

Cumbria Teacher Training

High Street, Workington, Cumbria CA14 4ES

Inspection dates

10–13 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?

Trainees are failed by Cumbria Teacher Training. This is because leaders have not ensured that trainees have access to a well-considered, well-planned training curriculum that prepares them to teach their subject or age-phase.

Leaders do not ensure that trainees benefit from effective support from programme tutors and mentors. Tutors and mentors lack clarity about what essential knowledge to teach to trainees and when. Leaders do not ensure that trainees know about up-to-date or pertinent educational research. As a result, they are unable to apply this to the subject or age-phase that they are trained to teach. Trainees receive poor-quality mentoring and ineffectual targets for improvement.

The initial teacher education (ITE) programmes do not prepare trainees to adapt the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or those who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Leaders do not ensure that trainees have a secure understanding of how to promote equality in their classrooms. The programme does not provide trainees with the knowledge and skills that they need to manage pupils' behaviour proficiently, including how to tackle prejudice-based bullying.

Despite the many failures in this partnership, trainees value their school placements. They said that school leaders and staff are welcoming. Trainees appreciate the regular contact that they have with the leaders of the partnership, who help trainees to maintain a reasonable workload. Primary-phase trainees receive suitable training in the teaching of early reading and mathematics. All trainees benefit from completing two Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) modules with a university. All trainees develop some knowledge of how to safeguard pupils.

Information about this ITE partnership

- Cumbria Teacher Training provides training for 20 primary-phase and 16 secondary-phase trainees during 2020-21.
- The partnership provides training in the 3–11 primary age range and in the 11–16 secondary age range.
- There are 31 schools in the partnership.
- The lead schools in the partnership are Victoria Infant School and Cockermouth School.
- Almost all partner schools are judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was conducted by four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs), who met with the leaders, directors and tutors of Cumbria Teacher Training. Inspectors also met with representatives of the West Cumbria Teaching School Alliance and representatives of Sheffield Hallam University.
- In the primary phase, inspectors completed focused reviews into early reading, mathematics, computing and music. In the secondary phase, inspectors undertook focused reviews in English, religious education, physics and geography.
- Inspectors spoke with three newly qualified teachers, 19 primary-phase trainees and eight secondary-phase trainees.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys. This included the 65 responses from staff in schools, the 24 responses from trainees and the 19 responses from newly qualified teachers.
- Inspectors made visits to nine schools to meet with trainees, mentors and headteachers. Some observations were made of trainees' teaching. Inspectors met separately with one headteacher at the request of the partnership.

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

Leaders lack ambition in their design of the teacher-training curriculum. They have not planned the content of their curriculum in any meaningful way. They do not successfully integrate the two PGCE modules that trainees study through a linked university into the training curriculum. Leaders, tutors and mentors are unclear about the essential knowledge and skills that trainees need to learn, including about the curriculum in early years. Secondary-phase trainees do not develop enough understanding of how to teach the curriculum in their chosen subject. Even though the quality of support for pupils with SEND is an issue for schools in the local area, the primary and secondary programmes do not define the knowledge about how to plan and deliver a curriculum effectively for pupils with SEND. Not enough trainees understand how to improve education for pupils with SEND in mainstream schools. Cumbria Teacher Training leaders reinforce low expectations for pupils with SEND.

The partnership does not prepare trainees to be curriculum thinkers who are able to debate and challenge educational research. This is because programme leaders have not identified the educational research that trainees should understand in each age-phase and subject throughout the programme. This is a significant weakness.

Programme leaders' inadequate knowledge of how to plan an effective ITE curriculum means that they give ineffective support and guidance to mentors in placement schools. For example, programme leaders do not give mentors enough direction about their role in school-based training. The training and support that mentors in different subjects and age-phases offer to trainees are ad hoc and of poor quality. For example, a primary-phase trainee may only be introduced to the areas of learning in early years if they specifically ask in school, or if a mentor thinks it is a good idea. This lack of a systematic approach to ensuring that all trainees gain the knowledge that they need leads to many primary- and secondary-phase trainees experiencing an uneven deal.

Primary-phase trainees learn some essential knowledge about how pupils learn to read. Even so, this training is not planned effectively. Trainees do not benefit from a well-organised reading curriculum that is clearly integrated into taught sessions and school placements.

