

Haybridge Teaching Alliance SCITT 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 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	2

Primary and secondary routes

Information about this ITE partnership

- Haybridge Teaching Alliance is a school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) provider based in Hagley, West Midlands. The partnership offers primary and secondary School Direct (fee paying) routes into teaching. Trainees who successfully complete their training are awarded qualified teacher status (QTS). All trainees are required to complete a programme leading to a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) from Birmingham City University.
- Haybridge High School leads the secondary training programme and Hales Valley Teaching Hub and the Rivers Teaching School coordinate the primary programme. Primary trainees focus on five to 11 years and secondary trainees on 11 to 16 years. An additional 14 to 19 programme is offered to trainees in business studies and psychology.
- The SCITT has 33 schools in its partnership across four local authorities.
- In 2017/18, there were 36 primary trainees and 32 secondary trainees.
- The SCITT has been operating since September 2015. This was its first inspection.

Information about the primary and secondary ITE inspection

- At stage 1, inspectors visited four schools and observed seven trainees.
- At stage 2, inspectors visited six schools and observed eight newly qualified teachers (NQTs). Some schools were the same as at stage 1. One trainee was observed at both stages of the inspection. Two NQTs visited were employed in schools outside of the partnership.
- Inspectors confirmed that the partnership complies with the criteria for initial teacher training (ITT) and statutory requirements, including safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed the provider's own self-evaluation of the programme, together with their improvement plan. Inspectors also evaluated the SCITT's response to actions for improvement identified at stage 1 of the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with individual and groups of trainees, NQTs and their mentors. Inspectors also met regularly with the director of the SCITT and the primary and secondary programme leaders. A meeting was held with members of the strategic steering group. Discussions with a representative group of headteachers and mentors from partnership schools also contributed to inspection evidence.
- Inspectors observed two professional studies training sessions for primary and secondary trainees. Interview and recruitment activities were also observed for a secondary physical education (PE) applicant.

- Inspectors took account of the 55 responses to the trainee online questionnaire from 2018.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, HMI (lead inspector)

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Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

Key strengths of the primary and secondary partnership

- A clear and ambitious vision for excellence is shared widely across the partnership. The director and her team are relentless in their aim to provide high-quality training and outcomes for trainees.
- The strategic steering group closely monitors the performance of staff and trainees. They hold leaders fully to account and there is a united commitment to continual improvement.
- Leaders are honest and accurate in their self-evaluation. Their responsive and swift action following stage 1 has led to effective improvements for current trainees. The partnership has excellent capacity to improve further.
- A broad, relevant and responsive course programme equips all trainees with sufficiently good knowledge and expertise to enter teaching successfully. Training, especially that delivered in-house by the SCITT, is consistently good and has a positive impact on trainees' practice.
- Mentors provide helpful and incisive feedback to trainees. This helps trainees improve their practice and secure stronger progress for pupils.
- Trainees listen to and act upon advice given. Carefully focused tasks and assignments set help to secure trainees' excellent understanding and skills in relation to the teachers' standards.
- Trainees create positive learning environments for pupils. They have good subject knowledge and use this well across the curriculum. Trainees and NQTs demonstrate excellence in their personal and professional conduct and make a good contribution to wider school activities.
- Partner schools are keen and committed to employing trainees from the SCITT. This is because they are well prepared and possess the skills and attributes needed to become good or better teachers.

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

The partnership should:

- Improve the quality of the postgraduate training programme delivered by the external provider for secondary trainees so that they have the same positive experience of training provided internally by the SCITT.
- Further improve completion rates, especially for primary trainees.
- Further develop trainees' skills in planning activities that meet the needs of pupils of different abilities, especially disadvantaged pupils and the most able.

Inspection judgements

1. SCITT leaders at all levels have a clear vision for the future of the partnership and are steadfast in their commitment to continual improvement. They have a strong resolve to develop good or better teachers who are well equipped to make a valuable and on-going contribution to the teaching profession, both locally and nationally.
2. Leaders set high expectations and took swift and decisive action after stage 1 to implement changes and improve systems and practices in place. While it is still too soon to determine the impact of adjustments made, there are very positive signs that the assessment of trainees, quality of mentoring, and school leaders' contribution to the strategic direction of the partnership are already much improved. Leaders are ambitious for the partnership and have a strong sense of purpose and direction. As a result, there is excellent capacity for further improvement.
3. Headteachers in schools visited have very positive views of the partnership. Many offer employment to trainees they receive, once they have qualified. Inspectors recognise that this is because the SCITT produces good, well-rounded and enthusiastic new teachers who are able to make a positive contribution to pupils' education. Headteachers and trainees alike highly value the School Direct route, which allows trainees to become fully immersed in school life for the entire academic year.
4. School leaders and mentors, especially those from the primary teaching schools, are well represented on a wide range of committees. They rigorously monitor and review different aspects of the SCITT, both managerial and pedagogical. They are fully involved in evaluating the programme, contributing very effectively to recruitment activities and delivering central training. Members of the strategic steering group make a strong contribution to the leadership of the partnership. They have a good insight into current strengths and weaknesses because self-evaluation is honest and accurate. As a result,

they offer well-informed challenge and support that are welcomed by programme leaders.

