

# Blackpool and The Fylde College

Ashfield Road, Bispham, Blackpool, Lancashire FY2 0HB

## Inspection dates

25 to 28 April 2023

## Inspection judgements

Further education age-phase

### Overall effectiveness

### Requires improvement

The quality of education and training

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

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

Trainees benefit from high levels of pastoral support from their course tutors, including if they experience personal difficulties. Tutors take care to get to know trainees and to understand their personal circumstances. Tutors also teach trainees appropriate strategies to manage their workload and their well-being. Trainees value the support that they receive to begin their teaching careers in the further education and skills (FES) sector.

Typically, trainees receive effective support from their mentors. With mentors' guidance, most trainees develop their subject-specific knowledge well on their placements. Alongside their mentors, trainees reflect on the principles and strategies that they learn in the centre-based training. They apply this learning in their teaching practice. Most trainees are taught to translate the generic principles of teaching into the distinctiveness of the subjects that they are training to teach. Trainees learn how to adapt the delivery of their subject curriculums for learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Trainees studying towards a Diploma in Education (DET) develop strategies to support learners who speak English as an additional language (EAL). For example, these trainees learn how to incorporate group discussions into lessons to develop learners' confidence in speaking English. They become proficient in adapting resources to support learners' understanding of technical language. However, most Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) trainees do not know how to adapt their teaching to support learners with EAL.

Tutors prepare most trainees well to manage learners' behaviour. Trainees observe expert teachers in their placements and work well with their mentors to identify useful strategies to promote a positive climate for learning. As a result, most trainees successfully apply a range of behaviour management techniques to manage any disruption to learning.

## **Information about this ITE provider**

- Since the previous inspection, the college has expanded its ITE provision to include the DET, alongside the PGCE route.
- The University of Lancaster validates the PGCE ITE programmes based at Blackpool and The Fylde College. The DET programmes are validated by an awarding body.
- At the time of this inspection, Blackpool and The Fylde College had 35 trainees on ITE programmes in the FES age-phase.
- The majority of trainees study towards the full-time PGCE. There are currently five trainees on the in-service FES phase and 22 trainees in the pre-service FES phase. The remaining eight trainees study for the DET.
- Most trainees complete their placement at Blackpool and The Fylde College. A small number of trainees are placed in alternative settings, most of which are not inspected by Ofsted.

## **Information about this inspection**

- Blackpool and the Fylde College's ITE provision was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2012. At that time, the provider was known as University of Lancaster: based at Blackpool and The Fylde College. It was judged to be good overall.
- The inspection was conducted by one of His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two Ofsted Inspectors (OIs).
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, leaders of the ITE programmes, course lecturers and subject mentors. Inspectors also spoke with leaders from those providers where trainees observe professionals teaching in 11 to 16 alternative education settings.
- Inspectors sampled a wide range of documentation relating to the ITE training programmes. This included: curriculum plans, online resources, trainees' assignments and evidence of target-setting and mentoring.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of information relating to the leadership and management of the programmes. These documents included leaders' annual monitoring reviews, leaders' self-assessment and leaders' improvement planning documents.
- Inspectors spoke with 21 trainees and five early career teachers.
- Inspectors completed focused reviews in business and management, English, engineering and vocationally related subjects in automotive, health and early years.

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

Overall, leaders have successfully designed the ITE curriculum around the age-phases of the FES sector. Trainees gain experience in teaching across a suitably wide range of programmes and age-phases in the post-16 context. They also benefit from observing teaching in 11 to 16 alternative education providers, as well as in secondary schools. This appropriately widens trainees' understanding of the education sector and exposes them to the phase of education immediately before the phase in which they are training to teach.

Tutors teach the ITE curriculum in a logical order. They develop trainees' foundational knowledge, before moving on to application in practice. While on placement, trainees shadow their mentors, exploring the key elements of generic and subject pedagogy, before preparing to teach themselves. As a result, many trainees are equipped to enter the classroom at the start of their placements with the confidence to teach their chosen subjects.

