

# Somerset SCITT Consortium

Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning, Dillington House, Ilminster, Somerset TA19 9DT

## Inspection dates

20 March to 23 March 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?

Trainees are proud to be part of a nurturing and supportive partnership. Many describe Somerset SCITT Consortium as a 'close family', where leaders provide a 'deep sense of care'. Trainees are overwhelmingly positive about the course.

Trainees acquire the knowledge that they need to become confident early career teachers. The centre-based 'INSPIRE' curriculum allows trainees to link theory and relevant educational research to classroom practice. For example, from the start of the programme, they learn about the importance of managing behaviour and use this knowledge successfully in their school placements. Trainees feel well prepared to teach mathematics and early reading, including phonics. They collaborate with their peers to build 'padlets' of high-quality children's literature to use in their teaching.

Trainees value the communication they receive. The weekly newsletter provides regular support and guidance, which all stakeholders find useful. This enhances the collaborative approach of the partnership. From the outset, trainees build strong relationships and networks. Additionally, they benefit from 'writing retreats' and talks from curriculum experts to complement the programme. As a result, trainees develop as highly reflective practitioners. Leaders regularly seek trainees' feedback about their learning. Trainees say they are part of a 'SCITT that listens'.

## Information about this ITE provider

- Somerset SCITT Consortium has been providing teacher training since 1998. It is part of Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning.
- This academic year there are 42 trainees enrolled on the SCITT programmes. All routes lead to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The vast majority of trainees complete a level seven Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) alongside QTS.
- Of the 42 trainees, 19 follow the PGCE route. Fifteen trainees are on a School Direct programme, which is non-salaried. Six trainees are on the Postgraduate Teaching Apprenticeship. At the time of the inspection, there were two trainees on the Assessment Only route. The SCITT works with five different multi-academy trusts or partnerships within the School Direct programme.
- The partnership is currently working with primary and special schools in Somerset, North Somerset, Devon and Cornwall local authorities. They also work with one independent school. The schools within the partnership have been judged as outstanding, good or requires improvement. There are no partner schools that have been judged as inadequate by Ofsted.
- Trainees are trained to either teach the three to seven or five to 11 age range. Seven trainees train on the five to 11 route with a special educational needs and/or disabilities enhancement.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team consisted of two of His Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspectors spoke with the SCITT programme manager, the lead placement moderator, subject leaders and other staff. An inspector also spoke with the SCITT management board and members of Somerset Local Authority as the legal entity.
- Inspectors spoke with headteachers, placement moderators, placement tutors and trainees.
- An inspector spoke with School Direct representatives of the following multi-academy trusts: The Oak Partnership Multi-Academy Trust and Wessex Learning Trust. The inspector also met with a representative from Growing Expert Teachers, which is a group of primary schools in North Somerset.
- The inspectors completed focused reviews in early reading, mathematics and music. Inspectors also spoke with leaders and reviewed training from a range of other subjects. Inspectors visited seven placement settings as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke with 29 trainees and 11 professional tutors, who undertake the role of mentors. An inspector also spoke with nine early career teachers, who had previously studied at the SCITT. Inspectors considered responses to the staff and trainee surveys, including free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered information related to the Department for Education's initial teacher training criteria and supporting advice.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of information provided by the SCITT leaders, including information about governance, safeguarding arrangements, trainee placements, the ITE curriculum and training resources and materials.

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

Leaders are ambitious in their offer to trainees. Their vision, to train high-quality teachers to work in local schools, is unwavering. Leaders select relevant knowledge and teaching strategies to underpin their ITE curriculum. This exceeds the requirements of the core content framework set by the Department for Education. The 'INSPIRE' curriculum is underpinned by up-to-date and pertinent research. Subject leaders use this research carefully when making decisions about the content to deliver.

Trainees transfer their centre-based learning into their school-based placements successfully. They are well prepared for the realities of teaching in key stages 1 and 2. For example, in music, trainees use what they have learned to develop effective routines in their classrooms. However, the curriculum is not considered well enough for the early years foundation stage. In some areas, trainees do not understand enough about early childhood development because the training they receive is fragmented.

Leaders ensure trainees understand the importance of adaptive teaching. Some trainees study an enhancement for pupils with special educational needs/and or disabilities. This is highly effective. All trainees have the opportunity to visit a special school. This enables them to understand successful strategies to support all learners' needs.

Leaders understand the importance of early reading and phonics. From the very beginning of the programme, trainees engage in activities regarding how children learn to read. Leaders provide carefully matched 'key tasks' to support trainees' understanding and teaching of reading in schools. Trainees are fully equipped to teach phonics using a systematic synthetic approach. English subject leaders instil a love of reading in their trainees, which transfers to their work with pupils.

Leaders have carefully considered what placement tutors need to know to support trainees. They deliver regular training, as well as provide key information on their virtual learning environment. Many trainees receive high-quality mentoring. This allows them to develop the knowledge and skills they need to be highly effective early career teachers. However, the checks that leaders make on the quality of this support are sometimes not robust enough. Therefore, some trainees receive inconsistent support.

Leaders are proactive in supporting trainees' workload and well-being. It is at the heart of everything they do. They carefully consider how to use formative and summative assessments to find out how well trainees learn the 'INSPIRE' curriculum. Many trainees report how useful the 'key tasks' are to cement the theory they have learned into practice. Leaders use what they know from these assessments to provide timely and bespoke support to trainees.

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

### **(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)**

- In a few areas of the ITE curriculum, leaders have not considered key knowledge and content that trainees should learn about the early years foundation stage. As a result, trainees do not develop a sufficient depth of knowledge in the early years in these areas. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum builds sequentially from the early years in all areas.
- Leaders' quality assurance of the support trainees receive in schools is sometimes not rigorous enough. Therefore, some trainees do not receive the same high-quality support as others. Leaders must ensure that this support is more consistent and in line with the best practice across the partnership.

## **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.

Leaders ensure that the initial assessment for trainees on the Postgraduate Teacher Apprenticeship programme fully reflects their current needs and previous school experience. They use what they know to build an individual learning plan to support trainees to fulfill the requirements by the end of the programme. Trainees complete a range of formative and summative assessment tasks and assignments. Leaders use these to monitor the further support apprentices need to gain knowledge and skills in teaching. Trainees on this route also have the opportunity to study for a PGCE. Most take this opportunity.

Apprentices benefit from the same centre-based training as their peers on the School Direct route into teaching. This enables them to learn the subject and teaching knowledge they need to use in their school placements.

## **ITE provider details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	70066
<b>Inspection number</b>	10249873

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.

<b>Type of ITE provider</b>	School-centred initial teacher training
<b>Phases provided</b>	Primary
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	26 June and 2 October 2017

## **Inspection team**

Donna Briggs, Lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Dale Burr	His Majesty's Inspector

## Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phase
Axbridge Church of England First School	138763	Primary
Blackbrook Community Primary School	146704	Primary
East Brent Church of England First School	143331	Primary
Hérons' Moor Academy	138603	Primary
Puriton Primary School	144436	Primary
St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School	123750	Primary
West Monkton Church of England Primary School	146676	Primary

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