

South West Teacher Training

c/o West Exe School, Hatherleigh Road, Exeter EX2 9JU

Inspection dates

10–13 May 2021

Inspection judgements

Primary and secondary age-phase combined

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education and training

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

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

Trainees speak highly of training with this partnership. Newly qualified teachers are well prepared for their first teaching post. Many trainees have chosen to follow this route because of the greater time spent on school placements. They appreciate the welcoming nature of the partnership.

Trainees know how to make learning memorable for pupils. Central to this is a set of research-based principles, known as the 'touchstones'. These allow trainees to understand why certain teaching approaches are particularly effective. However, a few primary-phase trainees' subject expertise is less well developed in some foundation subjects.

Trainees appreciate the responsiveness of partnership staff when they seek advice. They regard this as a strength of the partnership. The partnership's focus on 'pedagogy not paperwork' has been pivotal in supporting trainees to manage their workload.

Strong communication across the partnership and regular feedback mean that trainees develop into reflective practitioners. They have intellectual curiosity and take the initiative. Because of these attributes, they are highly regarded by headteachers. Trainees are knowledgeable about safeguarding and understand how to manage behaviour effectively. They are learning to adapt teaching to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Information about this ITE partnership

- The partnership currently has 77 trainees. The partnership has recommended two further trainees for the award of qualified teacher status (QTS) through the assessment-only route to QTS.
- The partnership covers both primary and secondary phases. Primary-phase trainees follow a pathway that allows them to train to teach pupils in the 3–7 or the 5–11 age group.

- At the time of the inspection, trainees were placed in 22 secondary and 24 primary schools. Most schools were in Devon, with a few in Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay.
- The partnership operates postgraduate, School Direct fee-paying and salaried, and assessment-only routes. One trainee is following the Future Teaching Scholar route.
- The partnership includes schools that were judged outstanding, good and requires improvement at their previous inspection. A few schools in the partnership have not yet had an inspection as they have recently become academies. Two schools visited by inspectors during this inspection had not yet been inspected.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team included three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI).
- Inspectors met with partnership leaders, the accounting officer, members of the partnership group and tutors. Inspectors also met with trainees, former trainees, school-based mentors and senior leaders in schools.
- Inspectors met with 19 trainees and 12 former trainees.
- As part of this inspection, focused reviews were carried out in computing, design and technology, early reading, geography, mathematics and physical education.
- Inspectors visited 12 partnership schools, two by videoconferencing.

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

South West Teacher Training is a highly valued provider in the region. Headteachers and school staff have well-founded confidence in the partnership and many trainees secure employment in partnership schools. Trainees receive good-quality training as a result of the clear, mutual relationship between all partners.

The programmes for both primary and secondary phases develop trainees' professional characteristics and intellectual curiosity well. The programmes are well sequenced, ensuring that trainees build their subject knowledge over time and gain an insight into different teaching approaches. Trainees' knowledge of how to teach their subject is strong in almost all of the subjects in the secondary phase, and in English, mathematics and science in the primary phase. Leaders ensure that trainees in the primary phase are introduced to teaching early reading at the start of the training year. Trainees have a good understanding of systematic synthetic phonics and use this in their teaching. However, a few primary-phase trainees are less secure in their understanding of teaching the foundation subjects, such as geography and physical education. Trainees do not get enough insight into the academic research that explores high-quality education in these subjects.

Trainees benefit from a range of school experiences. This allows them to practise their teaching in different environments and to adapt it to meet pupils' needs.

The partnership is overseen effectively by well-qualified leaders. They ensure that there is clear and regular communication with trainees, tutors and school-based staff. Leaders regularly review the course programmes and make improvements based on well-

researched evidence and from comments made by staff in partner schools. Leaders have ensured that the programmes meet the requirements set out in the Department for Education (DfE) 'Core content framework'.

Leaders have revised the recruitment procedures for potential trainees. This ensures that a much higher proportion of trainees who are enrolled complete their training. The personalised support that trainees receive means that trainees' needs are met exceptionally well.

Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership. They are aware that the quality of mentoring is not good enough in a few schools. Trainees confirmed this with inspectors. Although trainees have regular meetings with mentors, the quality of the feedback and the targets that are set lack precision. The partnership is trialling a new system that gives much greater specificity in two schools. This is working well and is expected to be used across the partnership from September 2021. Nonetheless, mentors' ongoing assessments and leaders' evaluations of trainees' proficiency are accurate.

Owing to the history of the partnership, governance arrangements are complex. In their current form, those responsible for governance do not have enough understanding of their role or the level of insight they need. Consequently, some weaknesses remain, including understanding fully the quality of trainees' experiences in a minority of schools.

What does the ITE partnership need to do to improve the primary and secondary combined phase?

(Information for the partnership and appropriate authority)

- There is some variability in the quality of mentoring across the partnership, which affects a minority of trainees' experience. The partnership should strengthen further the arrangements for the quality assurance of mentoring.
- The training in some of the foundation subjects in the primary phase, and in a few subjects in the secondary phase, does not give trainees enough insight into academic research at the level of the subject(s) they are training to teach. The partnership should ensure that all trainees gain the knowledge they need about the subject(s) they teach.
- The arrangements for governance are not as strong as they should be, which leads to variability in a few trainees' experiences. The governance arrangements should be strengthened further and pay closer attention to the trainee curriculum and leaders' oversight of the quality of the school-placement experience.

Does the ITE partnership primary and secondary combined phase comply with the ITE compliance criteria?

- The partnership meets the DfE's statutory compliance criteria.

ITE Partnership details

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| Unique reference number | 70072 |
| Inspection number | 10167321 |

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.

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|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Type of ITE Partnership | SCITT |
| Phases provided | Primary/secondary |
| Date of previous inspection | 2–5 December 2013 |

Inspection team

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Iain Freeland, Lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Stewart Gale | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Paul Williams | Her Majesty's Inspector |

Annex: Partnership schools

From the full list of partnership schools, the following schools were visited, as part of this inspection, to observe trainees' and newly qualified teachers' teaching:

| Name | URN | ITE phase(s) | Date joined partnership | Current Ofsted grade |
|---|------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Clyst St Mary Primary School | 113066 | Primary | 2020 | Good |
| Honiton Primary School | 113098 | Primary | 2018 | Outstanding |
| Isca Academy | 139682 | Secondary | Not known | Good |
| King Edward VI Community College | 113520 | Secondary | Not known | Good |
| St Luke's Church of England School | 147401 | Secondary | Not known | Not yet inspected |
| St Michael's Church of England Primary School | 139818 | Primary | 2018 | Outstanding |
| St Peter's Church of England Aided School | 113553 | Secondary | Not known | Good |
| Teign School | 136494 | Secondary | 2017 | Requires improvement |
| Tipton St John Church of England Primary School | 113438 | Primary | 2018 | Good |
| Torquay Academy | 138370 | Secondary | 2017 | Good |
| West Exe School | 145404 | Secondary | 1997 | Not yet inspected |
| Wynstream School | 134171 | Primary | 2018 | Requires improvement |

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