

Anton Andover Alliance SCITT

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 2 July 2018

Stage 2: 3 December 2018

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

The primary phase

Information about the primary partnership

- Anton Andover Alliance is a school-centred initial teacher training provider (SCITT), based at Anton Junior School. It grew out of a local partnership of schools offering the School Direct route into teaching. The SCITT came into being in September 2016, offering School Direct and School Direct (salaried) routes to qualified teacher status (QTS).
- The SCITT works in partnership with around 30 primary, special and independent schools in and around the Test Valley area of Hampshire. Trainees follow either a general primary (five to 11 years) or a primary physical education (PE) specialist programme. They also have the option to study for a professional graduate certificate in education (PGCE) awarded by the University of Winchester.
- The original director of initial teacher training (ITT) left the partnership in summer 2018. A new director, who worked alongside her in 2017/18 as cohort leader, took over in September 2018. The interim headteacher of Anton Junior School is currently the partnership's accounting officer.
- In 2016/17, 30 trainees joined the course. In 2017/18, 46 School Direct and one School Direct (salaried) trainees were recruited. Twenty-nine trainees started training in September 2018.

Information about the primary ITE inspection

- At stage 1, inspectors visited five schools and observed, jointly with their mentors, eight trainees teaching. Inspectors looked at evidence in trainees' files and electronic portfolios to inform their evaluation of how well trainees were meeting the teachers' standards. At stage 2, inspectors visited six schools, including two that are not in the partnership. Seven newly qualified teachers (NQTs) were observed teaching.
- During school visits, inspectors spoke with headteachers, school-based mentors, induction tutors, trainees and NQTs to gather their views about the quality of the partnership's training. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and took account of other evidence about the impact of teaching on pupils' learning over time.
- Inspectors met with SCITT leaders, SCITT mentors and trainers, members of the SCITT board and the chair of governors of Anton Junior School. They looked at training materials and a wide range of the partnership's documentation and records, including those relating to compliance with the criteria for ITT and statutory requirements, including safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 41 responses from trainees to Ofsted's online questionnaire that trainees completed in summer 2018.

Inspection team

Alison Bradley HMI, lead inspector

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Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

Key strengths of the primary partnership

- Recruitment and selection processes are effective in identifying trainees who are well suited to a career in teaching and have the potential to be successful. As a result, completion rates are strong and, by the end of their training, almost all trainees meet the teachers' standards at a good or better level for this point in their career.
- The learning support assistant graduate route into teaching developed by the alliance aids recruitment by providing up to a third of the cohort of trainees each year.
- Employment rates are high. All but two of the trainees completing over the first two years went straight into teaching posts. Around half are employed in partnership schools. Over half of the first cohort have already taken on a subject leadership role.
- Trainees benefit from the expertise and experience of leading practitioners delivering central training. They are well prepared to teach across the primary curriculum.
- NQTs are highly professional and committed to continuing to learn and develop as teachers.
- Trainees' consistently high levels of confidence to promote pupils' good behaviour is borne out in practice. This remains a strength as NQTs establish expectations with their own classes.
- The combination of up-to-date, expert central training and input from placement schools means that that trainees have a well-developed understanding of their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils.

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

The partnership should:

- embed and further enhance quality assurance processes to ensure that school-based training is consistently of the highest quality
- strengthen the involvement of schools across the partnership in recruitment, training and determining the strategic direction of the partnership.

