

Pioneers Partnership SCITT

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 23 April 2018 Stage 2: 23 September 2018

This inspection was carried out by 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 and secondary QTS
Overall effectiveness How well does the partnership secure consistently high-quality outcomes for trainees?	3
The outcomes for trainees	3
The quality of training across the partnership	3
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	3

Primary and secondary routes

Information about this ITE partnership

- The Pioneers Partnership is a school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) partnership. It provides teacher training for graduates through two main training routes: School Direct and School Direct salaried. Trainees who successfully complete their training are recommended for qualified teacher status (QTS). Trainees also gain a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) accredited by Leeds Beckett University.
- The Pioneers Partnership currently offers both primary (five to 11) and secondary (11 to 16) ITT programmes.
- During 2017/18, the partnership trained two primary trainees and 11 secondary trainees. In September 2018, the number of primary trainees increased to three and there were 12 trainees following secondary routes.
- The partnership was last inspected in July 2009. At that time, Matthew Moss High School was the lead school.
- Currently, the partnership consists of 18 schools. These are predominantly located in the Rochdale and Oldham areas. Middleton Technology School is now the lead school in the partnership.
- At the time of the inspection, the partnership offered the following secondary specialisms: art and design, biology, chemistry, computing, design and technology, English, history, geography, mathematics, modern foreign languages (Spanish and French), music, physics, physical education and religious education. The partnership also offers a primary specialism and a primary with mathematics specialism.
- Between stages 1 and 2 of the inspection, the SCITT director left the partnership and a new director was appointed.

Information about the primary and secondary ITE inspection

- During stage 1 of the inspection, the lead inspector visited four schools, observing four trainees teach across the primary and secondary phases. He reviewed trainees' online teaching records and their files of evidence of meeting the teachers' standards. These included subject knowledge audits, mentoring records and assessment information.
- The inspector held meetings with: trainees, subject and professional mentors, headteachers and senior leaders, the primary programme leader, the director of the teaching school, the SCITT director and the accounting officer. A telephone call was held with a representative from Leeds Beckett University.

- At stage 1 of the inspection, the inspector checked whether the partnership was compliant with safeguarding and other statutory requirements, including the ITT criteria (QTS). He also reviewed a range of evidence provided by the partnership. This included: self-evaluation documentation, improvement plans, the external examiner's reports, the programme handbook, the partnership agreement, the content of the training programme and trainees' assessment information.
- During stage 2, an additional inspector joined the lead inspector. Inspectors visited six schools and observed eight newly qualified teachers (NQTs) teach. Inspectors also met with members of the newly formed strategic board, NQTs, NQTs' mentors and induction tutors. Inspectors also met with senior leaders and headteachers from the schools in which the NQTs are employed. In addition, inspectors reviewed a selection of NQTs' files containing evidence of meeting the teachers' standards, their career-entry profiles and their final assessments.
- Inspectors took account of the 13 responses to Ofsted's online trainee questionnaire that were received in the summer term 2018.

Inspection team

Jonathan Smart HMI (lead inspector)

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Overall effectiveness

Grade: 3

Key strengths of the primary and secondary partnership

- NQTs inject energy and enthusiasm into their teaching. They are determined to make a difference to pupils' learning.
- The newly formed SCITT leadership team has brought about some much-needed coherence to the partnership.
- Primary trainees benefit from an effective school-based training programme.
- Trainees are well prepared to undertake the wider responsibilities of teaching. For example, they are well placed to deliver personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE).
- Employment rates are high. In 2018, every trainee gained employment in partner schools or within the Greater Manchester area.
- Leaders have been prompt in dealing with the non-compliance issues found at stage 1 of the inspection. They have appropriate plans to improve the quality of provision.

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

The partnership must:

- improve the quality of training by ensuring that:
 - the revised centre-based and school-based training programmes for primary and secondary trainees provide a high-quality experience that is meticulously quality-assured at every stage of a trainee's development
 - the partnership places as much emphasis on academic rigour as it does on providing strong pastoral support
 - over the course of their training, trainee teachers on the primary and secondary programmes gather compelling evidence of their progress towards meeting and exceeding the teachers' standards
 - trainees are supported to develop more fully their subject knowledge for teaching, so that they have a secure knowledge base on which to plan, teach and assess their chosen curriculum
 - mentoring across the partnership is of a consistently high quality
 - trainees have a stronger understanding of how to plan and teach lessons that maximise the progress of different groups of pupils
 - primary trainees are given opportunities to discuss and debate how to deliver the wider curriculum
 - target-setting is precise and promotes consistently good outcomes for trainees.
- improve the leadership and management of the SCITT by ensuring that:
 - the policies and procedures that have recently been put into place to strengthen recruitment and selection procedures are embedded
 - documentation to support the smooth induction of NQTs is suitably detailed and effective
 - the newly formed strategic board fulfils its role effectively to promote continual improvement
 - there is total clarity about roles and responsibility in the leadership of the primary provision
 - self-evaluation is more precise so that it leads to sharply focused improvement plans that contain clear success criteria on which leaders can be held stringently to account.

