

# The Solent SCITT

Park Community School, Middle Park Way, Havant PO9 4BU

## Inspection dates

10 to 13 May 2021

## Inspection judgements

Primary and secondary age-phase combined

### Overall effectiveness

**Inadequate**

The quality of education and training

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

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

Solent SCITT attracts recent graduates, career changers and trainees with experience of working in schools. They tend to choose the partnership for its convenience to home and often because they specifically want to teach on the Leigh Park estate. Trainees find the SCITT 'warm and welcoming' and are generally satisfied with the support and guidance they receive, including how to manage their workload. They develop a secure understanding of safeguarding pupils.

Trainees have no benchmark so their satisfaction with training is misplaced. Former trainees, with the benefit of hindsight, realise that the over focus on what leaders consider the essentials for teaching in the local area, such as behaviour management, is not helpful. It is at the expense of deepening trainees' subject knowledge. They are taught general teaching strategies rather than the rationale or research that underpins them. Trainees are not taught in sufficient depth how to plan a sequence of lessons that will help pupils learn, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Primary trainees hear contradictory messages about teaching early reading.

Trainees are expected to shoulder too much responsibility for joining up their centre- and school-based training. However, they do appreciate the care leaders have shown for their well-being during the pandemic.

## **Information about this ITE partnership**

- Trainees either train to teach secondary-age (11 to 16 years) or primary-age (5 to 11 years) pupils. Almost all also complete either a professional graduate (PgCE) or a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) with the University of Portsmouth.
- Twenty six trainees started training in September 2020. At the time of the inspection, 19 were still on the course. Two primary trainees were on the School Direct (salaried) route. All 11 secondary trainees and the remaining primary trainees were following the school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) route.
- The partnership is based at Park Community School. The headteacher of the school is the accounting officer.
- Historically, schools in the partnership have either been full or associate partners. The secondary full partners are Park Community School, Crookhorn College, Horndean Technology College and Warblington School. The primary full partners are Horndean Infant School and Mengham Junior School. The associate partners change from year to year. In 2020/2021, there were three secondary schools and 10 primary schools offering placements as associate partners. Going forward, the intention is that all schools will be full partners.
- All schools in the wider partnership, bar one which was judged as 'requires improvement', were graded 'good' at their last inspection.
- Three directors, all part-time, lead the SCITT on a day-to-day basis. They all took up post in January 2021.

## **Information about this inspection**

- The inspection was conducted by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspectors met with the accounting officer, the three directors of the SCITT, the SCITT coordinator, the SCITT trainer, the training manager and a representative of the University of Portsmouth. The lead inspector spoke with several headteachers attending a workshop for primary partners at the centre. The team inspectors observed centre-based staff holding progress reviews with individual trainees.
- In total, inspectors spoke to 15 trainees, either in their schools or in online meetings.
- The inspection team conducted focused reviews in early reading, primary history and geography, English, design and technology and history. They met with the subject experts or leads, scrutinised course documents and webinars and visited five schools to talk with trainees, mentors and senior leaders. They looked at evidence of trainees' learning and, where possible, observed them teaching the subject being reviewed.
- Inspectors took account of 23 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and 12 responses to the online survey for trainees.

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

The strategic and operational oversight of the partnership's work is weak. There has been a lack of urgency in developing the primary programme and a misplaced assumption that secondary training continued to be of good quality. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are not strong enough and too insular. Until very recently, leaders have wrongly believed that provision was much stronger than it is. They had not considered, for example, if the high proportion of withdrawals from the course might be linked to weaknesses in the recruitment process.

Too much is left to chance in the design and delivery of the training programme. Leaders have not systematically identified exactly what they want trainees to learn in each aspect or subject, or how that will build up over the training year. Their response to the introduction of the core content framework has been too slow and superficial. Those designing the training programme have not considered the depth of understanding trainees need and how that should be rooted in authoritative educational research. Trainees do not experience the thread of subject specialism the partnership's curriculum overview asserts. They do not receive a thorough grounding in key content and how pupils learn a subject.

Leaders have not methodically planned how the distinct aspects of training will be interwoven to build and reinforce trainees' learning over time. They have not checked that all those delivering training at the centre and in schools understand, agree on and promote some fundamental concepts. Inspectors found examples of messages that contradict the core content framework, such as how phonics is taught, reference to learning styles and a focus on skills ahead of foundational knowledge.

