

Services for Education ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 15 May 2018 Stage 2: 26 November 2018

This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty’s Inspector (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. The inspector 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

- Services for Education (SFE) is a school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) provider. It is based in Birmingham. It offers a School Direct route into primary teaching for both salaried and fee-paying trainees. At the time of stage 1 of the inspection, there were two salaried trainees and nine fee-paying trainees.
- Trainees who successfully complete their training are awarded qualified teacher status (QTS). The course lasts for one year.
- The SCITT currently has 14 schools in its partnership; all are based in Birmingham. Greenholm Primary School is the lead school and main training centre.
- Numbers of trainees are small. In 2017/18, there were 11 primary trainees on the programme. This year, there are 12 trainees.
- Initial teacher training (ITT) was previously managed by Birmingham Advisory Support Services, which was inspected in March 2012. SFE took over the management of the service in September 2013. There have been significant changes since the previous inspection, including three different managers. Training for secondary teaching is no longer offered.
- The SCITT is charity-based and offers reduced course fees of £6,000 per annum.

Information about the primary ITE inspection

- During stage 1 of the inspection, the inspector visited two schools and observed three trainees teach. Two of these trainees were re-visited as newly qualified teachers (NQTs) during stage 2.
- During stage 2 of the inspection, the inspector visited three schools and observed four NQTs teach. Two NQTs visited were employed in non-partnership schools and in a different local authority.
- During both stages of the inspection, the inspector held discussions with trainees, NQTs, school-based mentors and headteachers. The inspector also met with members of the operational management group and the strategic management group. Daily contact was made with the SCITT programme manager and regular feedback provided to the head of the school support service. A meeting was also held with the chief executive officer of SFE.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including 11 responses to the trainees' online questionnaires for summer 2018, training files and pupils' books. In addition, the inspector examined: the provider's self-evaluation of the partnership and improvement plan; training and induction documents; assessment information; mentors' feedback; and trainees' evaluations of training sessions.

- The inspector reviewed career entry profiles, external quality assurance reports and the actions taken by leaders and managers in response to areas identified for improvement at stage 1 of the inspection.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson HMI, lead inspector

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

The key strengths of the primary partnership are:

- Leaders have a strong focus on sustaining and improving the quality of training across the partnership. They are hard-working, dedicated and committed to the continual pursuit of high-quality outcomes for trainees.
- The partnership successfully recruits trainees who are dedicated, reflective and committed to becoming excellent and skilled primary teachers. Many bring much expertise to their training and adapt quickly to the demands of the programme and placements.
- Good-quality training ensures that trainees are 'school-ready' and able to teach across the range of the primary curriculum. They use a number of strategies well to develop pupils' abilities in phonics, reading and early mathematics.
- Trainees have very positive views about their training, the programme and the guidance provided by tutors and mentors. They readily act on feedback in order to improve their practice. Their professional attitudes and attributes underpin the strong gains they make against the teachers' standards.
- Trainees collect a wide range of evidence of pupils' learning and record their results in well-organised files. This helps demonstrate how they meet all the teachers' standards. Outcomes for trainees are consistently good.
- Partnership schools provide good-quality learning experiences and high-quality mentoring for trainees to develop their professional abilities. A good range of schools, serving different neighbourhoods, make up the partnership.
- The provider and school mentors ensure that assessment grades are accurate through systematic checking of trainees' teaching and the evidence collected in their files.
- Trainees develop effective and appropriate strategies to manage pupils' behaviour. They establish clear rules and routines and act as positive role models for pupils. This contributes to the calm, safe and purposeful learning environment they create for pupils.

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

The partnership should:

- extend opportunities for trainees to teach, and be observed teaching, a wider range of subjects in addition to English, mathematics and science
- continue to develop trainees' understanding of how to adapt their teaching to enhance the learning and progress of pupils who have different needs, especially disadvantaged pupils and the most able
- improve the quality of information sent to employing schools so that NQTs are able to build on their strong training more effectively.

Inspection judgements

1. SFE leaders and partnership schools share an ambition for excellence and demonstrate high levels of commitment and dedication to ensuring that trainees are thoroughly prepared for their careers in teaching. Leaders have a clear vision for the future and are relentless in their pursuit of the highest quality of training.
2. The programme manager coordinates the partnership very effectively. He is ably supported both by the previous and current course tutors. Together they provide strong pastoral support for all trainees. They are very responsive to issues that arise. For example, where placements are not suited to individual needs, alternative high-quality provision is quickly sought and additional time given to ensure that trainees' confidence is not diminished and that they do not lose any ground.
3. Leaders responded quickly and positively to address the emerging findings raised at stage 1 of the inspection. This illustrates their proactive and reflective approach to their work. For example, the programme was reviewed and additional sessions added to ensure that trainees received input on the full range of primary subjects and a greater understanding of mastery in English and mathematics. External quality assurance and training were also commissioned to provide greater levels of challenge and support for leaders and provide an objective view of systems in place. Actions taken have already begun to show greater impact on trainees' knowledge and skills and leaders' accountability.
4. Leadership and management have been further strengthened since stage 1 of the inspection. The strategic management group, made up of headteachers from partner schools, has been rejuvenated. It is now providing greater support and challenge to the partnership and is involved fully in formulating and checking documentation, including the self-evaluation document and development plan. New members joining the group are highly experienced and knowledgeable about the requirements of the programme. They show an equal

commitment and desire to produce high-quality NQTs. SFE has also created an operational management group made up of school mentors who contribute to shaping the programme. This revised structure has increased levels of individual contribution from members and has led to greater accountability.

