

North Essex Teacher Training (NETT)

c/o Tendring Education Centre, Jaywick Lane, Clacton on Sea CO16 8BE

Inspection dates

9 May to 12 May 2022

Inspection judgements

Primary and secondary age-phase combined

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education and training	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

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

Trainees welcome the supportive environment that the partnership offers. They establish positive working relationships with their trainers, in the central team and partnership schools. Their enthusiasm toward becoming early career teachers is crystal clear.

While trainees are typically positive about their experiences, the training is not consistently well focused on the detail of trainees' subject knowledge development. In both the primary and secondary phases, trainers do not check well enough how effectively trainees are extending their subject knowledge over time.

Most trainees are adept at promoting good behaviour in their lessons. They speak confidently about how they have improved their approach to planning for learning, using the research-focused concepts they are taught. They understand the principles of adapting teaching to meet pupils' different needs, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language.

Primary trainees are taught how to use systematic synthetic phonics effectively in the teaching of early reading. Additional opportunities, such as learning about forest and beach schools, are valued. Productive communications across the partnership help facilitate personalised approaches, including opportunities for some secondary trainees to experience teaching a second subject.

Information about this ITE provider

- The SCITT operates within The Sigma Trust, a multi-academy trust, with primary and secondary schools across the Tendring local authority area.
- Trainees follow various routes into teacher training. Most are enrolled as Postgraduate Certificate in Education trainees on a School Direct non-salaried pathway.
- There are 26 postgraduate and three undergraduate primary trainees, as well as 18 postgraduate secondary trainees.
- The partnership works with 30 primary schools and 12 secondary schools in Essex and Suffolk local authorities. Most of the partnership schools were graded good at their most recent inspection. A small number were judged as requires improvement and three of the primary schools were judged outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspectors spoke with the chief executive officer of The Sigma Trust, the programme director, who also leads the primary phase, and the secondary programme leader.
- Inspectors also spoke with a staff member who has oversight of trainees' well-being, a group of mentors, training and assessment tutors, primary and secondary headteachers, as well as the primary and secondary subject leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with 23 trainees in schools. They also spoke with two early career teachers, who completed their training in July 2021.
- Focused reviews were carried out in the following subjects: early reading, primary foundation subjects, secondary science, mathematics, English and art and design.
- Inspectors visited 12 placements during the inspection and conducted eight virtual visits via videoconferencing.

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

Leaders have taken effective action to improve the quality of education and training since the previous inspection. While there are elements of the provision that are not yet strong enough, they know what they need to do to continue to improve.

The ITE curriculum is increasingly ambitious. Leaders have thought more carefully about the rationale for curriculum choices, including about what trainees will learn and when. They have acted to ensure that trainees' teaching practice is informed by up-to-date research. Consequently, trainees are now more effectively prepared for their early teaching careers. Significant improvements in phonics training mean that primary trainees are confident to teach early reading. They understand the importance of regular practice and ensuring that books match the sounds children are learning. They know how phonics

can help older pupils to catch up.

While more time is given to subject training overall, the subject training in schools is underdeveloped, especially in primary foundation subjects. In both the primary and secondary phases, subject leads and mentors are inconsistent in evaluating the detail of trainees' subject knowledge improvement over time. Too often, trainees' targets lack subject specificity. This hinders formative assessment processes. Trainees do not get the precise guidance they need to move on quickly.

Leaders have ensured that the ITE curriculum complies with the core content framework. Trainees understand the principles of planning for pupils' learning. They can explain the importance of avoiding overloading pupils' working memory and how to adapt the curriculum to support pupils with SEND. Equality and diversity and the teacher's role in safeguarding pupils are well-understood themes interwoven through central and school-based training.

Links between the SCITT and partnership schools are strong. Mentor training takes account of recent educational research and curriculum changes. Schools receive weekly communications about the central training. Helpful prompts support mentors' regular meetings with trainees.

Subject leaders are appointed based on their phase and subject expertise. However, some subject leads, most notably in primary foundation subjects, are new and still developing their skills in taking forward SCITT leaders' curriculum intentions. The effectiveness of the implementation of new plans is yet to be fully evaluated.

Leaders take action to ensure that any shortfall in trainees' experience is responded to quickly. Ongoing improvement work with mentors and subject leaders is sharply focused on continuing to improve the quality of education and training over time. Leaders are mindful of trainees' well-being. Effective arrangements are in place to support individual needs.

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

- The subject knowledge training in schools is underdeveloped. In both the primary and secondary phases, subject leads and mentors are inconsistent in evaluating the detail of trainees' subject knowledge improvement over time. Consequently, some key aspects are covered superficially. Leaders should ensure that trainees are supported to deepen their knowledge fully in the subjects and phases they are teaching.
- Trainees' improvement targets lack subject specificity. This hinders formative assessment processes because trainees do not get the precise guidance they need to move on quickly. Leaders should ensure that the strengthened quality assurance arrangements now in place are as consistently rigorous in identifying weaknesses in the

subject training as they are in ensuring high quality in the development of the generic principles of teaching and learning.

- Some subject leaders, most noticeably in the primary foundation, are new. Consequently, they are still developing their skills in taking forward SCITT leaders' curriculum intentions. Leaders should work closely with subject leaders to ensure that they have the training they need to deliver the curriculum consistently and effectively across partnership settings.

Does the ITE provider's primary and secondary combined phase comply with the ITE compliance criteria?

- The partnership meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70015
Inspection number	10226400

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

Type of ITE provider	School-centred initial teacher training
Phases provided	Primary and secondary combined
Date of previous inspection	24 to 27 May 2021

Inspection team

Christine Dick, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Adam Cooke	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Wilson	Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phases
Cann Hall Primary School	138911	Primary
Clacton Coastal Academy	135957	Secondary
East Bergholt High School	137218	Secondary
Frinton Primary School	114723	Primary
Harwich and Dover Court High School	137946	Secondary
Holland Haven Primary School	115256	Primary
Mayflower Primary School	114747	Primary
Mersea Island Primary School	115311	Primary
Rolph Primary School	140506	Primary
Saint Helena School	137944	Secondary
Saint Osyth Primary School	142775	Primary
Tendring Technology College	137118	Secondary
Stanway Fiveways Primary School	114764	Primary
The Stanway School	137972	Secondary
White Hall Academy	138575	Primary

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