

Barr Beacon SCITT ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 30 April 2018

Stage 2: 22 October 2018

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), 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 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

	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

Secondary route

Information about this ITE partnership

- The Barr Beacon school-centred initial teacher training partnership (SCITT) provides teacher training for graduates who wish to teach in the secondary (11–16) phase. It is based on the site of Barr Beacon School. There are eight secondary schools and one special school in the partnership in Walsall, Birmingham, Staffordshire and Warwickshire. In 2017/18, 31 trainees were recruited to the programme. The secondary subjects they were trained to teach included biology, chemistry, computing, English, geography, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, physical education (PE) and physics.
- Trainees who successfully complete their training are recommended for qualified teacher status (QTS). The SCITT also offers trainees the opportunity to gain a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) with the University of Worcester.
- The SCITT governance advisory board oversees the executive group, which is responsible for policy and strategy. The executive group includes representatives from leaders of each of the partner schools.
- The partnership has not previously been inspected. It has provided ITE since September 2016.

Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- During stage 1, inspectors visited five schools. Nine trainees were observed teaching and receiving feedback from their mentors. Inspectors held discussions with trainees, mentors, school coordinators and headteachers. Inspectors also met with a group of four mentors and a group of seven subject course leaders. An inspector met with three members of the governance advisory board, including the chair. An inspector also attended subject training sessions in English and modern foreign languages. An inspector attended part of the Barr Beacon SCITT executive group meeting with partner school headteachers. Inspectors reviewed evidence in trainees' files in relation to the teachers' standards and documentation relating to the SCITT's compliance with the initial teacher training (ITT) criteria.
- During stage 2 of the inspection, inspectors observed seven former trainees in their schools. They met with newly qualified teachers (NQTs), mentors, senior leaders and headteachers in schools. They also attended two subject training sessions in English and science.
- Across both stages of the inspection, the inspectors met with SCITT leaders and members of the executive group, including the chair.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including improvement plans, self-evaluation, training documents, recruitment and selection policies and records, trainees' files, their assessment information, and the partnership's

analysis of trainees' outcomes. Inspectors took into account the 26 responses to the 2017 trainee online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Mark Sims HMI (lead inspector)

Jo Evans HMI (assistant lead inspector)

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

Key strengths of the secondary partnership

- All trainees have been judged at least good since the start of the SCITT, with the majority judged as outstanding in 2018.
- The overwhelming majority of trainees have gone on to secure teaching posts, most of which are within the SCITT's partner schools.
- SCITT leaders demonstrate very effective communication, support and engagement with schools, including non-partner schools, trainees and NQTs. This has led to a very high level of satisfaction expressed by schools, trainees and NQTs.
- There is a genuine partnership with schools, who contribute to the strategic direction of the SCITT, training and recruitment. As a result, schools are able to appoint high-quality NQTs.
- The high-quality training programme develops trainees' subject knowledge and pedagogy effectively.
- Rigorous recruitment procedures mean that leaders have recruited trainees who display exceptionally high levels of personal and professional conduct.
- Trainees have benefited from contrasting placements, complemented by additional experiences, such as in the sixth form, in a special school and in a school requiring improvement. This has prepared trainees well for teaching different groups of pupils.
- Leaders of the SCITT are strategic in their thinking, with plans in place to expand the number of trainees and range of subjects in order to respond to local needs in their partner schools and produce well-trained NQTs.
- Non-partner schools spoken to were consistently positive about the quality and accuracy of information received about their newly appointed NQTs.

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

The partnership should:

- ensure that the recent improvements to training in English as an additional language are now embedded across all subject courses, including in English
- analyse more closely the targets set for NQTs against the teachers' standards in order to inform future development planning
- enhance opportunities for trainees to gain more experience and understanding of how to deploy additional adults effectively.

Inspection judgements

1. Outcomes for trainees are very strong and improving. In the two years since the partnership was established they have never been less than good for any trainee. The proportion of trainees judged as outstanding increased in the second year to the extent that in 2018 it represented the majority.
2. Completion rates have been high since the SCITT was established. In the first year of the SCITT, all trainees secured a teaching post. In the next year, all of those who applied for teaching posts were successful. Most trainees gained an appointment in their chosen first subject at their first interview, even in heavily over-subscribed subjects such as PE.
3. Leaders of the SCITT communicate highly effectively with schools, including non-partner schools, trainees and NQTs. School leaders welcomed the detailed information they received from the SCITT on NQTs' strengths, weaknesses and areas for development. They consistently reported that these assessments were accurate. Targets set for NQTs are closely aligned to those set by the schools. The termly SCITT newsletter is an effective means of keeping in touch with trainees and NQTs, as well as extending the reach of the SCITT more widely. NQTs spoken to welcomed the ongoing communication and offers of support from SCITT leaders, including in non-partner schools.
4. The inspection judged that the provider was making accurate judgements against the teachers' standards and that appropriate systems were in place to ensure accurate judgements were being made consistently by all partner schools.
5. Schools, including non-partner schools, trainees and NQTs, all reported a very high degree of satisfaction with the SCITT. Schools were happy with the high calibre of their NQTs. Trainees and NQTs spoken to unanimously reported that if they had their time again they would definitely go through the same training route. All spoken to said they would recommend the SCITT to a friend.