5. Leaders' self-evaluation of the partnership's strengths and weaknesses is accurate and honest. Their thorough and detailed collection and analysis of data and the very good use of stakeholder feedback support their views. A detailed and considered improvement plan has been drawn up to address the issues identified. It is used well to make the changes needed to sustain or further enhance trainees' outcomes. As a result, the partnership demonstrates a good capacity to improve further.
6. The scope, reach and impact of the partnership continue to grow as new schools join the partnership. Leaders are overwhelmingly proactive in making both minor and major changes to training to make sure that current and former trainees receive the best experiences possible. This includes expanding the range of schools within the partnership, including more who are working in challenging circumstances and those who are part of multi-academy trusts.
7. The partnership ensures that trainees are superbly prepared for their careers in teaching. Employing headteachers recognise the strong knowledge, understanding and skills that NQTs bring to their schools. They describe NQTs as being good 'team players' with a strong willingness to ask for and act upon advice. They confirm that NQTs are well prepared for their employment and responsibilities. Trainees acquire a strong understanding of strategies and approaches that they draw upon in their posts as NQTs. They quickly establish themselves as respected professionals and role models for pupils in their care.
8. Procedures for recruiting and selecting trainees with the potential to become excellent teachers are effective. The lead school carefully coordinates and manages this aspect. It ensures that applicants offered places are suited to working with children. A range of activities is used to assess interviewees' skills and knowledge, including their use of standard written and spoken English, to ensure that they model accuracy in the classroom. The effectiveness of selection procedures is evident in the high employment rate and low number of withdrawals from the programme.
9. The course tutor and school mentors regularly monitor and assess trainees' progress. Regular observations, discussions and assignments are used to gauge how well trainees are meeting the teachers' standards. Well-targeted feedback enables trainees to address areas for improvement. The partnership's tracking document shows that trainees make good progress during their training and all exceed the required standards by the time they complete the programme.

10. SFE leaders are aware of, and mindful of, trainees' workload and well-being. They have adapted and reduced the time spent on course assignments and have minimised the number of lesson plans trainees need to complete. They provide clear advice on marking and feedback and how this can be managed efficiently. Additional individual support is also always available, and trainees report how approachable and supportive the programme manager and tutor are.
11. High-quality training ensures that trainees constantly see the links between theory and practice. Frequent opportunities for trainees to apply what they have learned in a wide and diverse range of schools, including those in challenging socio-economic circumstances, were cited by trainees and NQTs as strengths. The approach to course assignments has been changed this year to instil this connection even further. Task-based activities have been introduced to replace formal written assignments. Trainees draw on their creative and collaborative skills to present their action research findings. For example, working in groups, trainees produced posters to depict 'how pupils learn'. The results were then presented to their peers as part of their autumn assessment. This new approach enables trainees to transfer the skills and strategies used in their own learning to their daily teaching. It has also successfully reduced their workload.
12. Centre-based training at the lead school is delivered well by experienced practitioners within the partnership, SFE leaders and external specialists. Training focuses sharply on developing strategies and knowledge to teach different subjects, manage pupils' behaviour and be vigilant to safeguarding issues. As a result, trainees have a well-developed knowledge and understanding of the primary curriculum and how children learn, behave and develop. They realise the importance of pupils feeling safe at school and the actions they must take where concerns are raised. Evaluations of their training are exceptionally positive. They show that sessions delivered are equally well received. On the rare occasions that training is less effective, leaders act and change who or how a session is delivered.
13. While almost all trainees were found to have had some experience of teaching the full primary curriculum, a very small number have not had an opportunity to teach physical education (PE). NQTs commented that, during their training, opportunities to teach, assess and receive feedback on non-core subjects, such as art, music or PE, were less extensive. Trainees' files confirm that this is the case. Leaders have already begun to respond to this feedback. Contact has been made with an external consultant and discussions held with the course tutor to review this aspect.
14. Trainees receive good training in the teaching of early reading and phonics. They have good subject knowledge and maximise every opportunity to integrate pupils' reading and phonics knowledge into other lessons.

Assignments are also linked to this aspect to help trainees evaluate the impact of their teaching on pupils' progress in early reading and phonics. For example, trainees select a group of pupils to whom they will teach a series of phonics lessons. They assess them at the outset and then again after a series of lessons. Not only does this help trainees to evaluate the impact of their teaching but adds to and extends their use of assessment.

