

2Schools Consortium

Oakthorpe Primary School, Tile Kiln Lane, London N13 6BY

Inspection dates

30 January to 2 February 2023

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 provider?

This is a small training provider that serves schools in the local community. Trainees are extremely proud to be part of this programme. They are committed to being successful in their training and making a positive difference in their placement schools. They also value the support and care that they get from programme leaders. Bespoke guidance for each trainee is a key feature of the programme. Trainees feel that leaders care about them and want them to succeed. Professional relationships between staff and trainees are exceptionally strong.

Programme leaders design the content of the training with great care. They make sure that the curriculum prepares trainees well for the realities of teaching. In organising the programme, leaders make thoughtful decisions about the best time to introduce and revisit key ideas. For example, trainees value the information they get on safeguarding and behaviour, and how this helps them to feel well equipped when they start their school placements. Programme leaders, professional tutors and school-based mentors also provide trainees with helpful strategies to manage their workload.

The course is designed to make trainees aware of the different special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) that pupils in their class may have. All trainees feel prepared to teach the full curriculum in the primary phase, including early reading.

Programme leaders know the partner schools that they work with very well. They make sure that everybody who supports trainees provides the same messages and consistent levels of support. This means that, regardless of where trainees complete their school placements, they receive the same high-quality programme.

Information about this ITE provider

- 2Schools Consortium provides a programme of teacher training in the primary age-phase.
- Trainees follow either the school-centred (non-salaried) route or the apprenticeship route. All routes lead to the award of qualified teacher status (QTS) and a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE). The provider also offers the assessment-only route to QTS.
- The partnership currently has 16 trainees, the majority of whom are on the apprenticeship route.
- The provider currently works with 12 local schools.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by two of His Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspectors met with the provider's senior leadership team, as well as subject leaders and professional tutors. Meetings took place either in person or remotely.
- Inspectors met with all 16 trainees. They also spoke to early career teachers.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews in early reading, science, mathematics and history. Other aspects of the initial teacher education (ITE) curriculum were considered as part of this inspection.
- Inspectors visited five partner schools. They met with school leaders, school-based mentors and trainees. Inspectors also met remotely with school-based mentors and leaders from other partnership schools.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to the staff survey and the survey for trainees.
- Inspectors also considered a wide range of documents (including those on the ITE curriculum), records of safeguarding checks and information related to the provider's compliance with the requirements of the ITE criteria.

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

Programme leaders and staff share high aspirations for all trainees. The ITE curriculum is designed to support trainees in becoming knowledgeable and confident teachers across the primary age-phase. Leaders have made sure that the curriculum is ambitious in scope, and, in the main, have carefully chosen and sequenced its content. Together with the school-based tasks and training, the programme enables trainees to be well prepared for their future in the teaching profession. Leaders ensure that the core content framework (CCF) is used to shape and refine the training. The requirements of the CCF are complied with in full.

For many aspects of the ITE curriculum, leaders are clear about what trainees will know and remember by the end of the course. The centre- and school-based training has been coherently planned so that trainees acquire this knowledge in a logical sequence. This is working particularly well in subjects such as reading, mathematics and science. In a few subjects, however, leaders' expectations for what trainees need to learn have not been made explicit. Sometimes, it is unclear how trainees should revisit and apply what they have learned centrally at a school-based level. While leaders make sure that experts deliver subject-specific training, they have not checked exactly what content is being taught and emphasised. This means that trainees could develop gaps in their knowledge.

Leaders make sure that trainees learn about how to teach early reading, including the use of systematic synthetic phonics (SSP). Trainees learn the importance of providing all pupils, including those pupils with SEND, with enough structured practice to secure fluency in reading. School-based phonics tasks and follow-up mentor discussions supplement the course content effectively. All trainees, including those with less experience in key stage 1 and early years, become confident about using SSP to teach pupils to read.

The ITE curriculum is designed to ensure that trainees engage with up-to-date and pertinent research findings. Trainees, school-based mentors and leaders especially value the weekly newsletter, which signposts them to credible articles and research. All those involved in delivering the training are carefully chosen for their expertise. They draw on and model expert application of their own knowledge of teaching the curriculum in the primary age-phase. They show trainees how to select and appraise pedagogical choices and subject-specific approaches so that all pupils are supported to learn successfully.

Leaders make sure that all trainees receive the same level of high-quality mentoring, regardless of where their school placements are. Trainees benefit from regular opportunities to observe expert colleagues. They particularly value the opportunity to plan, deliver and evaluate sequences of lessons jointly with school-based staff. Trainees and mentors meet regularly. They discuss what is working well and identify suitable targets for moving forward. Trainees appreciate the way in which mentors provide the right balance of support and challenge.

School leaders are impressed by how well prepared trainees are to embark on their teaching careers. Leaders seek the views of all stakeholders regularly. They respond to the feedback received and ensure that everyone is getting the most out of the programme. They have made appropriate adaptations to the provision on offer over the years to best serve their local schools, for example by offering appropriate routes into the programme.

Leaders seek external expertise to help them get a clear picture of the ITE curriculum's strengths and weaknesses. They use these insights to self-evaluate their provision and to secure improvements for trainees. The pastoral support that trainees receive is appropriate, timely and a key strength of the provider. This includes helping trainees with managing workload and maintaining their well-being. Leaders are alert to trainees who experience difficulties. They intervene appropriately to support trainees to continue on the course. School leaders were positive about the quality of guidance and support that trainees receive, including through the use of additional support plans when needed.

All requirements are met for candidates on the assessment-only route.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- While much of the ITE programme is coherently planned, this coherence is not as strong and well established for some of the training in the non-core subjects. Some end-points that trainees need to reach by the end of the course have not been made explicit. This means that in some non-core subjects, experts who deliver aspects of the curriculum are not given sufficiently clear guidance on exactly what they need to cover in their training sessions. Leaders need to clarify and strengthen their curriculum intent in the foundation subjects where this is not fully established and complete. They should set out clearly how each training session fits in with the school-based tasks so that trainees are fully supported to develop and deepen their knowledge of teaching all subjects in the primary age-phase.

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

- The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

Do apprenticeships in the ITE provider's primary phase satisfy the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision?

- The provider meets the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision in the primary phase.

Apprentices are well supported to gain new knowledge, skills and behaviours and to achieve their full potential. From the initial assessment onwards, leaders and staff plan carefully for each apprentice's development. Ongoing assessment, including review points, shapes the training programme purposefully. All those involved in supporting apprentices communicate up-to-date subject knowledge that reflects expected practice and meets employers' needs.

Apprentices benefit from the entitlement to have regular protected time out of the classroom. Through their planned off-the-job training, apprentices acquire new knowledge, skills and behaviours that are relevant to their job role. These enable them to contribute to their workplace, fulfil their career aims and complete their apprenticeship successfully.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70178
Inspection number	10254527

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	School-centred initial teacher training
Phases provided	Primary
Date of previous inspection	24 March 2014

Inspection team

Aliki Constantopoulou, Lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Andrea Bedeau	His Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phase(s)
Eldon Primary School	101988	Primary
Worcesters Primary School	145985	Primary
George Spicer Primary School	101993	Primary
Russet House School	130958	Primary
Merryhills Primary School	101999	Primary

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