

Canterbury Christ Church University

Faculty of Education, North Holmes Road, Canterbury CT1 1QU

Inspection dates

16 to 19 May 2022

Inspection judgements

	Primary age-phase	Secondary age-phase	Further education age-phase
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement	Requires improvement	Inadequate
The quality of education and training	Requires improvement	Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Requires improvement	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good	Good	Outstanding

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

Across all three phases, training is variable in quality. Links between the different aspects are not strong. Nevertheless, there are some strengths in training, notably in how it supports trainees' understanding of how to adapt teaching for pupils or students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and to manage behaviour.

Trainees are mostly positive about their training and value being part of the university. They welcome the way in which their courses provide contrasting placements, and appreciate leaders' focus on supporting children and young people in the context of the local area. Undergraduates appreciate the range of additional, diverse placements on offer to extend their experience. Trainees know that partnership leaders are mindful of their workload and look for ways to make helpful changes where they can. However, as they move into the early stages of their career, many trainees would like more strategies for managing workload and building resilience.

The support that trainees get from their mentors is left too much to chance. By and large, mentors do their very best to support trainees, but they are not always sufficiently familiar with the centre-based training or systems for assessing and guiding trainees' development. Consequently, what trainees learn from the university is not always coordinated well enough with their school-based training.

Trainees are looked after well in a number of ways. Those with recognised disabilities or diagnosed needs are supported by appropriately qualified staff, and aspects of their courses and placements are adapted if required. Equally, trainees can benefit from access to trained and knowledgeable professionals for support with their mental health and well-being.

Information about this ITE provider

- At the time of this inspection, there were 921 trainees in the primary age-phase, 233 trainees in the secondary age-phase and 349 in the further education and skills (FES) phase.
- The primary and secondary phases both have trainees on one of five different training routes. These are undergraduate, core Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), PGCE School Direct (both salaried and fee-paid routes) and assessment-only routes.
- The primary phase also offers undergraduate and postgraduate routes with mathematics specialisms and flexible and part-time routes. Trainees can opt for either the 3–7 primary age-phase, the 5–11 primary age-phase or the 7–11 primary age-phase.
- This year, there are trainees enrolled on the following secondary courses: art and design, biology, chemistry, computing, English, geography, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, music, physical education, physics, religious education and social sciences. Trainees opt for either the 7–14 secondary age-phase, the 11–16 secondary age-phase or the 11–18 secondary age-phase.
- The FES phase has trainees on a variety of pre-service (part- and full-time) and in-service training routes. In this phase, the provider currently works with 14 colleges across Kent and several London boroughs.
- In the primary phase, the provider works with approximately 350 schools and in the secondary phase approximately 70 schools. Most schools are in Kent or Medway, but the provider works with schools across the South East region and beyond. Most colleges and schools in the partnership were graded good or better at their most recent inspection.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by 14 of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Ofsted Inspector. The inspection was carried out through in-person meetings, online meetings and on-site visits to partner schools and colleges.
- Inspectors met with the head of the school of teacher education, the director of initial teacher education (ITE) partnerships, other senior leaders, university phase leaders, directors of the various different training routes, several university tutors, and the head of the university's student well-being services.
- The lead inspector met with the dean of faculty, the faculty registrar and the faculty director of quality to discuss strategic leadership and governance arrangements.
- In all phases, inspectors spoke with headteachers and/or senior leaders in placement settings, curriculum leaders, professional tutors, mentors and teaching staff. They considered a range of documents, including trainee records and evidence of assessment, leaders' self-evaluation, and improvement planning.
- The inspection team considered 147 responses to Ofsted's online survey for trainees. This included responses from 82 primary-phase, 52 secondary-phase and 13 FES-phase trainees. They also reviewed and took into account the 249 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.

- In the primary phase, inspectors visited 12 placement schools and spoke with a total 57 trainees, either at their placement schools or via online meetings. They conducted focused reviews in reading, mathematics, science, history, geography, design technology, computing, physical education and art. Inspectors also held remote interviews with 11 former trainees.
- In the secondary phase, inspectors visited or communicated with 11 placement schools and spoke to 25 trainees. They conducted focused reviews in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, computing and religious education. Inspectors also held remote interviews with five former trainees.
- In the FES phase, inspectors visited or communicated with six placement colleges and spoke to 23 trainees. They conducted focused reviews in English, mathematics, art and design, performing arts, health and social care, and SEND. They also reviewed course provision targeted at various trades, including equestrian, army and nursing specialist courses.

