

Leicestershire Secondary SCITT

Rushey Mead Academy, Melton Road, Leicester LE4 7AN

Inspection dates

27 to 30 March 2023

Inspection judgements

Secondary age-phase

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education and training

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

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

Trainees value strongly the provider's inclusive ethos of care and support. They get an excellent deal. Trainees are well known by staff, who go the extra mile to support trainees' specific needs. One trainee reflected the overwhelming view of many when they said, 'I feel very lucky to be on the course.'

Expectations are high from the start. Trainers, including mentors, have complete clarity about trainees' journey from 'novice to expert'. Trainees understand how pupils learn and the effectiveness of different teaching approaches. There is a seamless link between trainees' professional and subject-based learning at the centre and what they learn in schools. The course is consistently underpinned by the importance of research, application and reflection. Trainees are exceptionally well prepared for the realities of teaching.

Trainees greatly appreciate the experiences they gain from placements in different settings, including sixth forms and specialist provisions. They are taught to be ambitious for all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The spirit of the course was commonly reflected by one trainee who said, 'This is the place to get the support you need to be the best, well-rounded teacher you can be.'

Information about this ITE provider

- The Leicestershire Secondary SCITT opened in November 2013.

- The partnership currently has 67 trainees, all in the secondary age-phase.
- The partnership covers the secondary age-phase only.
- There are 48 schools in the partnership, in two local authorities. The SCITT centre is based at the Rushey Mead Academy. Trainees experience two main placement experiences in contrasting settings. They also gain a shorter experience in a sixth-form setting and a specialist school for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The partnership offers School Direct fee-paying and salaried routes towards qualified teacher status (QTS). Almost all trainees opt to study for a postgraduate certificate in education. This is accredited by the University of Leicester.
- The partnership works with a range of secondary schools. These schools are a mixture of different sizes, local contexts and Ofsted judgements at their most recent inspection. One school visited has not yet had an inspection.
- In 2020, the Thomas Estley Learning Alliance entered into a formal agreement with the SCITT to support the delivery of the curriculum across several different subjects. The SCITT has overall responsibility for awarding QTS.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by three of His Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspectors met with the director of the Mead Institute and the interim director of the SCITT. They also met with other members of the leadership team, including the deputy director of the SCITT, the lead mentor and development officer. The lead inspector met with four representatives of the SCITT's partnership development board and three partnership school leaders. He also spoke with the chair of the board of trustees for The Mead Educational Trust.
- Inspectors spoke to 19 current trainees.
- The lead inspector reviewed the responses to Ofsted's surveys for initial teacher education. This included 33 responses from trainees and 42 responses from staff across the partnership. Inspectors also considered the survey responses conducted by the SCITT. Inspectors also spoke to several former trainees at the SCITT.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews of history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, science and physical education to evaluate the quality of education and training across the partnership.
- Inspectors made visits to nine schools to meet with trainees, mentors, initial teacher training coordinators and headteachers. These visits included observations of trainees' teaching.

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

The Leicestershire Secondary SCITT is a highly valued provider in the locality. A strong culture of trusting relationships and partnership connectivity permeates all aspects of the SCITT's work. Leaders are relentless in seeking ways to improve. They have an acute

'listening ear' and regularly sample the views of trainees, mentors and school leaders. Their procedures for checking the quality of trainees' learning and experiences are highly effective.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have absolute clarity about their vision, the strengths of the partnership and their priorities for future development. Headteachers and school staff have well-founded confidence in the partnership. As one mentor typically said, 'I can confidently say this is the best (partnership) I have worked with. It is a great team and culture to be a part of.'

Leaders have devised an innovative approach to recruitment that aims to 'Inspire, Reassure and Convert'. Their forensic analysis identifies local schools' staffing needs, the locations trainees apply from and where the partnership can reach out to next. Leaders are highly proactive, working with local schools, universities and further afield to attract high-calibre trainees. The recruitment and retention of trainees is strong. Trainees are exceptionally well supported towards their first appointments. All have been successful in securing employment, mostly in local schools.

Trainees attain well. The training programme is highly ambitious and well sequenced. Leaders have ensured that important concepts are revisited regularly throughout the professional learning course, including pedagogy, assessment, adaptive teaching and behaviour management. The 'progress tracking' system ensures that staff and trainees know precisely where they are with their training and how they may improve. Expert lead subject tutors ensure that trainees build on their learning during subject-specific sessions. Trainees value this aspect of the programme strongly. They gain valuable experiences when on school placements, in contrasting and specialist settings. These, and other opportunities, ensure that trainees' learning exceeds the minimum requirements set out in the Department for Education 'Core Content Framework'.

Leaders ensure, and check, that all mentors receive high-quality training. They have devised a comprehensive training package for mentor development, with a clear coaching philosophy and an emphasis on reflective practice. Trainees like this approach. They say that time with their mentors focuses closely on improving pedagogy, without excessive paperwork. Lead tutors make regular checks on trainees to ensure that leaders' high expectations are realised. When this is not the case, in very few instances, SCITT leaders take swift and responsive action to remedy the situation.

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	70283
Inspection number	10258793

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	1 July and 2 December 2015

Inspection team

Chris Stevens, Lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Chris Davies	His Majesty's Inspector
Rachel Tordoff	His Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Placement schools and colleges

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

Name	URN	ITE phases
Bosworth Academy	137969	Secondary
Castle Mead Academy	147068	Secondary
Lutterworth High School	137115	Secondary
Manor High School	137120	Secondary
Moat Community College	120292	Secondary
Orchard Mead Academy	144629	Secondary
Rushey Mead Academy	141916	Secondary
Soar Valley College	120286	Secondary
Thomas Estley Community College	138527	Secondary

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