

Bishop's Stortford Educational Trust

SCITT ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 21 May 2018 Stage 2: 15 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

- The Bishop's Stortford Educational Trust (BSET) school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) partnership offers primary and secondary programmes for graduates, through School Direct and School Direct salaried routes into teaching. Trainees who complete their courses successfully are recommended for qualified teacher status (QTS).
- The SCITT is based in Leventhorpe, a secondary school in Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire. It operates within the BSET Trust, a collaborative venture between headteachers from local Hertfordshire schools.
- The SCITT was established in 2016, initially as a provider of secondary teacher training. The first cohort of primary trainees started a year later.
- In 2017, a new, independent management structure was created. The name was changed from The Catalyst Teaching Alliance SCITT to the BSET Trust SCITT.
- The Rivers Multi-Academies Trust is the accredited body responsible for the provision.
- The inspection was the provider's first inspection since it opened.
- Between 2017 and 2018, the SCITT trained four primary trainees and 10 secondary trainees. In September 2018, the number of primary trainees increased to seven and there were five trainees following secondary routes.

Information about the primary and secondary ITE inspection

- During stage 1 of the inspection, inspectors visited six primary and secondary schools and observed eight trainees teach. They also looked at teaching practice files and spoke with other trainees in the schools, in meetings and in pre-arranged telephone conversations.
- Discussions were held with SCITT leaders, including those with quality assurance oversight, the headteacher's group and members of the governing body.
- At stage 2, inspectors visited NQTs in eight schools, including two schools from outside the partnership. They observed eight primary and secondary newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and spoke with the pupils they were teaching. They also spoke with an NQT and a headteacher from another school outside the partnership by telephone.
- The lead inspector met with a group of primary and secondary trainees who joined the training in September 2018.
- Inspectors reviewed NQTs' career entry profiles and the actions taken by leaders and managers to improve the quality of training between stages 1 and 2 of the inspection.

- During the visits at both stages, inspectors met with headteachers, mentors and other school-based trainers.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents provided by SCITT leaders. These included the partnership's self-evaluation and improvement plans, as well as assessment information related to trainees' and NQTs' teaching practice.
- They also took account of the five responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, alongside the provider's own analysis of trainees' views of the training year. In addition, they considered recruitment and selection records and records related to trainees' completion and employment rates.
- At both stages of the inspection, inspectors checked that the provider's safeguarding arrangements were effective and that all the statutory criteria for initial teacher training (ITT) were met.

Inspection team

Christine Dick, HMI (lead inspector)

Tracy Fielding, HMI (assistant lead inspector)

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

Key strengths of the primary and secondary partnership

- The highly collaborative partnership has a clear understanding of what is working well to secure high-quality outcomes for trainees and the things that need to improve further.
- Recruitment processes are well managed, leading to the selection of trainees with the capacity to become successful teachers, and to high employment rates.
- Good provision is ensuring that most trainees are on track to exceed the minimum level of practice by the end of the training.
- Academic and pastoral support from the central and school-based trainers is typically responsive, which helps trainees to develop effective teaching skills, while taking appropriate care of their well-being.
- Trainees have high standards of professional conduct and a good understanding of their responsibilities as members of the teaching profession.
- Trainees establish positive working relationships with their pupils, which contribute well to the productive learning environments typically seen in their lessons.
- Secondary trainees are actively engaged in wider school life, and this makes a useful contribution to ensuring that they are rapidly integrated into the whole-school community.

- Trainees have a thorough understanding of safeguarding requirements. They are vigilant and know what they need to do if they have any concerns about pupils' welfare.

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

The partnership should:

- Improve the effectiveness of the development of trainees' subject knowledge for teaching by:
 - extending the use of information from secondary trainees' subject knowledge audits, through regular reviews, so that any further development needs are routinely identified throughout the training and in career entry development profiles
 - ensuring that all primary trainees are fully confident to teach early mathematics and early reading and in their use of systematic, synthetic phonics.
- Secure consistently high-quality mentor support by ensuring that:
 - mentors' feedback is routinely focused on trainees' ability to adapt their teaching to meet pupils' different learning needs, including for the most able
 - mentors take sufficient account of the extent of pupils' progress over time in assessing the quality of trainees' teaching
 - mentors check systematically that primary trainees' strategies to manage pupils' behaviour in their lessons are effective.
- Develop further the range of primary and secondary trainees' practical experience of teaching pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Ensure that primary trainees have sufficient experience of teaching in foundation subjects.

Inspection judgements

1. Strong leadership, at all levels, has secured high-quality training and a trend of continuous improvement in this relatively new SCITT. Partnership schools share the same vision and commitment to making a positive difference to local teacher recruitment, retention and supply. Headteachers value their membership of this exceptionally collaborative group of like-minded schools. They are very responsive to the SCITT's development needs and increasingly involved in its improvement-planning processes.
2. Well-established communication links through partnership structures ensure that all relevant information is shared. Accountability has been strengthened

further, with headteacher and professional tutor involvement in regular mentor group meetings.