Primary phase report

What works well in the primary phase and what needs to be done better?

Centre-based training is suitably ambitious, carefully chosen and, on the whole, tackled in a logical order. The partnership offers trainees a curriculum that is grounded in relevant research and includes the minimum core content required. Leaders and centre trainers are highly knowledgeable and respected in their fields. They are passionate about subject disciplines and the place these have in a primary curriculum.

However, the different elements of the training programme do not link and build on each other well enough. Links between the centre-based and school-based training in particular are not strong enough. Leaders have not ensured that there is a common understanding across all partners about the current expectations of school-based training. The potential of school placements to reinforce, develop and extend centre-based training is not realised well enough. Consequently, overall, trainees do not learn and develop as much as they could.

Mentors keenly support trainees with useful advice and support. However, leaders have not ensured that mentors in schools are consistently well trained to play their part in implementing the partnership's curriculum.

Trainees are well supported during their training, particularly those with additional needs. Leaders regularly seek and act on trainees' views. Undergraduate trainees value hugely the additional placement that broadens their experience.

All courses develop trainees' understanding of teaching early reading and, within that, the importance of systematic synthetic phonics. Centre-based sessions alone do not equip trainees consistently well with a strong understanding of the principles of effective practice. School-based experiences enhance learning for many trainees, but this varies considerably according to placement schools and year groups.

The partnership has made a significant shift in the way in which it assesses trainees during the course. It has rightly moved away from continually assessing against the teachers' standards, which describe the professional standards for qualified teachers. This has been welcomed across partners. However, mentors' inconsistent understanding of the partnership's curriculum undermines their ability to assess well against it. This sometimes leads them to set targets that are imprecise and/or disconnected from the training programme.

Leaders know what they want to achieve and are very aware that there is more to do to get there. However, quality assurance processes and tools do not align fully with the partnership's curriculum. There are no robust mechanisms for ensuring that the intended main messages are conveyed to trainees on placements or for checking that teachers they

observe for a particular purpose have suitable expertise. Some link tutors, who have a critical role in quality assuring mentoring, have not had recent training.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- There is not a clear and consistent shared understanding of the role of mentors and school-based training in the intended partnership curriculum. Beyond the centre, there is a limited grasp of the core content framework (CCF) and, fundamentally, schools' and/or mentors' place within it. Although partnership documents are annotated with CCF references, some mentors do not know to what these refer. Leaders should ensure that all partners have a clear understanding of their roles in, and intended contribution to, the training programme.
- A lack of purposeful integration across the different elements of the partnership's curriculum undermines its success. This means that trainees' progress in terms of knowing, remembering and being able to do more is variable and not strong enough overall, including in reading. Leaders should ensure that the different elements of the training knit tightly together, and complement and build on each other, so that they have a strong impact on trainees' learning and experience.
- Mentors are not consistently well equipped with sufficient knowledge and understanding of the CCF and the partnership's curriculum in order to fulfil their roles well, including in assessing trainees' progress and determining next steps. The partnership should prioritise ensuring that all mentors are well trained and able to deliver clear and consistent mentoring that is closely aligned with the partnership's curriculum.
- Quality assurance systems are not sufficiently thorough or refined to secure the quality of school-based training that leaders desire. The link tutors, whom partnership leaders report are pivotal in ensuring and assuring the quality of mentoring, have not all received recent training. Some of the tools used for quality assurance do not align well with the ITE curriculum that the partnership is trying to implement. Leaders should strengthen quality assurance arrangements so that they focus rigorously on the quality of the curriculum, and its implementation and impact.

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

- The partnership meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

Secondary phase report

What works well in the secondary phase and what needs to be done better?

Leaders have designed an ambitious ITE curriculum underpinned by carefully considered research and informed by appropriate consultation with school-based leaders. Curriculum content is coherently sequenced and fulfils the requirements of the CCF. Through centre-based training, trainees develop their understanding of the generic teaching skills and subject-specific pedagogical knowledge they need in order to plan effective lessons.

