

St. George's Academy Partnership

St. George's Academy, Westgate, Sleaford NG34 7PP

Inspection dates

24 to 27 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 their training experience. They say they feel they 'belong' as a cohort, as well as to their placement settings. Communications are very effective. Trainees and staff say, 'It's all about the people.' The partnership provides the care, support and guidance trainees need to succeed.

Trainees benefit from a very well-balanced programme of university, subject-specialist and school-based training. The regular meetings trainees have with their mentors help make sure that what they learn in taught sessions is threaded through to their placements. The different parts of the training programme link together well.

Trainees are taught to be ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Trainees are taught some of the most important knowledge in the different subjects and effective ways of teaching. All trainees are taught the importance of teaching pupils to read, including phonics. They learn to manage pupils' behaviour well and understand the importance of building positive relationships.

The partnership prepares trainees for the realities of teaching and the importance of work-life balance and personal well-being. Trainees are prepared very well to teach in their first year of teaching, as well as their careers beyond.

Information about this ITE partnership

- St George's Academy Partnership currently offers primary and secondary phase training. Primary trainees are prepared to teach pupils in the three to 11 age range. Secondary trainees are prepared to teach pupils in the 11 to 16 age range in a range of subjects. The primary phase will discontinue at the end of the current academic year.
- In 2020/21, the partnership has 41 trainees. There are 15 trainees in the primary phase and 26 trainees in the secondary phase.
- The partnership works with a range of partner settings, primary and secondary schools. These are a mixture of settings of different sizes and local contexts. The partnership includes settings and schools who received a range of different Ofsted judgements at their most recent inspection.
- The partnership offers school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT). Trainees work towards the award of qualified teacher status and a postgraduate certificate in education which is accredited by the University of Lincoln. All trainees follow a School Direct route.
- Inspectors visited one nursery, five primary and four secondary settings. One primary visit was remote due to the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus). Nearly all settings visited were judged to be good or better at their most recent inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspectors spoke with the head of the SCITT, the principal of St George's Academy, the primary and secondary phase leaders and other senior staff and subject specialists. They met with school leaders, trainees, mentors and curriculum leaders from the University of Lincoln.
- Inspectors spoke with 10 current and former trainees from the primary phase, and 14 trainees from the secondary phase.
- Inspectors undertook focused reviews of reading, geography and history, and science in the primary phase and of history, mathematics, and design and technology in the secondary phase to evaluate the quality of education and training.
- Inspectors visited eight settings and communicated remotely with two settings. This was due to the impact of COVID-19.

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

Leaders check that the partnership meets, and often goes beyond, the requirements of the Core Content Framework (CCF). Primary trainees, for example, are asked to create a phonics leaflet or video presentation to explain phonics to parents. In a secondary design and technology lesson, a trainee gave pupils a 'driving test' for sewing machines. The partnership prepares trainees to meet the needs of pupils with SEND or who speak English as an additional language well. Trainees say, 'All children are entitled to the same curriculum.' The partnership provides training on understanding autism spectrum disorder, lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans awareness and promoting pupils' mental health and well-being. Primary trainees gain a detailed understanding of how to teach phonics. Secondary

trainees are taught about how to support weaker readers. Secondary leaders have secure grasp of the curriculum in different subjects. Leaders check trainees' subject knowledge and often personalise support to meet trainees' individual needs.

Leaders have a sharp understanding of the partnership's priorities for improvement. They have changed the way they assess trainees and are making sure all staff understand the principles of the CCF. Occasionally, mentors' and other staff's understanding of the partnership's priorities is not as precise as it could be. Mentors are skilled in guiding trainees to become successful teachers. They give trainees accurate feedback. However, sometimes the targets they set are not precise enough.

Leaders value trainees' feedback. In the 'burning issues' sessions, for example, trainees can raise any issues or ask questions about their training. Leaders consider trainees' personal and professional development very well. A typical trainee comment is, 'I have developed so much both as an individual and a teacher this year.' Trainees understand their responsibilities to help keep pupils safe.

There is a clear line of sight from trainees' application, training and preparation for employment. Partnership school leaders value being involved in recruiting trainees. The partnership has a positive reputation for training high-quality teachers who are retained in the profession.

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

- Leaders' new approach to assessing trainees' learning and development is not yet fully established. Some staff are not sharp in their understanding and so their guidance for trainees is not quite as effective as it could be. Leaders should provide guidance and support so that all in the partnership understand what is expected.
- There are some inconsistencies in the quality of mentors' work. In some instances, the targets they set are not as precise as they could be to better support trainees' development. Leaders should check more carefully that mentors consistently have the skills and understanding they need to fulfil their roles fully.

(Information for the partnership and appropriate authority)

- The CCF is successfully integrated into the primary, and particularly, the secondary phase curriculum. Leaders, mentors and trainees can articulate examples of how the CCF principles are applied in the programme. However, partnership planning documentation and the terminology used by some mentors is sometimes not accurate. Inconsistencies mean that support for trainees is sometimes not quite as effective as it could be. Leaders should provide guidance and training to ensure all in the partnership understand fully the principles and terminology of the CCF.
- Mentors usually provide effective support. However, there are some inconsistencies. Sometimes, mentors' targets are not sharply focused. Some mentors and other staff do not have a precise understanding of the expectations of the partnership's

formative assessment approach. Some mentors are not sure about how leaders quality assure their work. Leaders should strengthen further their quality assurance processes to ensure greater consistency.

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

- The partnership meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

ITE Partnership details

Unique reference number	70291
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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.

Type of ITE Partnership	SCITT
Phases provided	Primary Secondary
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2016

Inspection team

John Lawson, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Di Mullan	Her Majesty's Inspector
Chris Stevens	Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Name	URN	ITE Phase(s)	Date joined partnership	Current Ofsted grade
The Lincoln St Giles Nursery School	120365	Primary	September 2017	Outstanding
Dunston St Peter's Church of England Primary School	120520	Primary	September 2018	Good
Caythorpe Primary School	144594	Primary	September 2018	Not yet inspected
Brown's Church of England Primary School, Horbling	143258	Primary	September 2019	Good
Great Ponton Church of England Primary School	120602	Primary	September 2019	Good
Pilgrim Academy	144148	Primary	September 2018	Good
St George's Academy (Sleaford and Ruskington sites)	136044	Secondary	September 2014	Good
Carre's Grammar School	137213	Secondary	September 2014	Good
The Banovallum School	141581	Secondary	September 2014	Good

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