6. The quality of mentoring is consistently high. Trainees reported it was very good across both placement schools. Trainees also felt well supported during their placements through the regular visits and contact from SCITT leaders.
7. SCITT leaders are highly responsive to any concerns trainees have and to any feedback they receive. When trainees expressed concerns about the amount of work involved in collating their evidence portfolios, leaders amended the approach to reduce trainees' workload.
8. Leaders have responded swiftly since stage 1 of the inspection to ensure that the carousel week is quality-assured as rigorously as other aspects of the training. Leaders have put in place additional specialist training for English as an additional language. They have identified teachers' standards five (responding to the strengths and needs of different groups of pupils) and six (the use of assessment) as key priorities for development to ensure more trainees are able to achieve outstanding judgments.
9. Partner schools feel included in the SCITT's decision-making about its future direction. They are consulted widely on all aspects of the SCITT's work, including identifying future needs, training and recruitment. SCITT leaders have taken steps to ensure all partner schools are regularly represented at executive board meetings. In order to secure greater participation of the schools, leaders have rationalised the number of different meetings across the partnership.
10. Subject-specific courses during the training programme encourage NQTs to continue to develop their good subject knowledge on an on-going basis. NQTs also demonstrate high expectations, plan and teach well-structured lessons and fulfil wider professional responsibilities very effectively. Those NQTs teaching pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities plan and adapt learning according to pupils' individual needs.
11. NQTs have been well-prepared by the SCITT to be resilient. All of those spoken to said they are finding their NQT year less of a challenge than expected. This is because the training year prepared them very well for the challenges they would face in their NQT year.
12. A rigorous recruitment process ensures that the trainees selected by the SCITT display the highest levels of personal and professional conduct at all times. In the light of feedback from stage 1 of the inspection, leaders carried out an analysis of failed applicants to determine why none had successfully reapplied. Having identified lack of subject knowledge as the key barrier to a successful application, leaders have supported previous applicants in addressing their subject knowledge gaps. As a result, some have re-applied successfully.
13. Trainees have the opportunity to experience two contrasting school placements in different socio-economic circumstances. Their school experience is enhanced

during a carousel week where trainees gain experience in a special school, a school with a high proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language and a school with a large percentage of disadvantaged pupils. A school currently judged as requires improvement has recently joined the SCITT as a partner school. This is providing trainees with opportunities to experience teaching in a wider range of schools, including schools causing concern.

14. Trainees have also had the opportunity to teach in different phases and ability groups. Some trainees, who have had experience of teaching in sixth-form classes on placements, have been able to secure posts that include teaching A-level classes. Trainees are well prepared for teaching pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
15. Leaders are continuously focused on how to improve and extend the SCITT. Their vision to develop outstanding classroom practitioners and to meet the needs of local schools for well-qualified teachers has led to their engagement with a wider range of partner schools. There is a projected rise of 50% in the number of trainee places available for 2019 and additional subjects offered including business studies, psychology and religious education.
16. Trainees and NQTs have a good understanding of the importance of safeguarding pupils. Those spoken to confirmed that ensuring pupils' safety is their first concern. They are secure in their knowledge and up-to-date with the latest national and local guidance published in 2018. They know what to do and to whom they should report if an incident were to occur.
17. The SCITT partnership complies with all aspects of the ITT criteria. Its leaders meet all their statutory responsibilities with regard to safeguarding, promoting equality and diversity and eliminating discrimination. Trainees and NQTs spoken to also confirmed that they have been well trained in 'Prevent' and the dangers of extremism. They demonstrate a good understanding of promoting British values and are aware of the risks of radicalisation.
18. NQTs have devoted themselves quickly to the wider life of school, for example as form tutors, teaching personal, social, health and education and running after-school clubs. A number of them reported to inspectors that they felt less well prepared for deploying additional adults as they had had limited opportunities on their placements. This was confirmed by inspectors in lesson observations.
19. Since stage 1, SCITT leaders have taken further steps to deliver specialist training in English as an additional language and to embed this in some of their subject training, including in science. This is not yet consistent across all subjects, however, including in English.

20. A number of NQTs have been set targets by the SCITT for improvement in the teachers' standards for assessment and behaviour management. These particular standards are not included in the SCITT's development plan and thus are not being used to inform future improvement work.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Barr Beacon School, Walsall

Bloxwich Academy, Walsall

Blue Coat Academy, Walsall

Brownhills School, Brownhills

Dame Elizabeth Cadbury School, Birmingham

Elmwood Special School, Walsall

Etone College, Nuneaton

Grace Academy, Darlaston

The Hart School, Rugeley

Ormiston Forge Academy, Cradley Heath

ITE partnership details

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Phases provided	Secondary
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Previous inspection report	Not applicable
Provider address	Barr Beacon SCITT Old Hall Lane Aldridge Walsall West Midlands WS9 0RF



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