Despite some strengths in the design of the ITE curriculum, leaders do not make sufficient use of current educational research to underpin the curriculum. Occasionally, tutors discuss potentially outdated theories, and in a few cases, promote these approaches to trainees when they are designing their own lessons. As a result, a few trainees do not understand the limitations of these potentially contested and outdated theories. Some trainees apply these theories routinely in their teaching practices without evaluating their effectiveness or impact on how well learners are achieving.

Tutors use ongoing assessment to check trainees' progress towards the ITE curriculum. They use ongoing discussions to model effective practice. Tutors provide clear feedback to PGCE trainees. PGCE trainees successfully use this feedback to improve their academic writing and to develop their knowledge and skills of how to teach their chosen subject. However, sometimes, trainees studying towards the DET do not get sufficiently clear feedback. In addition, leaders do not have enough oversight of how well DET trainees are learning the ITE curriculum. Leaders do not always intervene quickly enough to rectify weaknesses in how well the ITE curriculum is being implemented for DET trainees.

Throughout the course, tutors discuss critical aspects of a teacher's wider professional responsibilities, such as safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Trainees benefit from external speakers, and PGCE trainees complete a safeguarding qualification to deepen their knowledge of how to identify potential safeguarding concerns. Trainees understand their roles and responsibilities to protect learners. They talk with confidence about how they would identify learners at risk and the safeguarding processes that they must follow.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that all elements of the curriculum are fully aligned so that trainees receive a consistently high-quality learning experience. This is because mentors do not always receive sufficient information about what trainees are taught in their centre-based training. Consequently, some mentors do not have the information that they require to reinforce the content of the centre-based sessions. This aspect of leaders' communication about the content of the ITE programmes is not as strong as it should be.

Leaders do not have a sufficient understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the ITE programmes. Some aspects of leaders' quality assurance processes are underdeveloped. As a result, leaders' improvement plans lack rigour and detail. They do not pinpoint exactly which elements of the training curriculum require strengthening. This

results in a lack of emphasis on the precise actions that will make the biggest improvements to the quality of education and training that trainees receive.

Leaders do not check the quality of mentoring that trainees receive with sufficient rigour. Although leaders complete joint lesson observations, they do not check the verbal feedback or subject-specific feedback that trainees receive while on their placements. Therefore, some trainees do not receive sufficient information to help them to improve their teaching practice at the pace required.

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

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

- PGCE trainees do not have the depth of knowledge and understanding that they require to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for learners who speak EAL. This hinders how well some trainees are prepared to teach these learners. Tutors must ensure that trainees understand how to adapt the delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of learners who speak EAL.
- Leaders do not make enough use of pertinent and up-to-date educational research to underpin the ITE curriculum. This means that, on occasions, course tutors promote potentially outdated theories to trainees who use these approaches in their lessons without evaluating their impact on learners. They do not discuss in sufficient detail pertinent or up-to-date teaching theories. Leaders should design the curriculum to focus on relevant up-to-date teaching theories so that trainees discuss, apply and evaluate these through their teaching practices.
- Leaders' systems to check the quality of mentoring and the quality of the ITE curriculum, including the DET, are underdeveloped. As a result, leaders do not know whether mentoring is as effective as it should be. Neither do they have all the information that they need to improve the quality of education and training for trainees. Leaders should ensure that their quality assurance systems provide clear oversight of the effectiveness of the mentoring process. They should also ensure that quality assurance systems provide clear oversight of the effectiveness of all ITE programmes, including the DET.
- Some mentors do not receive sufficient information about the content of what trainees will be taught. Consequently, some mentors do not reinforce the important learning that trainees have received through the centre-based curriculum. Leaders should ensure that all mentors know what will be taught through the centre-based curriculum. This is so that they can reinforce the curriculum content when trainees are on their placements.

## **ITE provider details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	70168
<b>Inspection number</b>	10270391

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>	ITE in FE
<b>Phases provided</b>	Further education and skills
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 to 15 November 2012

## **Inspection team**

Alison Humphreys, Lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Julia Jeanes	Ofsted Inspector
Tanya Evans	Ofsted Inspector

## Annex: Provider placements

Inspectors visited the following placements as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phase
Blackpool and The Fylde College	130739	FES
La Calavera College	Not applicable	FES

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