15. Trainees and NQTs have a suitable level of confidence and competence in teaching mathematics. They have good subject knowledge and are aware of the range of approaches, available resources and the necessary skills to secure pupils' development. They have had further training on teaching at greater depth in mathematics and there was some early evidence of this seen in pupils' books during stage 2 of the inspection. Occasionally, the slow pace of lessons and lack of challenge prevent pupils, particularly the most able, from making the progress of which they are capable.
16. Trainees and NQTs have a good understanding of how to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Many spoke positively about the impact of their visit to a special school during their training to observe how teachers manage and cater for pupils' individual needs. They are also adept and skilled at catering for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Trainees and NQTs adapt activities well and deploy teaching assistants effectively. This ensures that pupils who have additional needs receive the support needed to make good progress.
17. Trainees are less proficient at meeting the needs of the most able pupils. Occasionally, lessons lack pace and questions posed do not promote deeper thinking. Work in pupils' books shows that expectations are sometimes too low and work is not challenging enough. As a result, the most able pupils do not build sufficiently on their existing skills and knowledge or make the progress they should. Trainees and NQTs also have limited knowledge and understanding of their role in tackling achievement gaps for disadvantaged pupils. This is because this information has not been shared well enough during their training.
18. The partnership makes sure that trainees benefit from suitable and good-quality school placements. These provide valuable opportunities to learn from good and outstanding practitioners. Effective mentoring and support enable trainees to be immersed quickly into teaching and accepted readily as members of staff. Experience in contrasting school placements ensures that NQTs are well prepared to work in schools serving diverse communities and those in challenging socio-economic circumstances. The recent expansion of the partnership has led to an increased opportunity for trainees to work in schools that Ofsted judges to require improvement in order to be good.

19. Very effective oral and written feedback from well-trained mentors is enabling trainees to make good progress. Mentors are enthusiastic about their roles and take their responsibility seriously. They provide good-quality practical advice and rightly focus on pupils' progress. Through mentors' patience and empathy, together with encouragement, precise feedback and suitable targets, trainees are able to reflect, adapt and improve their practice. The programme tutor provides ongoing training for mentors. Regular visits and joint observations of trainees between mentors and the tutor are used to check that judgements are accurate. External moderation carried out at the end of the programme shows this to be the case.
20. Most trainees and NQTs have high expectations, which are reflected in the quality and presentation of classroom displays and work in pupils' books. Trainees and NQTs have a good presence in the classroom and quickly earn pupils' respect and trust. The strong rapport they establish with pupils, other staff and parents leads to warm relationships, calm classrooms and happy pupils who enjoy their learning. Trainees' files are well organised and provide convincing evidence to show that they are meeting each area of the teachers' standards.
21. Trainees and NQTs demonstrate well-developed skills in managing pupils' behaviour. Discerning use of praise, consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve and the setting up of agreed rules and routines all help trainees and NQTs to maintain discipline and instil effective attitudes to learning.
22. Trainees are astute and honest in their evaluations of their abilities. They create a career profile entry at the end of their training which identifies their own strengths and weaknesses in relation to the teachers' standards. While these are checked by SFE leaders, they are not translated into specific targets or sent to employing schools. The onus rests on the trainee to inform their employers of their final grade and areas for development. This lack of communication and transfer of transition information to the employing school reduces the NQTs' ability to get off to a swift start and does not add any value to the start of their teaching career. SFE leaders are aware of this issue and are keen to address it.
23. At the end of their training programme, all trainees exceed the minimum expectations of their practice as set out in the teachers' standards. Overall, trainees demonstrate a good quality of teaching. A good proportion complete the programme with the highest levels of attainment. As the numbers of trainees are small, it is not possible to determine if there are discernible differences in attainment between different groups.
24. Completion rates are increasing year on year. Almost all trainees complete their training. The small number who leave the course receive substantial support before they do so. Leaders do everything in their power to help a trainee reach

the standards required. However, they are clear that where trainees do not invest the time, effort and commitment needed, they have no hesitation in asking them to leave the course as they do not meet the requirements to become a good teacher. SFE makes a strong contribution to the supply of good and better teachers in local schools.

25. In 2016 and 2017, all trainees who completed the course gained employment at the end of their training. A very small number of trainees in 2018 chose not to seek employment as teachers immediately for personal reasons. However, all former trainees are eminently suitable for careers in teaching and met the teachers' standards at a good level.
26. The partnership fully complies with the ITT criteria. It has robust systems in place to check and verify that trainees have the relevant qualifications. It also meets all relevant safeguarding and other statutory requirements for promoting equality and diversity.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Gossey Lane Junior and Infant School, Birmingham

Great Bridge Primary School, Sandwell

Greenholm Primary School, Birmingham

The Cape Primary School, Sandwell

ITE partnership details

Unique Reference Number	70180
Inspection number	10040499
Inspection dates	15 May 2018
Stage 1	
Stage 2	26 November 2018
Lead inspector	Heather Simpson HMI
Type of ITE partnership	SCITT
Phases provided	Primary
Date of previous inspection	26–30 March 2012
Previous inspection report	https://report.ofsted.gov.uk/70180
Provider address	Services for Education Unit 3, Holt Court Holt Street Birmingham B7 4AX

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