

Teach First

6 Mitre Passage
London
SE10 0ER

Inspection dates

6 to 9 March 2023

Inspection judgements

Early career framework (ECF) inspection

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of professional development and training

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

N/A

What is it like to be an early career teacher (ECT) at this lead provider?

ECTs receive expertly designed training that is calibrated exceptionally well to meet their needs. This is because the lead provider checks what ECTs know about elements of the ECF to make training bespoke. Mentors and leaders of training adjust activities to account for what ECTs know and can do already. Seamless communication between programme leaders, facilitators and mentors makes this work extremely well.

ECTs develop extensive knowledge of how to apply the ECF when teaching different subject matter in their schools. They benefit from plentiful opportunities to watch other teachers and practise thoroughly themselves. This is so that ECTs can adapt their teaching to support pupils from a diverse range of settings and backgrounds.

Reflective practice is central to the training, which ECTs build through 'development cycles'. ECTs confidently connect general educational content with their specific contexts in the early years, primary, secondary and post-16 phases. The training successfully helps ECTs to deepen their expertise, including the nuts-and-bolts of managing pupils' behaviour and working with parents and carers.

ECTs receive joined-up messages about how to manage workload. For example, when they learn about assessment, their mentors consider how to help ECTs assess in proportionate and effective ways. When individual ECTs need additional help, leaders put high-quality support in place promptly.

Information about this lead provider

- There are 11,090 ECTs undertaking the lead provider's ECF programme. Of these, 5,468 are in their first year of the ECF programme and 5,622 are in their second year.
- Teach First works with 20 delivery partners, who deliver training to 9,891 ECTs.
- The delivery partners include 18 teaching school hubs and two multi-academy trusts.
- Teach First provides direct delivery to 1,199 ECTs.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by seven of His Majesty's Inspectors. The inspection was carried out through in-person meetings, online meetings, on-site visits to delivery partners and an online visit to a delivery partner.
- Inspectors met with the lead provider's representatives, including the programme director for teacher development, the head of school partnerships, the head of curriculum design and other senior leaders. The lead inspector also met with members of the strategic board and with members of the delivery and operations teams.
- Inspectors visited 12 delivery partners.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews in primary programmes and secondary programmes. For each focused review, inspectors met with delivery partner leaders and facilitators, discussed training with groups of ECTs and mentors, met with headteachers and induction tutors, watched online training, reviewed exemplified training materials, and scrutinised documentation. Inspectors observed four sessions of live training.
- Inspectors carried out 13 focused reviews. Of these, inspectors carried out 12 focused reviews with delivery partners and one focused review that considered Teach First's direct delivery.
- The inspection team considered 1525 responses to Ofsted's online survey for ECTs, 1150 responses from mentors, 549 responses from school leaders and 127 responses from delivery partner leaders.

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

At Teach First, those in the early stages of their teaching career benefit from meticulously thought-through training that comprehensively covers the knowledge and skills outlined in the ECF. The ECF content is incorporated within a curriculum that includes extensive illustrations of what this might look like in practice in different subjects and phases.

Leaders place tackling disadvantage at the heart of the decisions they make about key aspects of training. Detailed sessions, led by well-informed facilitators, prepare ECTs to decide how best to bring the ECF alive in their own specific teaching contexts. For example, secondary ECTs apply what they are taught about reading and language comprehension in their design and technology lessons, to support pupils who are still at the early stages of learning to read.

The lead provider uses formative assessment adeptly within the training. ECTs use information from low-stakes quizzes that they take before and after training modules to reflect on their growing professional knowledge base. This also helps their mentors gauge when ECTs might need greater support. For those ECTs who are confident with the basics, mentors equip them to explore educational research that further enhances ECTs' teaching practice.

What mentors learn on their training programme is well attuned to what ECTs cover. The training enables mentors to reflect on the ECF and their own professional experiences to craft discussions with ECTs. This gives ECTs additional guidance on how to put what they have learned to use in their developing teaching practice.

ECTs develop an impressive knowledge of how to apply the ECF skilfully in different phases. For example, ECTs compare what it might mean to apply high behaviour expectations in an early years setting, with a post-16 classroom. ECTs who are less confident reflect on their improvements in seminars and get further practice opportunities with their mentors.

The lead provider has forged highly productive relationships with each delivery partner. Together, they use their combined expertise to evaluate the delivery of the programme and make well-judged revisions where necessary. The lead provider uses its subject and phase specialist staff to develop training facilitators and to check the quality of individual sessions. Delivery partner leaders value the comprehensive support provided and the opportunity to feedback regularly. When there is a need, the lead provider is quick to assist in ways that are mindful of the size, location and demographic of delivery partners.

Leaders and managers ensure that the programme follows relevant legislation. Leaders make ECTs aware of how to raise concerns about equalities and safeguarding issues. ECTs are confident that leaders and managers will act if they raise concerns, including if they require adjustments to access training.

Leaders take the workload and well-being of ECTs very seriously. They take all reasonable steps to provide ECTs with extensive guidance and support. A majority of ECTs say that the training takes their well-being and workload into consideration.

Lead provider details

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This inspection was carried out by His Majesty's Inspectors (in accordance with the [early career framework \(ECF\) and national professional qualification \(NPQ\) framework and handbook](#)).

The framework and handbook set out the statutory basis for ECF and NPQ inspections in England.

Lead provider programmes offered ECF and NPQ

Date of previous inspection N/A

Inspection team

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