Inspection judgements

1. The overall effectiveness of the SCITT requires improvement. While there are some areas of good practice, the partnership is currently performing less well than it should be across all judgement areas.
2. Since stage 1 of the inspection, a newly formed leadership team has been put into place. It has the skills required to improve the partnership, and leaders have demonstrated the capacity to improve. They have begun to address with determination the areas for improvement identified at stage 1. Nevertheless, it is too early to gauge the impact of their actions on the quality of training and overall provision for trainees.
3. At stage 1 of the inspection, there were no effective governance arrangements. Since then, a new strategic board has been appointed, with appropriate terms of reference. Members are highly skilled and experienced in leading and managing ITE programmes. There is also a representative from business to oversee policy and practice. Despite having already had a positive effect on improving some aspects of the partnership's work, the board recognises that it has a big task ahead.
4. Leaders of the SCITT and the strategic board recognise that the primary phase of the programme remains somewhat of a 'bolt on' to the secondary programme. Although there are clear lines of accountability for the primary programme, roles and responsibilities for the day-to-day leadership of the programme lack clarity.
5. At the end of stage 1, there were four compliance issues. These related to: the rigour of recruitment and selection procedures (C1.3 Suitability); management arrangements (C3.1); the partnership agreement (C3.2) and the partnership's quality assurance procedures (C3.4). The newly formed leadership team and the strategic board have addressed those non-compliance issues effectively. No further compliance issues were found at stage 2 of the inspection. Consequently, the SCITT meets statutory safeguarding and ITT requirements.
6. Since stage 1 of the inspection, leaders have consulted with a range of stakeholders and relevant external bodies to advise them on how to make the necessary improvements to the quality of the provision. A new external moderator has been appointed. A leader from the Great Academies Education Trust has been brokered as a SCITT improvement partner. He is working with leaders to ensure that the improvements underway are fully realised and sustainable. External moderation is now accurate.
7. The new director of the SCITT, who was appointed from September 2018, has a track record of providing outstanding initial teacher training. She is working alongside the director of the teaching school. Both leaders are under no illusion about what still needs to be done to improve the provision for trainee teachers.

They are committed to the task ahead and have proven already that they can make a significant and immediate difference. For example, they have wasted no time in redesigning the centre-based training programme for the primary and secondary phases.

8. Leaders' evaluation of how well the SCITT is performing is still too generous. It does not get to the heart of some of the key issues facing the partnership. This lack of precision in self-evaluation means that the partnership's improvement plan is not as focused as it could be. The plan lacks clear measures of success on which the strategic board can stringently hold leaders to account for the quality of their work.
9. Leaders do not pay sufficient attention to analysing trainees' outcomes over time to improve the quality of the provision further. Moreover, the strategic board has not had time to use national benchmarking data to promote further improvement.
10. Leaders have already been extremely successful in improving communication across the partnership. They have been open and honest with key partners about the issues that the SCITT faces. Stakeholders value this improved level of communication and they want to be a part of the solution.
11. Leaders are equally determined to use the information that they have about trainees' and other stakeholders' views of the partnership. They have also arranged for groups of mentors and trainees to be involved in working groups so that they can effect change across the partnership.
12. Leaders ensure that there is a wide range of schools in the partnership, including those in challenging circumstances. All partner schools now know and understand their role, as outlined in the partnership agreement.
13. Leaders and members of the strategic board have put a new recruitment and selection policy in place from October 2018. It now meets the requirements of the ITT criteria. That said, the policy needs time to embed and to be evaluated for its effectiveness.
14. The partnership does not recruit trainees to support regional and national needs. Potential trainees have been rejected based on an insufficient number of available placements in partner schools. Leaders recognise that marketing arrangements are not as effective as they might be. A programme is now in place to review the quality and quantity of mentors to build further capacity within the partnership.
15. The trainees that are recruited often have extensive experience gained in schools as a teaching assistant, for example. This allows them to get off to a flying start on their training programme. They bring enthusiasm, passion and dedication to their training programme. Trainees and NQTs are committed to

making a difference to the pupils that they teach. However, some trainees have been let down by the partnership and have not made as much progress as they should have due to weaknesses in the quality of training.

