

Mid Somerset Consortium for Teacher Training

MSC, Crispin School, Church Road, Street, Somerset BA16 0AD

Inspection dates

6 February to 9 February 2023

Inspection judgements

Secondary 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?

The Mid Somerset Consortium provides trainees with a teacher training experience that is shaped to their experience and personal circumstances. Leaders listen to trainees' views. Trainees feel well supported. They appreciate the opportunity to qualify as teachers by working in local schools.

Across the partnership, there is a shared commitment to developing trainees as experts in their subjects. The programme is well organised and coherent. Leaders and school-based staff work together well to help trainees apply what they learn in theory to their classroom practice.

There is a culture of professional learning in which trainees engage with research and ideas in their specialist subject. Trainees build a repertoire of teaching approaches. They understand the evidence underpinning the pedagogies they learn about. Consequently, they are well prepared for their early careers as teachers. School leaders see this as a strength of the programme.

Trainees understand their wider professional responsibilities, such as safeguarding. They know why some pupils find learning difficult and how they can help. Trainees learn how to preserve their own well-being. They learn how to manage their own workload, for example by using assessment wisely.

Information about this ITE provider

- The Mid Somerset Consortium provides teacher training for the secondary phase (11 to 16).
- There are 21 trainees enrolled in the 2022/23 academic year.
- There are 19 schools in the partnership. Most were judged to be good at their most recent Ofsted inspection.
- The partnership offers the following routes: School Direct (salaried), School Direct (fees), school-centred initial teacher training, apprenticeships and assessment only. Trainees also have the option to complete a postgraduate certificate in education. At the time of inspection, there were no trainees following the apprenticeship or assessment-only routes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by two of His Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders from the SCITT. They also held meetings with members of the management board (SCITT governors), headteachers from partnership schools, Initial Teacher Training Coordinators (senior staff in schools with responsibility for Initial Teacher Education), subject leaders and school-based mentors.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews in English, geography and science.
- Inspectors visited five partnership schools in person and conducted focused review activities with a further school remotely. They met with 19 trainees and five early career teachers (ECTs). Inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and trainees.
- Inspectors visited centre-based training and viewed samples of provider and trainee documents.

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

The Mid Somerset Consortium (MSC) curriculum is ambitious. Subject-specific training builds on the pertinent research that trainees study. Consequently, they can apply what they have learned to the subject that they are training to teach. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Department for Education's core content framework.

The curriculum is well-matched to trainees' needs and supports their development during school placements. For example, an early focus on behaviour management in centre-based training means trainees use a range of approaches to secure good behaviour from pupils.

Staff who lead centre-based subject training have the expertise they need. They develop the subject-specific knowledge that trainees need. However, trainees do not always fully understand the uniqueness and breadth of knowledge in the particular subjects they are preparing to teach.

Leaders provide high-quality information and training to school-based staff. Consequently, most subject mentors and school-based leaders have a comprehensive understanding of

the ITE curriculum and can support trainees to put what they have learned into practice. A few school-based staff do not understand the ITE curriculum well enough, particularly the research that informs it. MSC leaders identify when trainees are not getting the quality of support that they should in school. However, they do not always improve this as promptly as they could.

The ongoing assessment of trainees is against the curriculum that MSC leaders have designed. The targets set for trainees now help them to know exactly what they are working on and how this links to their overall development. ECTs say that the assessment at the end of the course helped them to understand their strengths and weaknesses as they began their teaching careers.

Leaders check the quality of all aspects of the programme. They know their partner schools very well and seek their views in reviewing their curriculum to ensure it is well aligned to local needs. Headteachers speak highly of the quality of the ECTs that the MSC provides and see it as an invaluable part of the educational landscape in Somerset.

There are strong relationships between centre-based staff and trainees. Trainees feel able to raise any concerns they have with course leaders. Both centre- and school-based staff provide the professional and personal support they need. There is a strong focus on the well-being of trainees and they learn specific skills to help them manage their workloads throughout the course and into their careers.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- Some areas of the curriculum do not cover the full scope and breadth of the subject that trainees are learning to teach. As a result, some trainees do not fully develop the richness of knowledge within their subjects. Leaders need to ensure that trainees develop a wider understanding of the breadth of their chosen specialisms.
- The quality of support that a minority of trainees receive while on school placements is not consistently strong. Consequently, some trainees cannot consolidate and develop their understanding of all aspects of the ITE curriculum in their school placement as fully as they might. Leaders need to ensure that they act promptly to bring about improvement in the small proportion of placements where school-based training is not strong enough.

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

- The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70231
Inspection number	10249842

This inspection was carried out 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	Secondary
Date of previous inspection	14 February to 17 February 2022

Inspection team

Sarah Favager-Dalton, Lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lydia Pride	His Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phase
Crispin School Academy	136913	Secondary
King Arthur's School	147016	Secondary
Robert Blake Science College	123878	Secondary
Stanchester Academy	137080	Secondary
The Gryphon School	138471	Secondary
West Somerset College	136791	Secondary

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