Inevitably, the weaknesses in the education offered mean that assessments and progress reviews of trainees' learning are perfunctory.

Leaders have not done enough to assure themselves that the 'expert colleagues' trainees need to learn from are consistently high calibre. Mentors are regarded as good role models rather than trained to be experts. Leaders have not checked that subject leads have the expertise they need or stipulated that their own ongoing professional development is important to maintain their currency.

Communication between those leading training at the centre and in schools has been weak until very recently. School-based mentors only receive high-level detail about the course content. Unsurprisingly then, there is not enough coherence between what is taught at the centre and what trainees learn in school. School-based mentors are not clear what is expected in terms of ongoing assessment of trainees' learning. As a result, they do not consistently make effective use of weekly logs, and trainees revert to collecting summative evidence to demonstrate how they meet the Teachers' Standards too early in their training.

Too few school leaders are genuinely involved in the design and delivery of the training programme. The involvement of headteachers in overhauling the primary programme is at an incredibly early stage.

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

### **(Information for the partnership and appropriate authority)**

- Quality assurance and accountability are weak at all levels. Those responsible for the strategic and operational oversight of the SCITT's work have not been aware until very recently of fundamental weaknesses. As a matter of urgency, leaders must ensure that rigorous systems are in place so that they know if provision is improving at the pace required.
- Training and assessment lack substance, rigour and cohesion. Too little has been done to make sure that all involved in training understand the importance and expectations of the core content framework. As a result, the curriculum does not fully cover the minimum entitlement and lacks ambition for how much better trainees could be. Assessment is too superficial and does not get to the heart of what trainees have learned, particularly in individual subjects. Leaders must ensure greater depth and coherence, particularly in subject-specific training, so that trainees' learning builds logically and purposefully over the course.
- Not all partners subscribe unequivocally to the evidence-based view that systematic synthetic phonics is the most effective approach for teaching pupils to decode. They do not all promote that fidelity to one phonics scheme is essential. Consequently, trainees hear contradictory messages which puts them at risk of not being well equipped to teach early reading. Those training in key stage 2 placements do not necessarily get sufficient input to be well equipped to teach early reading when they take up their first post. Leaders must make sure that there is a consistent approach through all centre- and school-based training.
- Mentors are not seen as, or trained to be, the expert colleagues the core content framework demands. They do not receive the detailed information about course content and expectations that they need. While all are working hard to support trainees as best they can, mentoring is not as focused or rigorous as it needs to be. Leaders must make sure that mentors receive high-quality training and support and that they monitor the impact.
- Schools are not involved enough in the work of the partnership, particularly in forming the intended curriculum. SCITT leaders are not tapping into the potential there is in schools to improve the quality of the training programme and to contribute to monitoring and evaluation. They should implement their recently formed plans for greater involvement of senior leaders from schools at a strategic and operational level as a matter of priority.

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

- The partnership does not meet the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

The partnership does not meet the following criteria:

- criterion C2.1(a), which requires ITT partnerships to ensure that the content, structure, delivery and assessment of programmes are designed to enable trainee teachers to meet all the standards for QTS across the age range of training,
- criterion C3.1, which requires ITT partnerships to ensure that their management structure ensures the efficient operation of the training programme, and
- criterion C3.4 which requires all ITT partnerships to ensure that they monitor, evaluate and moderate all aspects of provision rigorously and demonstrate how these contribute to securing improvements in the quality of training and the assessment of trainees.

## **ITE Partnership details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	70281
<b>Inspection number</b>	10169017

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

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

<b>Type of ITE Partnership</b>	SCITT
<b>Phases provided</b>	Primary and secondary combined
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Stage 1: 18-20 May 2015, Stage 2: 12-14 October 2015

## **Inspection team**

Alison Bradley, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Matthew Newberry	Her Majesty's Inspector
Janet Pearce	Her Majesty's Inspector

## Annex: Partnership schools

From the full list of partnership schools, the following schools were visited, as part of this inspection, for focused reviews:

<b>Name</b>	<b>URN</b>	<b>ITE Phase(s)</b>	<b>Date joined partnership</b>	<b>Current Ofsted grade</b>
Crookhorn College	116428	Secondary	September 2018	Good
Mill Rythe Infant School	116490	Primary	September 2020	Good
Mill Rythe Junior School	115914	Primary	September 2019	Good
Park Community School	116473	Secondary	September 2013	Good
Purbrook Infant School	115937	Primary	September 2019	Good

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