3. Typically, all the trainees who complete the training gain QTS and exceed the minimum level required by the teachers' standards. Employment rates are high, with all NQTs securing teaching posts by the end of the training in each of the two years since the SCITT opened. There are no significant differences in outcomes between groups in either attainment or employment rates.
4. The partnership includes a range of different schools, including some judged as requires improvement by Ofsted. SCITT leaders are working with link governors to continue to extend the type of schools it works with. This focus aims to broaden the opportunities for trainees to experience teaching pupils in challenging socio-economic circumstances, as well as pupils from more diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
5. Leaders are ambitious for the SCITT's future. They are clear about what is working well and the things that they need to change. They draw on a suitably broad range of quality assurance information to inform the partnership's self-evaluation and improvement planning. The trainees' voice is very strong in this process. Prompt action is taken if any concerns about the quality of provision are raised.
6. The partnership is well led and managed. Policies and procedures meet statutory requirements, including the ITT criteria. Careful consideration is given during central training and in placement schools to ensuring that trainees and NQTs know how to keep their pupils safe. The elimination of discrimination and the promotion of equality of opportunity are given high priority.
7. The partnership agreement, signed by all schools, is regularly updated to take account of any relevant changes. Roles, responsibilities and the expectations of everyone involved are very clear.
8. The training is well organised. Headteachers are very positive about its impact on the teaching skills of the NQTs they employ. As one of them said, 'We trust them, and they trust us.' Activities are planned to ensure that all the teachers' standards are considered.
9. All primary and secondary trainees who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire agreed, or strongly agreed, that they appreciated the quality of their training. The confidence they expressed in the provision, to help them to become good or better teachers, was also mirrored in many of the discussions that inspectors had with them at each stage of the inspection.
10. Trainees and NQTs spoken with were quick to praise the high quality of support and guidance they receive, both in schools and through the central training

team. In meetings, they regularly told inspectors about the rapid response to any worries they had discussed with their trainers.

11. Effective steps were taken between the two stages of the inspection to secure the emerging areas for improvement that inspectors noted in their findings at the end of stage 1. The timely response indicates that the partnership has the capacity to continue to improve further.
12. While some new strategies were at an early stage of implementation at stage 2, the new cohort of trainees were already benefiting from, for example, better support to improve subject knowledge for teaching and revisions to mentor training.
13. During stage 1, although inspectors' evidence confirmed that much of the training was of high quality, they confirmed the provider's own self-evaluation that trainees' subject knowledge for teaching was an area for further improvement. This was because, in both phases, school-based trainers did not focus regularly enough on subject-specific issues in their feedback to trainees about their teaching.
14. The outcomes of subject knowledge audits were not systematically revisited to record improvements, or to identify any further training needed. By stage 2 of the inspection, appropriate revisions to mentor training, quality assurance and subject-specific support were in place.
15. In the primary phase, actions have been taken to strengthen further the training linked to early mathematics, literacy and reading. The changes include a deeper focus on the effective use of systematic synthetic phonics in the teaching of early reading skills.
16. Currently, work is underway to link the phonics training more closely to the knowledge and understanding required, rather than focusing primary trainees' learning on a specific teaching scheme. In addition, extra time has been allocated to primary subjects in the central programme, which makes better use of specialist expertise from within partnership schools.
17. While partnership schools typically provide high-quality placements and effective mentoring, inspectors noted some variable practice across schools at stage 1. In the current year, across both phases, mentors have been trained to ensure that checks on trainees' subject knowledge are revisited regularly. Their feedback on trainees' teaching this year has a much stronger focus on specific subjects. However, these new systems are at an early stage of implementation.
18. In the secondary phase, partnership headteachers have now identified specialist subject leads to take ownership of the training in their specialist areas. In both phases, headteachers' and professional tutors' accountability for

the quality of all aspects of mentoring in their own school has been strengthened further.