The intended curriculum is not, however, enacted fully. Leaders know that the quality of mentoring is not consistently strong across schools in the partnership. While leaders produce well-considered training materials for mentors, too few mentors attend training courses or access course information. Consequently, many mentors lack detailed knowledge about the aims and expectations of the training programme. They do not always understand how to ensure that important learning from centre-based training is reinforced in school-based training.

Mentors' lack of engagement with training also means that there are inconsistencies in how well they know, and expertly use, the recommended research to underpin their practice. Similarly, not all mentors understand and/or apply the university's formative assessment practices as expected. Consequently, mentors often set trainees targets that are imprecise or not clearly linked to the training programme. Where this occurs, trainees do not develop the knowledge and skills set out in the curriculum as well as they could. This hampers their development as subject teachers.

There are aspects of the secondary-phase courses that are strong. The additional placement in a special school, organised by leaders, is highly valued by PGCE trainees. Trainees gain a secure understanding of how to identify pupils with SEND and how to meet their needs in the classroom. Leaders ensure that trainees develop a thorough understanding of the importance of safeguarding and equalities.

Effective pastoral support systems mean that trainees feel well supported, particularly those with additional needs and those with workload or well-being concerns. Leaders have procedures in place to seek and act on trainees' views. Those trainees who struggle to fulfil the minimum requirements of the training programme receive helpful support from professional tutors and partnership leaders.

Leaders' quality assurance systems are not rigorous enough. They have delegated the quality assurance of school-based training to school leaders. This does not provide them with sufficiently accurate information about the quality of mentoring and how well trainees make progress through the training programme. Too much emphasis is placed on school leaders' understanding of trainees' progress rather than on the quality of discussions between mentors and trainees, or the work and reflection of trainees. These weaknesses in

quality assurance mean that leaders lack sufficiently detailed and robust information to underpin their improvement plans.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that curriculum content is integrated fully across the partnership. There is significant variation in mentors' knowledge and their expertise to routinely reinforce centre-based training as required. This means that trainees' experiences vary between and within school settings, and many do not develop their subject knowledge and skills as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all mentors have the expertise to reinforce the intended curriculum content in school-based settings.
- Leaders have not ensured that mentors access the partnership training available to them. Some mentors have a limited understanding of the CCF and the partnership's curriculum. This inhibits how well they assess trainees' progress and determine their next steps. Leaders should ensure that all mentors are suitably trained and able to deliver clear and consistent mentoring that matches the partnership's curriculum.
- Leaders do not quality assure the impact of the ITE curriculum across the partnership sufficiently well. Consequently, leaders are not well enough informed about how well their systems are working or how well trainees are learning the curriculum. Leaders should improve their quality assurance systems to provide more accurate information on trainees' development, work and progress, and, in turn, to ensure more consistent delivery of the intended curriculum.

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

- The partnership meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

Further education and skills phase report

What works well in the further education and skills phase and what needs to be done better?

The university is too hands-off in its approach to training to teach in the FES sector. Leaders lack coherent oversight as a consequence of largely delegating the design and delivery of the curriculum to partner colleges, which is compounded by weak quality assurance processes. The upshot is that it cannot be confident that trainees are benefiting from the training and support they need to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to be successful in their chosen career.

Partner colleges plan suitably sequenced programmes to build trainees' pedagogical knowledge and skills over time. Some trainees, for example those in the NHS and Army, gain from knowledgeable, experienced mentors who have received mentor training from their own organisations. Where this is the case, mentors complement training sessions well. They explain the theoretical and practical aspects of subject-specific teaching thoroughly.

Leaders have not, however, ensured that mentors across the partnership are well equipped for their role. Leaders create useful mentor training materials, but do not monitor the completion of this training or measure its impact on creating a consistent and high-quality mentoring model. Despite this, most mentors act as a critical friend, share their expertise and provide effective feedback to improve trainees' pedagogical practice. However, too few mentors have a good enough understanding of what is expected of them or focus sufficiently on subject-specific teaching. As a result, they do not help trainees to reinforce their theoretical understanding, or have an effective oversight of how this theory could be reflected in trainees' subject-specific teaching.

