

London South Bank University

103 Borough Road, London SE1 0AA

Inspection dates

25 to 28 April 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

Requires improvement

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

Trainees enjoy the programme and are excited about their future careers as teachers. They feel well supported by the centre-based training, including in managing the demands of the course. Most also value the training and support during their school placements. That said, a few trainees would like more guidance on how to make the central training relevant to school placements in specialist settings.

Comprehensive training on safeguarding and behaviour is delivered early on in the programme. Trainees like the way in which this training is organised. They said that it helps them to feel well prepared for their school placements. Trainees also learn about adaptive teaching and how to cater effectively for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The programme promotes trainees' readiness to teach the primary phase. This includes the knowledge needed to teach the full national curriculum. Learning how to teach early reading is a key part of the course. Trainees are taught the fundamentals of systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) and how SSP enables pupils to learn to read fluently.

From the start of the course, trainees know what they will be learning and how this will develop over time. Communication is strong. This helps everyone to play their part in supporting trainees to progress smoothly through the course. In some instances, however, leaders have not ensured that all trainees receive high-quality support from the mentoring programme.

Information about this ITE provider

- London South Bank University provides a programme of teacher training in the primary phase.
- Trainees follow either the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) route or the School Direct (salaried or non-salaried) route. Both routes lead to the award of qualified teacher status.
- The partnership currently has 72 trainees, the majority of whom are on the PGCE route.
- There are 139 schools in the partnership. The majority of these schools were judged as good or outstanding when they were last inspected by Ofsted.

Information about this inspection

- When London South Bank University was last inspected by Ofsted in July 2021, it was judged as requires improvement.
- The inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspectors met with the provider's senior leadership team, as well as university subject leaders and link tutors. Meetings took place either in person or remotely.
- Inspectors met with 23 trainees. They also spoke to early career teachers.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews in the following subjects: early reading, science, mathematics, history and computing.
- Inspectors visited eight schools in the partnership. They met with school leaders, school-based mentors and trainees. Inspectors also met remotely with school-based mentors from other partnership schools.
- Inspectors reviewed 23 responses to the staff survey and 17 responses to the survey for trainees. Inspectors also considered a wide range of documents, including on curriculum planning, records of safeguarding checks and information related to the provider's compliance with the initial teacher education (ITE) criteria.

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

The partnership has high aspirations for trainees. The ITE curriculum is designed to support trainees in becoming knowledgeable and confident teachers in the primary phase. Masters-level modules, for instance in inclusion and SEND, complement the core ITE curriculum offer. These are popular and enable trainees to deepen their understanding further.

Leaders review the effectiveness of the programme regularly. They make sure that the requirements of the core content framework are covered in full. Partnership leaders and tutors regularly check the progress that trainees are making, including during their school placements. If a trainee needs extra support, leaders have strategies in place to ensure that individualised help is provided. Leaders also identify accurately aspects of the programme that need further development. Currently, leaders are prioritising strengthening their approach to quality assurance.

Centrally delivered training is typically ambitious, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Trainees are supported to develop a strong understanding of pedagogy and curriculum design. They learn about the latest research and how this can be used to help pupils know more and remember more in different subjects. Leaders ensure that the programme is delivered by experts, including visiting speakers with experience in educational research. However, in a small number of the foundation subjects, the aims and content of the centre-based training have not been considered as carefully. As a result, trainees' knowledge of these subjects and how to teach them is not promoted as strongly as it is in others.

Leaders structure the centre-based and school-based training effectively. They make sure that the different elements work in tandem to increase trainees' knowledge and confidence. For example, right from the start of the course, trainees learn about how to create a calm classroom environment. This helps to ensure that trainees feel confident and ready to manage behaviour in their school placements. In a few instances, however, the delivery of the ITE curriculum does not bear in mind the needs of trainees in specialist settings. Sometimes, these trainees feel unsure how to apply in their placement schools what they have learned.

Ensuring that trainees are ready to teach early reading is prioritised. Trainees learn how to support pupils who are at an early stage of reading and those who have fallen behind. Leaders involve partnership schools closely in this work. This helps to ensure that trainees get plenty of practice in applying their knowledge of early reading and SSP.

School-based mentors, including those who are new to the role, receive clear information on their roles. Guidance and documentation have been streamlined. Partnership schools and trainees appreciate these changes, and in particular how leaders make it straightforward to understand the requirements of the course. Mentors receive helpful training, including on how to give trainees feedback. However, leaders' quality assurance of the mentoring programme is still developing. Some school-based support and guidance do not match up closely with what trainees learn at the centre. When this happens, it can be confusing for trainees.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' quality assurance of the mentoring programme, while improving, is not consistently rigorous. On occasions, some school-based guidance leaves trainees unsure of how to develop their practice. This happens when advice to trainees does not align closely with what they have learned at the centre. Leaders should make sure that all school-based support makes a consistently strong contribution to trainees' progression through the ITE curriculum.
- Leaders have not considered fully how to make all parts of the curriculum relevant to trainees who undertake placements in specialist settings. A few trainees feel unclear about how to apply important learning. Leaders have started to address this, but further refinements to the curriculum are needed. Leaders should continue their work to ensure that all trainees feel confident in using and adapting course content meaningfully.
- While most of the centre-based training is carefully planned, the curriculum for a small number of foundation subjects is not as clearly defined. This means that trainees' knowledge of how to teach these subjects is not deepened fully over the course of the programme. Leaders should revisit the aims and content of the centre-based training in these subjects and ensure that all curriculum content is planned and sequenced equally well.

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

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

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70064
Inspection number	10230610

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

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

Type of ITE provider	Higher education institution
Phases provided	Primary
Date of previous inspection	28 June to 1 July 2021

Inspection team

Adam Vincent, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrea Bedeau	Her Majesty's Inspector
Aliki Constantopoulou	Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phase(s)
George Carey Church of England Primary School	136431	Primary
Heathbrook Primary School	100566	Primary
Invicta Primary School	100134	Primary
Park House School	134145	Primary
St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary School	100447	Primary
Stockwell Primary School	100582	Primary
West Ham Church Primary School	102765	Primary
Purley Oaks Primary School	101733	Primary

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.reports.ofsted.gov.uk.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022