

St Joseph's College Stoke Secondary Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 11 June 2018 Stage 2: 19 November 2018

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one Ofsted Inspector (OI) 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?	2
The outcomes for trainees	2
The quality of training across the partnership	2
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	2

Secondary route

Information about this ITE partnership

- The St Joseph's College Stoke Secondary Partnership provides school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) for graduates who wish to teach in the secondary (11 to 16) phase. It is part of the St Joseph's College Teaching School Alliance and is based on the site of St Joseph's College. There are 10 secondary schools in the partnership.
- Trainees who successfully complete their training are recommended for qualified teacher status (QTS). In 2017/18, 23 trainees were recruited to the programme. The subjects they were trained to teach included English, mathematics, biology, art and design, physical education, history, geography, music and drama.
- The partnership is overseen by a steering group made up of partner school headteachers and mentors. Its day-to-day operations are managed by its management board, which comprises St Joseph's College's director of teaching school, its ITE programme leader, its quality assurance and development leader and the SCITT's administrator. A development group, consisting of mentors and specialist leaders of education (SLE), advises the management board on operational issues.
- The partnership works in collaboration with the Stoke-on-Trent Mathematics Excellence Partnership (MEP). This is a local project aiming to train and retain specialist mathematics teachers.
- The partnership has provided ITE since September 2013, having replaced the Stoke-on-Trent GTP Partnership, which was previously inspected in June 2012.

Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- During stage 1, inspectors visited six schools. Ten trainees were observed teaching and receiving feedback from their mentors. Inspectors held discussions with trainees, mentors, school coordinators, headteachers and a group of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) who had completed their training with the partnership the previous year. A training session was observed. Inspectors met with members of the partnership's quality assurance team, its director of research and a representative of the Stoke-on-Trent MEP. Inspectors reviewed evidence in trainees' files in relation to the teachers' standards and documentation relating to the partnership's compliance with the initial teacher training (ITT) criteria.
- During stage 2, inspectors observed seven former trainees in their schools. They met with NQTs, induction tutors, headteachers and former trainees who are now middle leaders. They also spoke on the telephone to one NQT, one induction tutor and the chair of the SCITT's steering group. Inspectors observed a meeting of the development group.
- Across both stages of the inspection, inspectors met with subject leaders and several representatives of the partnership's steering and development groups.

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.

Inspection team

Alun Williams HMI, lead inspector

Dan Owen HMI, assistant lead inspector (stage 1)

Sara Arkle, OI, assistant lead inspector (stage 2)

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

Key strengths of the secondary partnership

- Leaders provide a clear moral purpose for the SCITT. This is to provide local schools with high-quality teachers and so improve children's life chances. They are successful in achieving this aim, as indicated by the quality of NQTs from the partnership who take up posts in local schools
- During its five years of operation, almost all trainees have completed their training and secured employment as teachers. Many have moved into positions of leadership in local schools and very few have left the profession.
- Provision for training mathematics teachers is very effective. The number and quality of mathematics teachers in local schools who trained with the SCITT reflect the significant part it plays in improving the teaching of mathematics in Stoke-on-Trent.
- Partner schools are thoroughly involved in the SCITT. They support its aims and contribute fully to its work at all levels. Their commitment contributes well to the good outcomes trainees achieve.
- The SCITT provides excellent care and support for trainees, from the point of recruitment through to finding employment at the end of the course.
- Trainees are well prepared to manage behaviour and for the breadth of responsibility in the teaching profession, including behaving professionally and making a wider contribution to school life.

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

The partnership should:

- ensure that the remits of the governors' standards committee and the SCITT steering group are clear and understood by all, and provide sufficient scrutiny of the management board's work

- improve arrangements for supporting trainees as they move into employment by providing them with targets that are well matched to their development needs and will help them to further improve their teaching.

Inspection judgements

1. Over its five years of operation, outcomes for trainees have been consistently good. All trainees who have completed their course have exceeded the minimum level of practice expected of teachers. Typically, the great majority of trainees are judged as good, with between one third and one half judged as outstanding.
2. Completion rates compare favourably with national benchmarks and almost all trainees complete their course. Very few fail to secure employment as teachers. Leaders' tracking of previous trainees' employment shows that almost all continue in the teaching profession. In each of the SCITT's five cohorts to date, at most one ex-trainee has left teaching. Completion and employment rates have been particularly strong in mathematics and history.
3. Trainees are well prepared to be teachers. Several trainees told inspectors that they had found the transition from trainee to NQT smooth and seamless. They attributed this to the training year's design, with gradually increasing teaching load and responsibility. Several said that their first term as an NQT felt very similar to their final term as a trainee. Employing schools, both within the partnership and outside of it, believe that the SCITT provides them with high-quality NQTs.
4. Trainees are well prepared for the expectations placed on teachers in terms of personal and professional conduct. Trainees and NQTs understand what is meant by professional conduct. They become involved in the wider life of the school and, consequently, several take up positions of leadership in the early years of their careers. They are well prepared to teach pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and understand how to adapt their teaching to meet these pupils' needs.
5. The SCITT's central training programme, delivered on Wednesday afternoons, has been thoughtfully constructed to ensure that trainees are well prepared for what is required of them in their placement schools. Mentors in placement schools build upon and add to this training well. Consequently, as the year progresses, trainees develop increasing confidence and expertise.
6. Subject-specific training is of a high quality. All trainees complete an audit of their subject knowledge at the start of the year and subsequent training is personalised and targeted towards key knowledge and individual need. Central training sessions, run by SLEs, are supplemented well by mentors in placement schools and trainees are expected to put their training into practice. Consequently, by the end of their course, trainees develop an effective

understanding of the curriculum and assessment practice. Training for mathematics trainees is particularly effective. In addition to the bespoke training that others receive, they benefit from additional development opportunities through Stoke-on-Trent's MEP.