5. Mentors, tutors and trainers monitor and track trainees' progress closely. SCITT mentors carry out regular paired observations with school staff to quality assure judgements made and monitor the quality of mentoring. Frequent checks on trainees' files, careful collation of evidence on the online portal and thorough termly subject audits all contribute to trainee grades awarded. Trainees make good progress and all exceed the minimum level of practice expected in the standards by the end of their training.
6. SCITT leaders ensure that the programme equips trainees fully for teaching. Their placements provide extensive opportunities and support to hone the skills needed. By the end of their training, trainees are ready to embark on their roles as NQTs successfully, and their schools agree. Their practice reflects high levels of achievement in those teachers' standards relating to the wider responsibilities of their profession and their personal and professional conduct. NQTs are well organised, committed, forge positive working relationships with their colleagues, and uphold high professional standards.
7. Most trainees and NQTs have high expectations which are reflected in pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Trainees and NQTs create calm and purposeful learning environments, built on trust and mutual respect. They have a good presence in the classroom and most manage pupils' behaviour well. The strong rapport they establish with pupils leads to the right climate for learning and motivated pupils.
8. Trainees have good subject knowledge and apply it effectively. Subject-knowledge audits are revisited at different points in the programme and identify where gaps exist. Leaders have improved the use of these subject audits following stage 1. Subject knowledge enhancement courses were signposted where necessary and additional sessions taught to eradicate gaps in knowledge. Newly recruited trainees for 2018 were given a target over the summer to work on areas of weakness so that they could 'hit the ground running' in September.
9. High-quality training enables trainees and NQTs to draw on a range of teaching strategies to deliver engaging and purposeful lessons. Correct subject vocabulary is taught, reinforced and applied well so that pupils use the correct terminology in different subjects. Effective questioning techniques and application of school assessment systems help inform planning and assessments of pupils' learning.
10. Very strong personal and professional attributes are reflected in trainees' and NQTs' excellent relations with pupils, their high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement, and their positive contributions to school life. They

readily take on additional responsibilities, such as running after-school clubs or leading booster sessions to raise achievement and are confident and well prepared to engage with parents. The partnership has an on-going commitment to continual professional development. Trainees move seamlessly from SCITT-based training to high-quality NQT training to supplement and build on their professional knowledge.

11. Trainees and NQTs have a good awareness of how to meet the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with SEND. This is because this is taught well in the programme. One of the most memorable training sessions trainees described was of being taught in Greek. The aim of this session was for trainees to empathise with, and reflect, the anxiety faced by pupils who do not speak English. This session had a lasting impact on secondary trainees.
12. Trainees' and NQTs' planning and practice do not always take sufficient account of the needs of the most able or disadvantaged pupils in their classes. Pupils' needs are not routinely met and activities can sometimes lack challenge. Leaders have rightly recognised the need to improve this aspect and are focusing on this teachers' standard in greater depth this year.
13. Central training makes a strong contribution to trainees' development as new teachers. Leaders have been responsive to trainees' views and have made effective adjustments to the programme to maximise their teaching experience. For example, this year, leaders have amended the timetable for primary professional studies and varied the teaching days. This is because previous trainees reported that they missed the opportunity to teach specific subjects, such as primary art or PE, because they were out of school on the same day each week. Careful consideration is given to training venues to help reduce trainees' travel time and costs. This demonstrates leaders' care and awareness of trainees' workload and well-being.
14. A notable strength of the partnership is the well-structured, purposeful and relevant centre-based training programme. High-quality teaching ensures that trainees gain a good balance of teaching strategies and subject knowledge. Trainees particularly value the levels of experience of staff leading sessions in both the primary and secondary phases. The SCITT makes good use of external experts and school practitioners to ensure that the training programme prepares trainees and NQTs fully for the demands of teaching the whole of the primary curriculum or discrete subjects in secondary schools.
15. Leaders recognise that further development is required in the training leading to the postgraduate certificate of education (PGCE) from Birmingham City University. This is because feedback on trainees' experience on the programme, particularly secondary trainees, was less positive than their experience of training provided by the SCITT. In particular, trainees referred to poor

assignment briefings, a lack of relevance to their roles, and some staff lacking current teaching experience. The large group lectures at the university also resulted in some trainees feeling significant isolation compared with their SCITT training.

