

Middlesbrough College

Middlehaven, Dock Street, Middlesbrough TS2 1AD

Inspection dates

10–13 May 2021

Inspection judgements

Further education age-phase

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education and training

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

N/A

What is it like to be a trainee at this ITE provider?

Most trainees develop their subject-specific knowledge well because of effective placements with high-quality providers. The large majority of trainees receive effective support from their mentors and other staff in their placement settings. For example, mentors and managers in a number of departments at Middlesbrough College ensure that trainees have or develop the appropriate subject-specific knowledge to teach on a range of programmes.

Staff in placement settings help trainees to develop a rounded understanding of the practical realities of teaching. For example, departmental staff at Middlesbrough College include trainees in meetings and ensure that trainees understand local safeguarding policies and practices well. Many trainees benefit from links with other professionals, including those involved with learner support, while on placement.

ITE staff model the use of innovative software well, so trainees learn to use this effectively with their own students.

The centre-based programme does not provide trainees with sufficient insight into up-to-date and pertinent educational theory and research in relation to planning a curriculum or the use of effective teaching and assessment methods.

During a period of frequent staff changes, ITE staff have not provided consistently effective communication with, and feedback to trainees. Some trainees have therefore not made all the progress of which they are capable.

Information about this ITE provider

- The college provides ITE programmes validated by the Open University (OU) for the further education sector (FES).
- There are 37 trainees at the provider, of whom 29 are on part-time programmes and eight are studying full time. There are 25 trainees enrolled on the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and 12 on the Certificate in Education.
- There are 26 trainees on placements at Middlesbrough College. The remainder are on placements at Caedmon College based at Whitby Sixth Form College, Askham Bryan College, the NHS, Brook Advisory Service Stockton-on-Tees, the Northern School of Art, Westlands Academy, Teesside University, and OpenReach Thornaby Regional Learning Centre.
- The Northern School of Art is an outstanding provider. Teesside University is an outstanding provider of apprenticeship provision. Middlesbrough College, Askham Bryan College, Caedmon College and Westlands Academy are all good providers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team consisted of two Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI).
- Inspectors spoke with Middlesbrough College's principal and chief executive, the deputy principal/chief executive, the assistant principal of faculty, the director of higher education, the associate director of curriculum/temporary programme leader, the director of teaching and learning/student development, the teaching and learning manager, the vice-principal quality and performance, the governor higher education representative, the executive director human resources, the human resources manager, the vice-principal students, the student support services manager, and curriculum managers in hair and beauty, arts, English, and health and social care. They also spoke to the following OU staff: the deputy director for partnerships, the senior quality manager and an academic reviewer.
- Inspectors spoke to 19 current trainees and three former trainees.
- Inspectors undertook focused reviews in hair and beauty, English, the NHS 'positive approaches' course, full-time trainees in placements at Middlesbrough College, and arts/media/publishing.
- Inspectors communicated with staff and trainees in placements at Middlesbrough College and at four further placement settings as part of the inspection.

What does the ITE provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Most trainees benefit from the support and expertise of staff in placement settings. For example, trainees in the NHS are supported by knowledgeable, experienced mentors who have received mentor training from the NHS. NHS mentors explain theoretical and

practical aspects of the subject-specific curriculum thoroughly. This helps trainees to develop their subject knowledge well.

Tutors model a wide range of helpful online resources, including some received from the OU. Trainees benefit from the OU's long expertise in online teaching and adapt these resources effectively for their own teaching. For example, they use engaging online quizzes well to check their students' progress. This has been particularly useful during recent periods of remote teaching and learning.

Managers recruit trainees effectively to fill local and regional demand for teachers in a range of further education settings. This includes at Middlesbrough College itself and at other partner settings, such as the NHS. Most trainees complete their courses successfully and gain or retain relevant employment, sometimes in positions of increased responsibility.

ITE staff do not include in the programme enough about recent, pertinent research or evidence-based approaches in relation to planning and teaching a curriculum. Trainees are therefore unable to apply a knowledge of up-to-date educational theory in their written work and in their teaching. Teachers comment on this when marking written work, but do not adjust the curriculum to help trainees develop more effective knowledge and skills. Instead, trainees often learn and apply, uncritically, outdated and contested theoretical perspectives about teaching and learning. Managers have recently taken action to improve the specialist knowledge of ITE staff to enable them to update the curriculum, but it is too soon to see the impact.

Significant changes in staffing over the last year have had a negative impact on the quality of education that trainees receive. In some cases, staff are not sufficiently familiar with what trainees already know and can do or what they need to do next. This reduces teachers' ability to plan and adapt the curriculum to meet trainees' needs. As a result, trainees do not learn as much as they could.

Trainees are familiar with the professional standards, as these are embedded throughout the ITE curriculum. However, they lack sufficient awareness of the Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) designation, and the post-qualification professional formation process. Some trainees are under the impression that QTLS is only relevant for those who want to teach in schools.

What does the ITE provider need to do to improve the FES phase?

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- Leaders and managers should ensure that the ITE curriculum and resources are updated to reflect recent, pertinent, high-quality research, so that trainees learn up-to-date, evidence-based approaches to curriculum planning and teaching. They should ensure that trainees do not learn and use discredited approaches.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that plans to support ITE staff to develop and update their specialist ITE knowledge are thorough and rigorous, and that they are implemented quickly.

- Leaders and managers should ensure that any periods of staff disruption do not have a negative impact on trainees.
- ITE staff should routinely plan and adapt their teaching, so that it is informed by an accurate understanding of what trainees know and can do and what they need to do next.
- ITE staff should ensure that trainees have a robust understanding of the post-qualification professional formation process that can lead to QTLS. They should equip their trainees with an accurate understanding of the relevance of QTLS to their careers.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number 2580203

Inspection number 10166934

This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) in accordance with the 'Initial teacher education inspection framework and handbook'.

This handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from September 2020.

Type of ITE provider General further education college

Phases provided Further education

Date of previous inspection N/A

Inspection team

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Annex: Trainee settings

Inspectors contacted trainees and staff at the following settings as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	Current Ofsted grade
Middlesbrough College	130570	Good
NHS Flatts Lane	N/A	N/A
Caedmon College based at Whitby Sixth Form College	121667	Good
Teesside University	133894	Outstanding
Northern School of Art	130571	Outstanding

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