

Manchester Nexus SCITT

The Blue Coat School, Egerton Street, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL1 3SQ

Inspection dates

22 to 25 May 2023

Inspection judgements

Primary and secondary age-phase combined

Overall effectiveness

Good

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

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

Trainees at Manchester Nexus SCITT are well guided and well looked after by staff across this close-knit partnership. Typically, trainees thrive in a culture where leaders take full account of their workload, well-being and welfare.

Trainees benefit from an ITE curriculum that is suitably designed and delivered. They learn about relevant teaching theories that positively shape the development of their teaching practice. They quickly grow into well-informed, confident and reflective practitioners.

Trainees experience centre-based training that is delivered by experts in their field. Staff ensure that trainees in the primary phase have a deep understanding of the teaching of early reading and systematic synthetic phonics. Trainees across all phases are well informed about the pedagogy and practice that is specific to the age-phase and/or subjects that they are training to teach.

Trainees are introduced to, and revisit, important knowledge about behaviour management and safeguarding throughout the ITE programme. For example, trainees learn strategies which help to promote positive behaviour and motivation in the pupils that they teach.

Trainees learn about the different needs that pupils may have, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. They gain a secure understanding of approaches to adaptive teaching which help pupils with additional needs to overcome the barriers that may affect their learning.

Trainees benefit from opportunities to develop their practice across appropriately contrasting schools. In the main, trainees are well supported by skilled mentors who have

a secure understanding of the ITE curriculum. The ITE training programme prepares trainees well to embark on their teaching careers.

Information about this ITE provider

- Manchester Nexus SCITT is a school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) provider. It is part of the Cranmer Education Trust.
- The SCITT has been providing teacher training in the primary and secondary age-phase since September 2017.
- In the 2022/23 academic year, there were 52 trainees enrolled on the SCITT's programmes. This included 20 primary and 32 secondary age-phase trainees.
- All trainees follow a programme leading to the award of qualified teacher status. The SCITT works in partnership with Liverpool Hope University to enable all trainees to complete a Postgraduate Certificate in Education.
- Trainees who follow the primary programmes are trained to teach either the three to seven or five to 11 age-phase. Trainees on the secondary programmes are trained to teach either the 11 to 16 or 14 to 19 age-phase.
- Secondary trainees choose from the following subject specialisms: art and design, biology, chemistry, design and technology, English, geography, history, mathematics, media studies, physical education, physics, religious studies or social sciences.
- The partnership includes 25 primary schools and 20 secondary schools across six local authorities.
- Four schools in the partnership are currently judged as requires improvement by Ofsted. All other schools are judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by one of His Majesty's Inspectors and three Ofsted Inspectors.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of SCITT leaders, including the director of the SCITT. They met with members of the SCITT's executive committee. Inspectors spoke with a range of staff and other partners within the SCITT. Inspectors also spoke with representatives of the Cranmer Education Trust.
- Inspectors sampled a wide range of documentation relating to the ITE training programmes. This included: subject and phase curriculum plans; trainees' assignments and their records of target setting and mentoring; and information relating to the Department for Education's (DfE's) ITE criteria and supporting advice.
- Inspectors also reviewed a wide range of information relating to the leadership and management of the partnership. These documents included leaders' records of self-evaluation and improvement planning.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online trainee survey. Inspectors

also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

- The inspection was carried out through face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings and on-site visits to partner schools.
- During the inspection, inspectors visited five schools across the primary and secondary age-phases.
- In the primary age-phase, inspectors spoke with 15 trainees and two early career teachers (ECTs), either face to face or remotely.
- In the secondary phase, inspectors spoke with 13 trainees and two ECTs, either face to face or remotely.
- In the primary phase, inspectors carried out focused reviews in the foundation subjects, focusing on design and technology and geography. Inspectors also carried out focused reviews in early reading and mathematics.
- In the secondary phase, inspectors carried out focused reviews in art and design, English and mathematics.

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

Leaders and staff across Manchester Nexus SCITT are ambitious for trainees in the primary and secondary age-phases. Leaders' overall aims for the SCITT's ITE programmes are increasingly well matched to their vision to create exceptional teachers. Leaders fully realise their mission to support the recruitment of high-calibre ECTs in the local area and beyond.