16. School placements are well planned and carefully selected to provide good-quality learning experiences for trainees to develop their expertise. Partnership schools provide high-quality support and effective mentoring. Trainees benefit from working with and observing good and outstanding practitioners. Trainees are immersed in schools from the outset of their training.
17. NQTs are well prepared for teaching in schools within and beyond the partnership by working in schools serving diverse communities. These include schools with high levels of social deprivation, those judged as requiring improvement and those where a high proportion of pupils come from different ethnic, cultural or religious backgrounds.
18. Mentors for both trainees and NQTs are enthusiastic and most are highly experienced. They receive helpful training from the SCITT and receive regular communication and updates. Trainees appreciate and value the practical guidance, high levels of support and insightful feedback they receive from their mentors in weekly meetings. Examples of effective mentoring and exemplary feedback are shared at mentor training sessions and promoted within the partnership.
19. Leaders have continued to refine and develop systems to ensure that trainee assessments are accurate and reliable. Following stage 1, they devised much clearer grade descriptors for school mentors to improve the consistency and accuracy of grades awarded. Mentors have welcomed this additional guidance. Although partnership data indicates that fewer trainees achieved the higher levels in 2018 in most of the teachers' standards compared to the previous year, inspectors' checks of NQT skills at stage 2 show that current assessments are accurate. Systems to moderate final assessments are also robust. This ensures that no one gains QTS undeservedly and that the great majority of trainees are at least good teachers by the end of their training
20. By the time they complete the training programme, all trainees exceed the minimum requirements expected and a good proportion reach the higher grades. Leaders carefully analyse data by gender, age group, phase and degree level. No particular group underperforms; where marginal differences are detected, leaders are quick to provide effective, additional support and monitor this area carefully.
21. Recruitment and selection processes are robust and demonstrate the SCITT's high expectations of trainees wanting to become teachers. Leaders are astute in recognising applicants who are not 'the finished article' but demonstrate

potential. They quickly identify the additional support needed for new recruits to become successful practitioners. Candidates' subject knowledge is skilfully tested at interview. Their presentation skills and teaching ability are also assessed to see how well candidates articulate key information. Once accepted, trainees are quickly immersed into the programme through an early residential weekend to establish positive working relationships, share key messages and introduce them to the teachers' standards.

22. Most of the trainees recruited have significant experience of working in schools. This means they have a realistic view of teaching as a career. Nevertheless, leaders emphasise from the outset, including at the recruitment stage, the demands of the course. To reduce stress levels, leaders ensure that sessions on mental health and well-being are included in the programme to equip trainees with strategies to cope.
23. Completion rates in 2017 and 2018 were below those of other partnerships nationally, particularly for primary trainees, but are improving. Leaders have a detailed knowledge of the reasons behind withdrawals. They rapidly intervene and do all they can to support trainees so that they successfully complete their course. For example, eight trainees last year were deemed to be causes for concern during the spring term. Action plans were promptly generated, and additional support provided, which had a positive impact. All eight completed their training successfully and seven were graded as good. As a result of leaders' interventions, completion rates are now improving year on year.
24. Leaders are adamant that, if trainees do not meet the standard required, they will not be awarded QTS. In these instances, leaders extend the programme for individual trainees to allow additional time and input for them to reach the levels required. Leaders maintain the very highest expectations of trainees' professional conduct. Leaders have no hesitation in withdrawing places on the programme where breaches of professional conduct occur, irrespective of any impact on completion figures.
25. Employment rates are high, with almost all trainees securing employment in 2016 and 2017. In 2018, a small number of trainees have yet to secure permanent positions. Leaders are providing on-going support for these individuals. Many trainees gain employment in schools used for their trainees' placements on the strength of the partnership. Leaders provide good support and advice throughout the training programme to help trainees secure their first teaching post. Interview techniques, signposting to jobs and helping with applications are typical of the individual help available.
26. The partnership fully complies with all requirements for ITE and has robust systems in place to check and verify this. Safeguarding requirements are fully met.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Ashwood Primary School, Dudley

Ellowes Hall Sports College, Dudley

Heronswood Primary School, Worcestershire

Withymore Primary School, Dudley

Haybridge High School, Worcestershire

King Charles High School, Worcestershire

Pedmore Technology College, Dudley

Pitmaston Primary School, Worcestershire

Smestow School, Wolverhampton

ITE partnership details

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	Stage 2 22 October 2018
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Previous inspection report	N/A
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