

East Sussex Teacher Training Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 11 June 2018 Stage 2: 10 December 2018

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) 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

- The East Sussex Teacher Training Partnership is a school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) provider. Trainees follow a general primary programme (five to 11 years). Training takes place in approximately 26 schools and academies across East Sussex and in neighbouring local authorities.
- Trainees who successfully complete their training are recommended for qualified teacher status (QTS) and may also gain a postgraduate certificate of education from the University of Brighton.
- The partnership of schools, academies and East Sussex local authority was initially established as a graduate teacher training programme in 1999. The lead training schools in the partnership are Robsack Wood Primary Academy, Iford and Kingston Church of England Primary, Manor Primary School, Newick Teaching School and The Haven Voluntary Aided Church of England/Methodist Primary School.
- The leadership and management of the programme transferred from the local authority to Robsack Wood Primary Academy in September 2018. At the same time, the chair of the strategic management group changed from a headteacher to a senior manager from the local authority.
- During 2017/18, there were 25 trainees: eight School Direct and 17 School Direct (salaried). In 2018/19, there are 21 trainees: five School Direct and 16 School Direct (salaried).
- The partnership also supports teachers new to the profession.

Information about the primary ITE inspection

- There were two inspectors at both stages of the inspection.
- At stage 1 of the inspection, inspectors visited six schools, observing eight trainees teaching. The observations were carried out with the trainees' school-based tutors. The inspectors observed the tutors giving feedback to the trainees, held discussions with the trainees, school-based tutors and school leaders, and looked at the trainees' files, which included an analysis of trainees' evidence towards meeting the teachers' standards.
- Inspectors also met with trainers, link tutors and a further group of school-based trainers and tutors in one of the lead schools to discuss the effectiveness of the training.
- At stage 2, inspectors visited six schools to observe seven newly qualified teachers (NQTs) teaching. They scrutinised documentation, met the NQTs' induction tutors and the schools' headteachers. Inspectors met with a further NQT and two of the current trainees, and had a telephone discussion with a school-based tutor.

- Inspectors had discussions with programme leaders and strategic management group members, including the chairs, during both stages of the inspection and considered a wide range of evidence. This included: recruitment and selection procedures; data on trainees' progress, attainment, completion and employment rates; evidence of compliance with statutory safeguarding and initial teacher training requirements; training documentation; tracking and assessment information; and induction targets. Inspectors also reviewed the partnership's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors took account of 18 trainees' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire completed in summer 2018.
- Inspectors reviewed documentation and considered the actions taken by leaders and managers to improve training and outcomes between the two stages of the inspection.

Inspection team

Sheena MacDonald OI, overall lead

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Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

Key strengths of the primary partnership

- The programme equips the trainees well, so that they make a strong start to their teaching careers. It also makes a valuable contribution to the supply of good teachers in the local area. Almost all trainees complete the programme, gain employment and achieve well.
- Trainees and NQTs are highly professional and have a very secure understanding of their wider roles and responsibilities, including those relating to ensuring pupils' safety and well-being.
- Trainees and NQTs provide interesting, stimulating learning activities so that pupils are engaged, behave well and are keen to learn. They demonstrate good subject knowledge in English and mathematics.
- Centre- and school-based training is highly regarded by trainees, particularly in mathematics. Trainees appreciate, and benefit from, numerous opportunities to visit a wide range of schools, learning from practising teachers.
- The extended and contrasting placements enable trainees to develop their skills so that they have a good understanding of potential barriers to success for pupils and the strategies to deal with these, for example supporting pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Very real and strong partnership working results in school colleagues who play important roles in all aspects of the programme and are influential in ensuring the programme is relevant and up to date.

- Leaders are committed to raising expectations and ensuring the programme continues to improve. This is evident in the actions taken since stage 1 of the inspection and in the emerging evidence of the positive impact of these actions.

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

The partnership should:

- increase the proportion of trainees who achieve exceptionally well against the teaching standards
- make sure that all trainees have opportunities to plan and teach across the full primary curriculum
- ensure it is clear to all involved what evidence should be gathered and how it is used to arrive at ongoing and final assessments, so that there is greater consistency across the partnership.