Inspection judgements

1. Leaders' determination to supply good or better teachers for schools in the partnership and surrounding area is bearing fruit. In the partnership's first two years of operation, 73 trainees have completed their training and around half are employed in partnership schools. There are no notable differences in outcomes for any group.
2. Recruitment and selection processes are well designed to test out a passion for, and understanding of, the demands of training and teaching. Very few trainees do not complete the course. Headteachers within and beyond the partnership are, almost without fail, extremely positive about the NQTs who have joined their staff.
3. Trainees are right to be confident that their training will make them good or better teachers, that they will be able to demonstrate how they meet the teachers' standards and that they will secure employment. Virtually all reach the partnership's good or high level by the end of training, and employment rates are very high. The targets NQTs take into their first year of teaching generally support their continuing development well. Most of the first cohort are still in teaching and over half have taken on extra responsibility as a subject leader in their second year of teaching.
4. Leaders' active marketing to recruit graduate learning support assistants (LSAs) with an eye to them becoming the trainee teachers of the future is proving effective. Nine trainees per year have joined the course via the alliance's formal graduate LSA route. The programme gives potential trainees access to relevant development and training, which sets them in good stead to start the School Direct programme or, in some cases, make the decision before training that teaching is not for them.
5. The September residential experience introduced in 2017/18 gets training off to a good start and brings multiple benefits. The trip mirrors taking pupils on a residential visit, so trainees learn about their wider responsibilities as teachers, and see how subjects can be brought to life through first-hand experiences. The time spent together also helps to establish a supportive peer network which trainees draw on over their year together.
6. Centre-based training draws well on expertise within the partnership and the recommendations of the core framework for ITT, including the place of research. Many of the trainers are specialist leaders in education (SLEs). By delivering training in their own schools, with opportunities to observe staff and pupils at work, they broaden trainees' experience and nurture their willingness and appetite to learn from more experienced colleagues. This stays with them as NQTs. They make good use of non-contact time to observe and learn from others and value the contacts they have established, knowing they can go back to them for advice.

7. School-based training involves a range of schools with different socio-economic make-ups and profiles of pupils, for example those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), those who speak English as an additional language and minority ethnic groups. Most schools are good or outstanding. A lower Ofsted grading does not preclude a school joining or staying in the partnership, as long as they can demonstrate that they have the capacity to support trainees.
8. Leaders take good account of feedback from trainees and regularly survey their views on training and the impact they think it is having on their practice. Where a need for change becomes apparent, they are quick to make improvements. For example, when leaders found that the first cohort lacked confidence in teaching phonics, largely because central training came some time before key stage 1 placements for most of them, they organised additional training.
9. An early phonics input to prepare trainees whose main placement is in key stage 1, revisited just ahead of second placements to refresh those who start off in key stage 2, has become the norm. As a result, there was a significant increase in trainees' confidence to teach phonics and promote literacy skills in 2017/18. This matches the levels of competence found during the inspection. Occasionally, NQTs set themselves English targets. This is because they know the curriculum for older primary pupils is demanding or they are teaching an unfamiliar year group, not a reflection of their capability.
10. NQTs are competent and confident in teaching mathematics. Training develops both strong subject knowledge and an understanding of how to deepen pupils' mathematical understanding. This manifests itself in generally accurate teaching, including use of mathematical vocabulary, and getting pupils to explain their working or prove their answer is correct. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
11. Trainees are well prepared to teach across the primary curriculum. Inspectors found this when, for example, they observed art and physical education (PE) lessons and talked to trainees about their training. The expectation that, as part of their school-based training, trainees choose foundation subjects to plan sequences of lessons develops their understanding of how to build pupils' knowledge and skills over time. Consequently, NQTs are well prepared to apply this learning to the subjects they have less experience of teaching. All have benefited from the PE expertise the partnership has been able to access to date and the detailed schemes of work made available to them.
12. NQTs' teaching is structured logically. They typically check on pupils' understanding or recap previous learning before moving on to new teaching, modelling examples and then getting pupils to apply new knowledge and skills. NQTs generally use teaching assistants well to differentiate activities so as to support and challenge different groups of pupils. They use assessment between

lessons effectively to identify any misconceptions that need tackling and to differentiate activities. Some NQTs are adept at assessing and adapting teaching accordingly during lessons; others are still developing this skill.