7. Trainees benefit from effective mentoring in both of their placement schools. Mentors are well trained and clear about their roles and responsibilities. They develop trusting relationships with trainees, model effective practice and provide excellent support throughout the placement.
8. Mentors make regular and accurate assessments of trainees throughout the year. They provide trainees with developmental targets to improve their teaching. The quality of these targets has improved steadily because of leaders' focus on ensuring they are sharp, specific and understood by the mentor and trainee. Mentors also agree targets with trainees at the end of the training year and these are passed to employing schools as part of a 'career development entry profile' (CDEP). These targets are too often not useful. Some are too vague and therefore not understood by trainees. Others are not well matched to those areas of teaching the trainee needs to develop as an NQT. Consequently, employing schools do not generally make use of the targets contained in the CDEP.
9. Leaders ensure that all trainees have two placements in contrasting schools. Several trainees told inspectors how much they had valued their second placement, even though it was only six weeks long. Trainees also spend a week in a primary school to develop an understanding of pupils' experience before they move to secondary school. Following feedback from trainees which suggested that this week's purpose was not as clear as it might be, leaders have strengthened this experience with the addition of a handbook and a focused task to be completed during the placement.
10. Training in managing behaviour is highly effective. Central training occurs at the start of the year and again later in the course. It is built upon well by mentors in placement schools, which include schools causing concern and those requiring improvement. Consequently, NQTs manage behaviour well. They build good relationships with pupils, make their expectations clear and use the school's behaviour systems effectively. They understand the importance of keeping pupils safe, for example from bullying.
11. Leaders have a very clear and persuasive vision for the SCITT's purpose. They are determined that the SCITT should help to improve education in Stoke-on-Trent and therefore enhance the life chances of local children and young people. They have a clear commitment to equality and diversity. In the five years of the SCITT's operation, it has produced more than 85 teachers, several in shortage subjects, and most are still employed in local schools. Some local schools have many staff who were trained by the SCITT and several are in

leadership roles. One local headteacher told inspectors, 'The SCITT has been a significant part of my school's improvement journey.'

12. The SCITT engages well in local partnerships. It plays an important part in the MEP, the Stoke-on-Trent Schools' Improvement Group (SIG) and the Stoke-on-Trent Association of School, College and Academy Leaders (SASCAL). Consequently, leaders have a clear idea of local need and seek to address gaps in the local teaching force. For example, the SCITT consistently recruits more trainees in mathematics than in any other subject. These become successful teachers in local schools.
13. Partner schools are thoroughly involved in many aspects of the SCITT's operation. They take part in recruitment. They provide placements and generally high-quality mentoring. They are fully involved in quality-assurance activities and some sit on the SCITT's development and steering groups. Partner schools hold the SCITT in high regard.
14. Leaders reflect on the SCITT's effectiveness and continually seek ways to improve its performance. To this end, leaders have recently increased the membership of the management board in order to improve leadership capacity. Leaders reacted with energy to the emerging areas for improvement from stage 1 of the inspection, putting in place clear plans to address these areas. For example, they have reviewed the requirements for trainees' record-keeping; improved training on the needs of disadvantaged pupils and revised their grading of trainees to identify potential performance issues at an earlier stage.
15. Stage 1 of the inspection identified some weakness in the SCITT's scrutiny of the management board. Although this was part of the steering group's remit, the group had not carried out sufficiently detailed checks, leading to potential compliance issues with some ITT criteria. At stage 2, all issues had been addressed and the SCITT now complies with all aspects of the ITT criteria and all its statutory duties, including safeguarding. Additional scrutiny is to be provided by the standards committee of St. Joseph's governing body. However, at the time of inspection, this was yet to take place. The specific remits of, and relationship between, the standards committee and the SCITT steering group have not yet been determined.
16. Recruitment and selection procedures are rigorous and effective, with a clear focus on equality and diversity. A broad range of activities ensure that successful candidates have the potential to become good teachers.
17. Leaders, SLEs and mentors provide excellent care for trainees, from recruitment, through their course and to the point of starting their teaching career. Several trainees told inspectors of the care they had been given when they were finding things challenging or when personal circumstances were

difficult. They particularly valued the support that leaders and mentors provided when they were making applications for employment.

18. Rigorous and regular checks made by members of the SCITT's quality assurance team ensure that mentors' assessments of trainees are accurate.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

The Discovery Academy, Stoke-on-Trent

St Thomas More Catholic Academy, Stoke-on-Trent

The Excel Academy, Stoke-on-Trent

Haywood Academy, Stoke-on-Trent

St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy, Stoke-on-Trent

St. Joseph's College, Stoke-on-Trent

Wolstanton High School, Newcastle-under-Lyme

Cheadle Academy, Stoke-on-Trent

ITE partnership details

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Previous inspection report	https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/41/70243
Provider address	St Joseph’s College London Road Trent Vale Stoke-on-Trent ST4 5NT



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