Inspection judgements

1. The outcomes, quality of training, leadership and management and the overall effectiveness of the East Sussex Teacher Training Partnership are good. The programme makes a valuable contribution to the supply of high-quality teachers to the local area. This is particularly important in an area where schools, and recruitment, are often challenging.
2. Headteachers and school staff feel that they are part of a true partnership where their knowledge and skills are valued. They comment positively on the benefits of the programme, not just on its impact on local recruitment but also in developing the expertise of existing staff. They, and trainees, are confident that recruitment and selection systems are rigorous so that only trainees capable of achieving well are selected.
3. Trainees achieve well and outcomes are good. All trainees who are awarded QTS at the end of their course exceed the minimum levels of practice outlined in the teachers' standards. Over time, most of the trainees' practice in relation to the teachers' standards is good. About a third of trainees demonstrate excellent practice, a proportion that has remained static over the past two years.
4. Completion and employment rates have improved over the last three years, so that now they are at or above national and regional norms. Employment rates are particularly high for the 2017/18 cohort, with all gaining their first teaching post and now on the verge of successfully completing their first full term as NQTs.
5. Inspection evidence showed that trainees are highly professional and demonstrate a good practical knowledge and understanding of issues around

keeping children safe. They are alert for the signs which might signal possible neglect or radicalisation. They take account of matters such as pupils' well-being, keeping safe and online safety, and promote equal opportunities and fundamental values in their everyday teaching.

6. Most trainees have real presence in the classrooms and are particularly good at managing behaviour and promoting good attitudes to learning. Warm relationships, good behaviour and purposeful attitudes to learning were seen in all inspection observations. They plan lessons which are carefully structured, and often lively and interesting, and try to take account of the needs of different groups of pupils.
7. Planning and evaluation of teaching are strongly focused on the outcomes for pupils. Trainees and NQTs understand the barriers to learning experienced by pupils with different needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and often adapt plans to support these pupils. At this point in their teaching careers, however, trainees' skill in using assessment during lessons, to adapt teaching and move the learning on quickly, is less well developed. They are less confident about ensuring that the challenge is sufficient to really stretch all pupils, including the most able. Linked to this is variation in practice in the effective deployment of teaching assistants. The NQTs seen, on the other hand, were reflective and evaluative and therefore have themselves identified meeting the needs of the most able as an ongoing target for development into their induction year.
8. Trainees and NQTs observed demonstrated secure subject knowledge in mathematics and English and were able to reinforce pupils' understanding and pre-empt misconceptions. They made good use of subject-specific vocabulary and questioning to promote and prompt effective learning. Pupils responded using the same vocabulary and learned about aspects such as the features of different types of text, including reported text and poetry, and about concepts such as inverse functions in mathematics.
9. The responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire show that some trainees are a little less confident about teaching early reading using phonics. During the inspection, however, some highly effective phonics teaching was observed. Headteachers and school-based staff are confident that trainees and NQTs are having a positive impact on pupils' progress, including in early reading.
10. During the inspection, some very good science teaching was observed; however, there was little evidence in trainees' files that they were given many opportunities, or expected, to teach the broader curriculum. It is clear that, where a school fully commits to its training role and the trainee is proactive, there are opportunities to teach across the broad curriculum. Where schools have not fully embraced this role or fully understood the expectations, some trainees have had fewer opportunities. This has a negative impact on their

confidence to teach the full range of curriculum subjects. It is particularly evident from their responses, both in person and in the trainee online questionnaire, that some lack experience and confidence in their ability to teach physical education.

11. Leaders have taken action to improve this for the current cohort, through the inclusion of school-based learning tasks linked to central training, involving observation and teaching of different subjects. There is some early evidence that this is already having an impact in ensuring that the current trainees are engaging with the broader curriculum. However, there is more to be done to ensure that the expectations and enhanced requirements are explicit so that no trainees slip through the crack.
12. Trainees and NQTs rate the central training highly because it is often exciting, thought-provoking and practical. The range and diversity of schools used for training and the involvement of current practitioners as trainers are real strengths. The training sessions take place in various schools, including those in challenging socio-economic circumstances, those requiring improvement and some where pupils come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Trainees, therefore, appreciate how schools tackle challenges and learn that schools can be effective in different ways.
13. Trainees also benefit from extended placements in contrasting schools and differing age groups. As a result, they are well prepared to teach in a variety of schools, including those in a variety of challenging circumstances. They develop a good understanding of strategies to deal with aspects such as teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language.
14. Training sessions provide a good balance between practice and theory, with trainers combining up-to-date practice with reference to relevant research. Trainees and NQTs are particularly positive about the training in mathematics, which many say is transformative, boosting their understanding and their confidence in teaching mathematics.
15. Leaders have carefully considered the programme design to ensure it is current and equips trainees well for a career in teaching. The training programme is generally well organised and coherent, with sensible links between school-based tasks, centre-based training and assignments. Trainees' evaluations of training are gathered immediately and regularly so that, if issues arise, they can be addressed rapidly. The trainers amend the content to meet the needs of trainees throughout the year.
16. Leaders have taken the opportunity provided by the transfer of responsibilities to carry out an in-depth review and revision of the programme so that there is even greater coherence between centre- and school-based training. The timing of some training activities has been revised and expectations about what

trainees need to experience and record in school have been made more explicit.

