous inspection report	N/A
Provider address	Notre Dame High School Fulwood Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S10 3BT



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