19. Typically, high-quality training is ensuring that trainees and NQTs are very professional in their conduct. Throughout the training year and as they begin their teaching careers, they have high expectations of themselves and of the pupils they teach. Most of them establish strong working relationships in their classrooms. These relationships contribute very well to the creation of constructive learning environments and to pupils' positive behaviour for learning.
20. Trainees and NQTs generally plan lessons that are well structured, with interesting activities that make effective use of a range of resources. They are eager to promote a love of learning. Their own passion and enthusiasm is often evident in their practice. Primary trainees work well with teaching assistants deployed to support pupils in their classes.
21. While overall support for trainees is strong, in some instances mentors and trainees' ability to reflect on how well pupils are learning, because of the teaching, is uneven. A few trainees have relatively limited experience in the use of assessment information to plan learning over time for pupils with different starting points.
22. Mentors' feedback does not always focus sharply enough on the difference teaching is making for different groups of pupils, including for the most able. Further improvements to mentor training and refinements to quality assurance arrangements aim to eradicate any remaining inconsistencies in the current year.
23. Trainees and NQTs develop a good understanding of curriculum and assessment arrangements, including examination specifications. They pay appropriate attention to subject-specific vocabulary in their teaching. Most of them respond quickly to correct any misconceptions that may occur in their lessons.
24. Although primary trainees often gain useful practical experience of teaching foundation subjects, including physical education, the extent of this experience is inconsistent across placement schools. In recognition of this, by stage 2 of the inspection, SCITT leaders had initiated further checks to ensure that the current cohort of trainees have access to the same opportunities.
25. Typically, trainees and NQTs use questioning techniques skilfully to extend pupils' learning. For example, in a secondary mathematics lesson, the NQT sustained a strong focus on 'mastery' techniques to ensure that pupils had grasped the basics before moving on to the next stage.

26. Overall, the training provides a good theoretical understanding of the potential barriers to learning, including for disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and pupils who speak English as an additional language. New arrangements are in place to ensure that trainees have a more consistent set of opportunities to apply this knowledge, in particular, in working with pupils with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language.
27. Importantly, these changes include enhancements to how information is shared between mentors at the key points of transition between the trainees' first and second placements. This is so that each trainee's individual experiences can be tracked more closely and any gaps identified quickly.
28. Typically, trainees and NQTs manage pupils' behaviour effectively, applying school policies and procedures as appropriate. They understand the links between potentially poor behaviour and weaknesses in teachers' planning. Behaviour management strategies are well covered in the central training. However, primary trainees and NQTs were not always as confident as their secondary peers in managing the occasional incident of low-level disruption in the lessons inspectors observed.
29. Trainees and NQTs have a thorough understanding of safeguarding matters. They know the signs to look for and how to make referrals if they have any cause for concern. They understand their duties to watch out for and to report any early signs of radicalisation or extreme views.
30. Most trainees and NQTs undertake wider responsibilities in their placements and employing schools. In discussions with inspectors, senior leaders frequently commented on how quickly new recruits became valued members of the whole-school team. Secondary trainees and NQTs readily become class tutors and contribute appropriately to pupils' personal, social and health education.
31. Recruitment procedures are thorough in ensuring that only those trainees with the potential to succeed in becoming good or better teachers are selected. Clear pre-entry criteria take account of the most recent national guidance on teacher supply. Representatives from partner schools are routinely involved in the interview process, which is school-based, inclusive and fair but suitably challenging and rigorous.
32. The unforeseen personal reasons that account for the very few occasions when trainees withdraw early, or defer their training, are well documented. Any lessons to be learned are captured and responded to appropriately.
33. SCITT leaders are fully committed to addressing issues of national concern around teachers' workload. Across the provision, a high priority is given to ensuring that trainees' and NQTs' well-being and mental health are protected.

34. Although the partnership makes accurate assessments in relation to the award of QTS, inspectors' evidence at stage 2 indicated that a few of the assessments at the highest level were overgenerous. This was especially so where insufficient account was taken of the impact of trainees' teaching on pupils' progress over time, or trainees' ability to adapt their teaching to the needs of different groups, including for the most able pupils.
35. Leaders know there is more work to do to improve the clarity of the career entry development profiles that trainees produce with their mentors towards the end of the training. This is because the targets in these documents are not always specific enough to help new mentors, from the outset, to continue to improve NQTs' practice as they begin their teaching careers.
36. The SCITT maintains professional development links with NQTs beyond the training, through telephone contact and helpfully planned events to support them during their induction year.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Bishop Stopford's School, Enfield

Hockerill Anglo-European College, Bishop's Stortford

Leventhorpe School, Sawbridgeworth

Manor Fields Primary School, Bishop's Stortford

St Mary's Catholic High School, Bishop's Stortford

Summercroft Primary School, Bishop's Stortford

The Bishop's Stortford High School, Bishop's Stortford

The Hertfordshire and Essex High School and Science College, Bishop's Stortford

Thorley Hill Primary School, Bishop's Stortford

Thorn Grove Primary School, Bishop's Stortford

Windhill21 Primary School, Bishop's Stortford

ITE partnership details

Unique reference number	70353
Inspection number	10040507
Inspection dates	21–23 May 2018
Stage 1	
Stage 2	15–17 October 2018
Lead inspector	Christine Dick HMI
Type of ITE partnership	SCITT
Phases provided	Primary and secondary
Date of previous inspection	N/A
Previous inspection report	N/A
Provider address	BSET SCITT Leventhorpe Cambridge Road Sawbridgeworth CM21 9BY



The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2018