17. The quality of mentoring is generally valuable and appreciated by the trainees in helping them to identify targets and move their practice on. Mentor feedback sessions observed during the inspection were clearly focused on pupils' learning and gave trainees good opportunities to reflect on, and evaluate, their own successes, weaknesses and next steps.
18. The roles and responsibilities of link tutors, school-based tutors and class-based tutors are generally well understood, and the layered approach to support and training works well in most instances. There is clarity about the requirements for training and placements, and this is being strengthened further this year. School-based tutors comment on the value and high quality of their training in helping them carry out their role effectively. They particularly appreciate the opportunity to moderate the trainees' evidence files along with other tutors. Link tutors have a key role in summarising trainees' progress at key points and also assuring the quality and impact of school support.
19. However, although inspectors confirmed the accuracy of the partnership's judgements about how well trainees teach, the recorded evidence showed variation in practice between class-based tutors, school-based tutors and link tutors. As a result, there was confusion among trainees about what should, or could, be included in their evidence files. There were some differences about what evidence is used to make summative judgements. For example, some tutors used a broad evidence base beyond the lesson observations to grade against the teachers' standards. Others only graded what is evident in the formal lesson observations. There were also inconsistencies in the completion and quality of the records of weekly meetings and the class-based tutors' monitoring records.
20. Some of these inconsistencies have been clarified for the current group of trainees and there is some early evidence that the changes are resulting in improvements. For example, there are now more regular summaries of progress against the teachers' standards and increased opportunities for trainees to experience, and to receive feedback on, teaching across the wider curriculum. However, trainees and school-based staff lack sufficient specific guidance and explicit requirements in relation to the contents of their evidence files, assignments, curriculum coverage and criteria to be used to grade against the teachers' standards.
21. All employing schools receive useful transition information. This is being used very effectively to support induction and, as a result, all of the NQTs seen are making a strong start to their teaching career. This process has been improved significantly for the current year. The revised transition information provides more depth and the targets are more precise.

22. Leaders use an appropriate range of evidence, including an analysis of outcomes and feedback from trainees and schools, to identify areas for improvement and inform action-planning. Actions taken have resulted in improvements such as rising completion and employment rates.
23. In the past, however, the management group has not always fully scrutinised the evidence it gathers in order to ask challenging questions and hold leaders fully to account. As a result, there were instances when quality assurance was not rigorous and concerns not addressed quickly enough. At the time of stage 1 of the inspection, there were two instances which needed urgent attention. Both of these concerns were addressed thoroughly and comprehensively so that the partnership now meets its legislative requirements regarding equality and diversity, discrimination and safeguarding. The partnership complies with the statutory criteria for ITT.
24. The records of the strategic management group meetings show that members have increased their rigour and are more incisive. They use a range of evidence, including trainee feedback, to evaluate the quality and the impact of provision and hold leaders to account more effectively.
25. Leaders are raising expectations about how well trainees should be achieving and about the quality of the training. They are building on an already strong programme and knowledge of the partner schools' strengths and weaknesses. They have implemented more rigorous approaches to ensure the early identification of any concerns or potential weaknesses arising from inexperienced school partners and the action needed to address them.
26. Leaders have a clear vision and are committed to making rapid improvements to ensure the best possible training is being provided. They are realistic about what the partnership has achieved and what more can be done to strive for excellence. In the relatively short time since the transfer of responsibility for the programme, leaders have completed a thorough review and revision of documents, guidance, agreement policies and proformas. Some changes are already having a noticeable impact, such as the earlier engagement with the broader curriculum for some trainees.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Ark Castledown Primary Academy, Hastings

Hankham Primary School, Hankham, Pevensey

Hellingly Community Primary School, Hailsham

Manor Primary School, Uckfield

Motcombe Community Infant School, Eastbourne,

Parkside Primary School, Heathfield

Robsack Wood Primary Academy, St Leonards on Sea

St Paul's CE Primary Academy, St Leonards on Sea

Sandown Primary School, Hastings

Silverdale Primary Academy, St Leonards on Sea

Wallands Community Primary School, Lewes

ITE partnership details

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Stage 2	10–12 December 2018
Lead inspector	Sheena MacDonald
Type of ITE partnership	SCITT
Phases provided	Primary
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Previous inspection report	https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/41/70193
Provider address	Robsack Wood Primary Academy Whatlington Way St Leonards on Sea East Sussex TN38 9TE



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