Reviews by leaders and strategic boards of the quality of their teacher training programme are overly generous and imprecise. Leaders take too little action to check on, or to improve, the quality of trainees' training in schools. Leaders have not acted to address the weaknesses in the programme that were identified at the previous inspection. This means that weaknesses in developing trainees' understanding of SEND, EAL and prejudice-based bullying remain.

Leaders across the partnership do not understand the role and purpose of the core content framework (CCF). The strategic boards do not challenge and review the work of the partnership with enough rigour. Leaders and mentors use the CCF and the teaching standards inappropriately to assess trainees' progress throughout the course. Leaders make checks on the quality of target-setting; however, they do not act to improve this crucial aspect of trainees' learning and development.

Despite the plethora of weaknesses that underpin this partnership's work, all trainees develop some essential knowledge about the safeguarding of pupils. This includes county lines, radicalisation and female genital mutilation.

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

(Information for the partnership and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is poorly considered, inconsistent and disorganised. As a result, trainees do not develop the subject-specific teaching knowledge that they require. They do not learn how to teach across their chosen age-phases, nor how to adapt the curriculum for pupils with SEND and EAL. They do not understand how to incorporate the teaching of equalities into their lessons. Leaders must develop a curriculum that is ambitious,

coherent and rigorous. It should be designed around subjects and age-phases, and carefully sequenced.

- The programme does not focus sufficiently on up-to-date research and relevant debates within subject communities and age-phases. This means that trainees are poorly served by their training programme. Leaders should make sure that all aspects of the programme give trainees a secure understanding of relevant research about key curriculum developments and subject-pedagogical issues.
- The quality of mentoring is poor. This is because programme leaders do not check the quality of mentors' work effectively. They also provide insufficient direction and training. Mentors provide inadequate targets that do not improve trainees' teaching and curriculum expertise. Leaders should make certain that mentoring, including target-setting, broadens and enriches trainees' subject curriculum knowledge and that it improves their delivery of the curriculum. Leaders must provide effective training to mentors.
- Leaders, tutors and mentors misunderstand the role and purpose of the CCF. This means that trainees' ongoing progress through the curriculum is not accurately assessed. Consequently, there are significant gaps in trainees' curriculum and subject knowledge. Leaders should ensure that tutors and mentors assess trainees using the teacher-training curriculum as the progression model. Leaders must ensure that trainees know and remember more of the planned ITE curriculum.
- Leaders, including the strategic boards, do not review, evaluate and improve the quality of the training programme with sufficient clarity or focus. They do not have enough oversight of the teacher-training curriculum. They have not tackled existing weaknesses. This means that trainees have a poor-quality experience. Leaders must ensure that there is an effective teacher-training programme in place and that they quality assure all aspects of their work.

Does the ITE partnership combined primary and secondary 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 qualified teacher status (QTS) across the age range of training
- criterion C3.1, which requires ITT partnerships to ensure that their management structure ensures the effective operation of the training programme
- criterion C3.2, which requires that ITT partnerships ensure that partners establish a partnership agreement that sets out the roles and responsibilities of each partner
- criterion C3.3, which requires that ITT partnerships comply with all relevant legislation relevant to ITT

- criterion C3.4, which requires that ITT partnerships 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

Unique reference number	70017
Inspection number	10180793

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

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

Type of ITE partnership	School-centred initial teacher training (SCITT)
Phases provided	Primary Secondary
Date of previous inspection	10–13 March 2014

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Tomkow	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Nixon	Her Majesty's Inspector
Will Smith	Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Name	URN	ITE Phase(s)	Date joined partnership	Current Ofsted grade
Bridekirk Dovenby Church of England Primary School	112270	Primary	Not known	Outstanding
Broughton Primary School	137513	Primary	Not known	Good
Cockermouth School	142306	Secondary	Not known	Outstanding
Grasslot Infant School	112132	Primary	Not known	Outstanding
Holme St Cuthbert School	112112	Primary	Not known	Good
Netherhall School	112382	Secondary	Not known	Good
St James' Church of England Infant and Nursery School	112297	Primary	Not known	Good
St Joseph's Catholic High School	112401	Secondary	Not known	Good
The Whitehaven Academy	146634	Secondary	Not known	Not yet inspected

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