

Two Mile Ash ITT Partnership

Fairfields Primary School, Apollo Avenue, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK11 4BA

Inspection dates

31 January to 3 February 2022

Inspection judgements

Primary age-phase

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education and training

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

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

Trainees join this partnership because they want to make a difference to pupils and the generations to come. They are not disappointed. Trainees learn not only what to teach and how to teach it, but also develop a deep understanding of how children learn. Trainees forge their own identity as a teacher and become impressive role models.

Trainees are immersed in the ups and downs of school life. They learn and remember the essential content of each subject and how to teach this in the classroom. Trainees then apply and practise their teaching in their placement schools, improving their knowledge and skills. Trainees absorb demanding research about the most effective ways to teach pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They are well equipped to manage pupils' behaviour and understand how to keep them safe.

Effective communication between the programme leaders and schools ensures a coherent training experience. Most school-based trainers (SBTs) make deliberate and active use of the core content to help their trainees progress through the programme. Personalised support for their well-being and progression through the programme, together with 'unflinching encouragement and support', help trainees to sustain their motivation and stay in the profession.

Information about this ITE partnership

- Two Mile Ash Initial Teacher Training Partnership offers different routes into primary-phase teaching. Some trainees follow a three-year Bachelor of Arts with Honours degree with qualified teacher status (QTS) in primary education with early years, in

partnership with Birmingham City University. Other trainees follow postgraduate programmes and apprenticeships in primary education, specialising in the 3–7 years or the 5–11 years primary phases. All postgraduate programmes lead to QTS, and some trainees also study to gain a postgraduate certificate in education.

- There are 121 trainees enrolled on the various programmes. The partnership is overseen by the Inspiring Futures through Learning multi-academy trust (MAT). Since the previous inspection, the partnership has established hubs in Aylesbury and Corby. The chief executive officer of the MAT is the accounting officer.
- The senior leadership team of the partnership comprises the head of system leadership, a senior initial teacher training programme lead, and a project and delivery lead.
- The partnership works with 70 schools. Partner schools are a mix of infant or first schools, junior and middle schools, and two special schools. Most schools were judged good or better at their previous Ofsted inspection.
- The partnership is based at Fairfields Primary School in Milton Keynes.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI).
- Inspectors met with the system leader, other programme leaders, tutors and the accounting officer. Meetings were also held with members of the strategic board, partnership headteachers, and representatives of the hubs and Birmingham City University. Inspectors observed online tutorials and training sessions for trainees and SBTs. Meetings were a combination of in person and online arrangements.
- Inspectors spoke to 28 trainees in online meetings and when on school visits.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews in early reading, mathematics, science, physical education, history and geography. They met with subject leads or experts, reviewed course documents and training plans, and scrutinised trainees' documentary evidence. Inspectors visited six schools, where they spoke to trainees, SBTs and school leaders and, where possible, observed trainees teaching the subject being reviewed.
- Inspectors considered 61 responses to the trainee survey and 11 staff survey returns.

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

The ITE programme is intelligently designed to achieve the right balance between subject content and pedagogical skills. The coherently sequenced curriculum ensures that trainees practise, repeat and remember crucial skills and knowledge. Programme leaders meticulously check the quality of core training and school placements. Rooted in pertinent research and fully meeting the expectations of the core content framework, the programme ensures that trainees become, as one said, 'adept by the end'.

Trainees are very well prepared to teach phonics and develop pupils' love of books. They learn and remember the essential content of each subject and how to teach this in the classroom. Focused studies of essential topics in the programme deepen trainees' knowledge. For example, trainees all complete an intensive study of how to teach pupils with SEND. They also focus closely on a specific group of pupils to analyse the impact of their teaching. Key aspects of training are revisited frequently over time, to add new dimensions and help trainees to remember their learning.

SBTs are skilled mentors and experts in their areas. They build on trainees' core knowledge and help them to refine and reflect on their teaching. SBTs are trained to identify precisely what trainees need to improve or whether they need additional support for their work or well-being. Trainees say, 'You cannot hide if you have areas to improve.' However, not all SBTs implement the intent of the curriculum at a consistently exceptional standard. A very small number do not make enough deliberate use of the information they have about the core training to build up trainees' knowledge and skills.

Partnership leaders are committed to trainees' and staff's well-being. They draw on additional support to help trainees who are in crisis or having difficulties with their workload. Equally, the partnership is dedicated to a cycle of continuous improvement. For example, the undergraduate programme was developed to respond not only to the needs of local schools, but also to increase higher education opportunities in the area. In this way, the partnership is contributing to a culture of education and aspiration locally and further afield.

Programme leaders are well informed and assiduous about ensuring that tutors and trainees are at the cutting edge of education research. Strategic board members ask challenging questions, look outwards and are guardians of the core values, aspirations and quality of the partnership.

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

(Information for the partnership and appropriate authority)

- A few SBTs do not actively use the information they have about the content of the core training programme to structure and refine their day-to-day work with trainees. They therefore miss opportunities to strengthen and deepen trainees' subject knowledge. Programme leaders should ensure that all SBTs fully and deliberately implement the intended initial teacher education (ITE) curriculum at the highest standard.

Does the ITE partnership primary phase comply with the ITE compliance criteria?

- The partnership meets the Department for Education statutory compliance criteria.

ITE partnership details

Unique reference number	70221
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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 set out the statutory basis and framework for ITE inspections in England from September 2020.

Type of ITE partnership	School-centred initial teacher training
Phases provided	Primary
Date of previous inspection	18 to 21 March 2013

Inspection team

Janet Pearce, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Dan Lambert	Her Majesty's Inspector
Laurie Anderson	Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Partnership settings, schools and colleges

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phase(s)	Date joined partnership	Current Ofsted grade
Olney Infant Academy	136792	Primary	September 2002	Outstanding
Olney Middle School	143263	Primary	September 2016	Good
Two Mile Ash School	137061	Primary	September 2002	Outstanding
The Redway School	110592	Primary	September 2021	Good
Cedars Primary School	110399	Primary	September 2015	Good
Brooklands Farm Primary School	135271	Primary	September 2013	Good

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