16. The partnership ensures that trainees and NQTs have a secure understanding of their role in safeguarding pupils. All trainees have undertaken 'Prevent' duty training. Since stage 1 of the inspection, all the safeguarding training has been moved to the start of the training programme. Checks are made to ensure that schools induct trainees and NQTs with school-specific safeguarding training.
17. Trainees are well prepared to fulfil the wider aspects of the role of a teacher. They are committed to high standards of personal and professional conduct. Trainees receive effective training on PSHE, and on sex and relationships education.
18. Trainees receive appropriate training on behaviour management and they are aware of their role in preventing bullying and discrimination.
19. Despite these positive aspects of training, at stage 1 of the inspection, the centre-based training programme lacked coherence with the school-based training programme. It was also too focused on the needs of secondary trainees at the expense of primary trainees.
20. From September 2018, the centre-based training programme has more phase-specific modules in professional studies. There is more coherence between the professional studies programme, how it will be assessed and the role of the school-based training programme in reinforcing key learning.
21. The centre-based training programme still does not offer primary trainees sufficient opportunities to discuss and debate how to plan and teach the wider curriculum. This area of their subject knowledge is not good enough. Although leaders have effective plans to address this training deficit, they have not yet been realised.
22. The school-based training programme for primary trainees is a stronger aspect of the training programme. This is because the primary lead offers a more bespoke school-based training package. Primary trainees develop well their skills to teach phonics, early reading, communication and mathematics. Although some primary trainees received highly effective training in physical education, a minority did not due to timetable constraints.
23. Subject knowledge for teaching is weak in the secondary phase. Some trainees are not sufficiently prepared to plan, teach and assess their curriculum areas. For example, in science, trainees do not have the knowledge or experience required to teach across the disciplines, yet they are expected to do so. They do not have the support, advice and guidance to develop subject-specific

pedagogy. New specialist leaders in education are being appointed to enhance subject knowledge across the partnership.

24. Some trainees and NQTs do not have a sufficiently secure understanding of how to plan for different groups of pupils, for example disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Leaders have appropriate plans to strengthen this aspect of the teachers' standards and to ensure that it is well documented. Mentors now receive additional support and guidance to assist trainees with this aspect of teaching.
25. Mentoring across the partnership remains too variable. Under the previous leadership, mentors were left to deliver training as they desired, and it was not adequately quality-assured by the partnership. By stage 2, it was evident that mentor training had improved. Furthermore, appropriate quality assurance procedures are now fully in place for the new cohort of trainees.
26. Trainees value the experience that they get in their placement schools. Primary trainees spend time in the early years and in key stage 3. Secondary trainees have some opportunities to see the primary phase and post-16 education. However, for some trainees, enrichment opportunities at the end of the training have not been as beneficial as they could have been. The new leadership team is reviewing this important aspect of training.
27. Until recently, too much emphasis was placed on the pastoral support of trainees at the expense of academic rigour. Trainees were supported to be resilient and emotionally intelligent. However, they were left to their own devices in relation to the collation of evidence and the completion of mandatory training documentation. Consequently, there was insufficient evidence in trainees' files of the work that they had done towards meeting and exceeding the teachers' standards.
28. Following stage 1 of the inspection, new moderation procedures were put into place. Trainees were asked to complete their files of evidence retrospectively. Although leaders are committed to supporting trainees with their workload, this activity added pressure at a crucial point in their training. Following the moderation process, it was clear that the quality of documented evidence in trainees' portfolios was significantly weaker than the evidence gathered through observations of teaching and learning.
29. In 2017/18, the process of setting targets for trainees' progress was weak and lacked focus and precision. The lack of evidence in trainees' files meant that it was difficult for leaders to track trainees' progress towards their targets. Too much was left to chance.
30. Target-setting in NQTs' career-entry profiles is inadequate. However, the new director of the SCITT recognised this serious issue and has re-written all the

targets to support NQTs' induction year. The partnership's NQT induction tutor is holding review meetings with each NQT in their employing school. The quality of transition documentation requires significant improvement. Leaders recognise this, and it is a priority.

31. Outcomes for trainees require improvement because the partnership's assessment of a significant minority of trainees is overgenerous. Inspection findings indicate that the final assessment of some trainees does not accurately reflect the quality of their teaching.
32. On average, trainees on primary programmes achieve more highly than those on secondary programmes. However, there is no discernible difference between the achievement of trainees on School Direct and School Direct salaried routes. There is equally no difference between outcomes for male and female trainees.
33. On secondary courses in 2017/18, outcomes were not as strong for trainees on mathematics and computer science courses, albeit numbers were small.
34. Trainees are highly ambitious, energetic and passionate about teaching. However, not all trainees exceed the minimum level of practice expected of teachers, as defined in the teachers' standards. This is because the training programme has not been good enough. The SCITT's vision to be a provider that is 'training talented graduates to become outstanding teachers' requires much more work before it is fully achieved.
35. The proportion of trainees who complete their chosen programme of study is broadly average. In 2017/18, however, every trainee who started a training course with the partnership achieved QTS.
36. Most trainees are awarded a PGCE. Trainees value the opportunity to undertake academic research. The newly formed leadership team has taken steps to include more high-quality research opportunities in the training programme for the 2018/19 cohort.
37. Employment rates are high. Over time, most trainees are employed in partner schools or in the local area. In 2017/18, all trainees went into employment.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Broadfield Community Primary School, Rochdale

Matthew Moss High School, Rochdale

Meanwood Community Nursery and Primary School, Rochdale

Middleton Technology School, Middleton

Kingsway Park High School, Rochdale

St Anne's Academy, Middleton

The Radclyffe School, Oldham

ITE partnership details

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Phases provided	Primary and secondary
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Previous inspection report	https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/41/70227
Provider address	Middleton Technology School Kenyon Lane Middleton Manchester M24 2GT



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