Overall, the centre- and placement-based elements of the programme are simply not integrated well enough. There are no arrangements in place for ensuring that training needs identified through the centre-based programme inform the work that trainees carry out on their placements.

Too much falls to trainees to reflect on their progress. By and large, they do recognise their own areas for improvement and value support from their trainers. However, targets are not consistently focused on improving teaching or subject-specific knowledge. Developmental actions following feedback are not closely monitored. As a result, trainees do not always demonstrate improvements in their subject teaching over time and ongoing support plans for trainees are weak.

Leaders do not have sufficient oversight of safeguarding. They do not react quickly enough to deal with known safeguarding concerns. Communication with partner colleges to understand and take appropriate actions is too slow and ineffective. Furthermore, leaders are overly reliant on the safeguarding processes and procedures of their partner colleges. They do not ensure that all trainees have completed their safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty

training. Leaders do not evaluate the impact of safeguarding training, so they do not know whether trainees are developing the knowledge they need to recognise and act on safeguarding concerns.

All in all, leaders' self-evaluation and improvement planning are weak. They lack sufficient knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses across the partnership. While partners do identify appropriate key areas for improvement, such as the quality of mentoring, these do not match the university's priorities. Consequently, there is no effective collaboration to identify and implement focused actions to achieve the rapid improvement required.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- The centre-based and placement-based elements of the FES-phase programme are not purposefully integrated. Arrangements to ensure that the centre-based programme informs the work that trainees carry out on their placements are insufficient. Leaders need to ensure that they take responsibility for planning and implementing a coherent and ambitious FES curriculum that prepares trainees sufficiently well for teaching in further education.
- Mentors do not have an in-depth understanding and knowledge of the academic programme taught to trainees. Consequently, they do not support trainees to develop and reinforce their theoretical understanding and practical application of subject-specific teaching well enough. Leaders should ensure that all mentors are well trained to support trainees' progress through the curriculum effectively.
- Safeguarding arrangements for trainees are weak. Safeguarding concerns identified during the inspection had not been followed up rigorously or in a timely manner. Leaders must ensure that they can guarantee that timely, appropriate and robust interventions are actioned.
- Leadership and management arrangements as they stand are not fit for purpose. While leaders have some awareness of the improvements that are needed to ensure greater consistency across the partnership, a lack of oversight and weak planning have impacted on the pace of improvement. Leaders need to ensure that they prioritise rapid improvements in the quality of the ITE curriculum and its implementation and impact.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70011
Inspection number	10220400

This inspection was carried out 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 Secondary Further education and skills
Date of previous inspection	24 to 27 March 2014

Inspection team

Matthew Newberry, overall lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Daniel Beale	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Hilary MacDonald	Her Majesty's Inspector
James Broadbridge	Her Majesty's Inspector
Laurie Anderson	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lee Selby	Her Majesty's Inspector
Louise Walker	Her Majesty's Inspector
Peter Cox	Her Majesty's Inspector
Shaun Jarvis	Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Placement schools and colleges

Inspectors visited the following schools and colleges as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phase(s)
Chilton Primary School	141766	Primary
Green Park Community Primary School	135197	Primary
Herne Bay Infant School	118359	Primary
Joy Lane Primary Foundation School	135130	Primary
Kennington Church of England Academy	141329	Primary
Loose Primary School	146143	Primary
Mersham Primary School	118377	Primary
Regis Manor Primary School	136794	Primary
South Avenue Primary School	140521	Primary
Tree Tops Primary Academy	137882	Primary
Upton Junior School	143220	Primary
White Cliffs Primary School	138168	Primary
Barton Court Grammar School	137474	Secondary
Brockhill Park Performing Arts College	137458	Secondary
Highworth Grammar School	136379	Secondary
Meopham School	139075	Secondary
Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School	136570	Secondary
Salvatorian Roman Catholic College	138458	Secondary
Sandwich Technology School	136317	Secondary
Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School	118840	Secondary
The Norton Knatchbull School	138019	Secondary
The Sittingbourne School	137687	Secondary
The Whitstable School	144354	Secondary
Capital City College Group (The College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London)	130421	FES
EKC Group (Canterbury College)	130728	FES
MidKent College	130726	FES
North Kent College	130725	FES
Orchard Hill College of Further Education	131948	FES
West Thames College	130447	FES

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