13. Trainees understand that the quality of their teaching is determined by the impact it has on pupils' learning. They complete tasks during training to track how well small groups of pupils achieve learning objectives. School mentors are expected to discuss pupils' progress with trainees as part of weekly reviews. However, these activities have not focused enough on gains in pupils' learning over time and comments about pupils' progress are sometimes superficial. Hence trainees can find it difficult to articulate the impact they have had on pupils' learning.
14. Nevertheless, the training prepares them well because, with the benefit of a term teaching their own class, most NQTs can talk authoritatively about what their pupils have learned and identify who has made particular strides and who still has gaps. Leaders have strengthened the focus on pupil progress this year and are already planning more radical changes for next year.
15. NQTs feel they have had sufficient grounding in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND or who speak English as an additional language. They appreciate that training cannot cover all scenarios, but know who to go to for support in school. Those who took the opportunity to spend a week in a special school were overwhelmingly positive about the experience and the impact on their practice back in their placement schools.
16. Almost all trainees responding to the online questionnaire in 2016/17 and 2017/18 felt they knew how to promote good behaviour and use a range of behaviour management strategies. This was borne out in practice for the trainees that inspectors observed teaching, even when some pupils exhibited challenging behaviour. These skills are honed by the practice trainees see in placement schools, as well as the partnership tapping into external expertise for central training.
17. Most NQTs have successfully established good relationships and high expectations of behaviour with the pupils in their classes. Some have found the advice from training not to let the first conversation with parents be negative has been really helpful in this respect.
18. Central training in safeguarding is comprehensive and hard-hitting, covering matters such as serious case reviews as well as the 'Prevent' duty, to demonstrate the importance of vigilance. Induction into schools is rigorous and trainees often benefit from whole-school safeguarding training while on placement. As a result, trainees and NQTs have a well-developed understanding of their responsibilities for keeping children safe and the signs to be alert for.

They appreciate how one piece of information on its own may not seem important but how, by sharing, it might prove to be a crucial part of a jigsaw.

19. Over the two stages of the inspection, inspectors came across mixed views on how successful the significant expansion in trainee numbers in 2017/18 was. Evidence of its impact on training and outcomes was also mixed. On the one hand, widening the partnership allowed leaders to introduce additional opportunities, such as a week in a special school and experience of forest schools. They set up electronic systems to track trainees' attainment against the teachers' standards from the centre. This helped them to identify a group at risk of not reaching the partnership's good level in plenty of time and take effective action to support them to improve. Overall, attainment was better, with a greater proportion of trainees reaching the partnership's high level.
20. However, it was also clear that what had worked well for the core of original, established trainers and mentors in closely complementing each other's inputs did not always work on a larger scale. The partnership agreement and course handbook formalise how school placements complement central training and in most instances this works well. However, the finer detail of what schools should provide has not always been explicit enough. As a result, some NQTs feel there are mixed messages and some inconsistencies in their experience as trainees.
21. The bottom line was that, while mentor training in 2017/18 was well received, quality assurance of school-based training was not strong enough at times. In part, this was because SCITT mentors were expected to check things had happened, rather than focus on the quality. SCITT mentors were also spread more thinly, meaning some had not managed to complete all the required visits. In turn, their work was not checked closely enough.
22. New leaders are determined that it is time to take stock in order to refresh training and the way the partnership operates. In light of some of the contradictions from 2017/18, they have sensibly capped trainee numbers for the moment to allow themselves better oversight of quality and the capacity to respond where needed. Documentation has been overhauled to emphasise expectations of school and SCITT mentors.
23. Changes to the staffing structure at the centre mean the new director is better placed to focus on quality rather than administrative tasks. Weekly meetings of the leadership team, comprising the director, administrator, accounting officer and assistant headteacher from Anton Junior School, have been established. These meetings provide helpful support and challenge for the new director to talk through strengths and areas for improvement, and ideas for the future.
24. Anton Junior School has been influential in leading and steering the partnership and original strategic board. However, with significant changes in the school, the director and accounting officer are keen to seize the opportunity to widen

the involvement of other schools in recruitment and training and in the leadership of the SCITT. Through the recently reconstituted strategic management committee and headteacher group, they are sharing more operational information and ideas for the future. This, in turn, is encouraging greater participation. There is, however, more to be done to broaden the involvement and influence of schools across the alliance.

25. The programme is compliant with the criteria for ITT and statutory requirements, including safeguarding.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Abbotswood Junior School, Southampton

Anton Infant School, Andover

Anton Junior School, Andover

Cliddesden Primary, Cliddesden

Croft Primary School, Swindon

Foundry Lane Primary, Southampton

Knightswood Primary School, Chandler's Ford

Portway Infant School, Andover

Portway Junior, Andover

Vigo Primary School, Andover

Wolverdene Special School, Andover

ITE partnership details

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Lead inspector	Alison Bradley HMI
Type of ITE partnership	SCITT
Phases provided	Primary
Date of previous inspection	N/A
Previous inspection report	N/A
Provider address	Anton Junior School Barlows Lane Andover SP10 2HA



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