

Keele and North Staffordshire Teacher Education

Seabridge Primary School, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 3PJ

Inspection dates

15 to 18 May 2023

Inspection judgements

Primary and secondary age-phase combined

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education and training	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

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

Trainees enjoy exceptional training experiences at Keele and North Staffordshire Teacher Education. Leaders' vision of 'reaching for excellence' is fully realised through this high-quality initial teacher education (ITE) course. The programme provides trainees with the best possible start to their professional careers.

Trainees are supported by tutors and mentors who care about them. These staff go out of their way to offer trainees meaningful guidance and support, both at the training centre and while on placements. Course leaders provide clear communication so that trainees understand what is expected of them. They then work relentlessly to ensure that trainees fulfil these expectations. As one trainee said, 'I could go to any tutor or director and they would do everything they can to help me.'

Trainees develop a deep understanding of the subjects they teach and how to teach them. Leaders have designed the course programme 'like a rope', knitting together the broad range of knowledge that trainees need. This means that trainees successfully learn about the practical realities of teaching at the same time as building their subject knowledge. For example, when learning how to teach reading and phonics, trainees also build expertise in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about this ITE provider

- Keele and North Staffordshire Teacher Education is a school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) provider. The SCITT is affiliated with Keele University and Shaw Education Trust.
- There are 54 trainees in this academic year. There are 51 trainees in the primary age-phase provision and three trainees in the secondary age-phase provision.
- Trainees study on one of two training routes. These are the postgraduate School Direct (fee paid) route and the assessment-only route. Trainees who complete the course gain qualified teacher status.
- There are 120 schools in the partnership. These schools are located in one of two local authority areas.
- The schools in the partnership have been judged as outstanding, good or requires improvement by Ofsted.
- The SCITT is based at Seabridge Primary School, which is part of Shaw Education Trust.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team consisted of three of His Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of SCITT leaders, including the director, assistant director and SCITT adviser. The lead inspector also met with representatives of the strategic board.
- Inspectors completed focused reviews in early reading, mathematics, history, physical education and science.
- Inspectors reviewed a broad range of information relating to the ITE curriculum. This included training materials, assessment documents and course handbooks.
- Inspectors spoke with 21 trainees and 16 early career teachers. Inspectors also held discussions with a sample of headteachers and mentors.
- Inspectors visited eight placement schools in total.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of information concerning the leadership and management of the SCITT. This included information about governance, safeguarding arrangements and recruitment of trainees.

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

Leaders work exceptionally well with stakeholders across the partnership to ensure that the course is of a high quality. Together these partners have created an ambitious and rigorous curriculum that is sophisticated yet simple and effective in its design and structure.

The curriculum covers, and goes beyond, the core content framework. Leaders organise the programme of study into five 'dispositions'. These dispositions enable tutors, mentors and trainees to use a shared language that is understood by all. This benefits trainees as they gain a very clear understanding of the features of quality in education. Thus, they are very well prepared to teach.

Trainees build on and enhance their centre-based learning through two school-based placements. Leaders ensure that there is seamless integration between what trainees learn at the SCITT hub and their learning in partner schools. For example, during the first of these placements, trainees continue to attend in-centre sessions each week. Leaders use this arrangement so that trainees can study course content and then quickly put what they have studied into classroom practice. This arrangement generates regular opportunities for trainees to discuss their learning with mentors, course tutors and peers. This helps trainees to use and remember key information. As a result, they make very strong progress through the SCITT curriculum.

Subject leaders are experts in their areas of oversight. Many engage in research projects and collaborate with professional organisations. They ensure that trainees understand recent research relating to specific subjects, as well as more general teaching strategies. They share some of this information with trainees and mentors through 'knowledge organisers'. These documents enable mentors to identify and emphasise the key information that leaders expect trainees to know.

From very early in the programme, trainees learn how to teach reading. This includes all trainees developing their phonic knowledge and applying it in teaching. Mentors arrange for trainees to learn from good practice by observing and working with experienced teachers. Trainees learn how to check on what pupils know and how to adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs. All this means that trainees are very well equipped and confident to teach reading by the time they complete the course.

Leaders closely check the quality of mentoring and its impact on trainees' knowledge. They provide regular training and communicate clear messages to mentors. This has a significant and positive influence on trainees' experiences. Trainees typically have two general mentors from placement schools over the duration of the programme of study. Leaders organise for these two mentors to work together, in collaboration with a lead mentor. This connected approach 'bridges' trainees' placements and creates a team of staff who know each trainee exceptionally well. These teams work together in 'co-analysis' with trainees to formatively assess their progress through the ITE curriculum. This enables leaders to act quickly and provide trainees with extra support if needed and further supports trainees' strong progress through the SCITT curriculum.

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

- The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70312
Inspection number	10247732

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 and secondary combined
Date of previous inspection	13 June and 14 November 2016

Inspection team

Jonathan Leonard, Lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Helen Forrest	His Majesty's Inspector
Mark Sims	His Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phases
Bursley Academy	138043	Primary
Forsbrook Church of England Controlled Primary School	132260	Primary
Goldenhill Primary Academy	142992	Primary
Jackfield Infant School	143487	Primary
St John the Evangelist Catholic Academy	140146	Primary
St Peter's Catholic Academy	140150	Primary
St Wilfrid's Catholic Academy	140151	Primary
Sutherland Primary Academy	138548	Primary

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