Expert staff carefully select the overall content of the SCITT's ITE programmes. For example, they ensure that the education and training that trainees receive meet, and in many places, exceed the requirements of the DfE's core content framework. Trainees benefit from professional and subject-specific studies that are deliberately aligned and well matched to the age-phase and/or subject in which they are training to teach.

Overall, programme tutors think carefully about the broad knowledge that trainees should know and remember from their centre-based training. Typically trainees benefit from centre-based training which equips them with sufficient subject and pedagogical knowledge to develop their teaching skills. However, some aspects of this essential knowledge are not defined as precisely as they could be. To some extent, leaders' efforts to convey information about the content of the ITE curriculum to all partners mitigate this weakness. Nonetheless, this lack of precision in defining the exact content of the ITE curriculum occasionally impedes how deeply some trainees learn and hone their craft.

Across both the primary and secondary age-phases, trainees benefit from knowledgeable tutors and mentors. These tutors and mentors ensure that the centre-based and school-based training are often underpinned by pertinent reading, research and debate. This provides trainees with some opportunities to apply, and to test out theoretical perspectives, in their teaching practices. However, this aspect of the ITE programme is still being formalised by leaders. Consequently, the breadth and depth of trainees' engagement

with reading, research and debate are mixed across phases, subjects and school-based experiences. Nevertheless, trainees continue to achieve well overall.

For the most part, trainees benefit from effective mentoring across their placement settings. This means that most trainees are well supported with secure guidance, feedback and target setting that builds meaningfully on their centre-based training.

Leaders ensure that assessment systems are suitably designed. Leaders have successfully supported mentors to use their assessment systems with increasing effectiveness. Mentors and trainees work collaboratively to review trainees' knowledge and practice. However, the quality of some feedback and target setting remains variable. This is because the phase- or subject-specific knowledge that trainees are intended to learn is not precisely defined and understood by a few mentors.

Leaders have recently strengthened their systems to check on the quality of education and training that trainees receive. These systems provide leaders with a clear overview of the main strengths and weaknesses of their ITE programmes. Leaders successfully use these systems to secure specific and demonstrable improvement. However, leaders are in the process of further refining their quality assurance systems to ensure that they provide them, and other key staff, with the detailed information that they need to test the delivery and impact of the ITE curriculum more fully on trainees' learning and development.

What does the ITE provider need to do to improve the primary and secondary combined phase?

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- Some mentors' understanding of the exact knowledge that trainees should know and remember from their centre-based training is not secure enough. This is because leaders have not defined the precise knowledge that trainees must learn in a few areas of the ITE curriculum. As a result, some of the feedback and target setting that trainees receive are not as closely aligned to the centre-based training as they could be. Leaders should ensure that the knowledge that trainees learn in the centre-based training is precisely defined and subsequently understood by all mentors. They should ensure that all mentors set high-quality targets and give suitable feedback to trainees.
- Leaders have not fully established all the research and theoretical perspectives that trainees should encounter across the ITE training programme. Consequently, the opportunities that trainees have to assess the validity of some pertinent theoretical perspectives are occasionally limited. Leaders should finalise the range of research and theoretical perspectives that trainees should discuss, debate and test out throughout their training year. This is so that trainees achieve even more highly.
- Some of leaders' quality assurance checks are not consistently well developed. This means that in some areas of the ITE curriculum, leaders and other staff do not get all the detailed insights that they need about the quality and delivery of the ITE programmes. Leaders should ensure that they finalise their quality assurance systems so that they can realise their ambition of exceptional education and training.

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

- The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	1246901
Inspection number	10292027

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	Primary and secondary combined
Date of previous inspection	17 June and 18 November 2019

Inspection team

Michael Pennington, Lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Dawn Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Valerie Elson	Ofsted Inspector
Sonja Oyen	Ofsted Inspector

Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phases
Coppice Primary Academy	139704	Primary
Greenhill Academy	140579	Primary
Mayfield Primary School	142550	Primary
E-Act Royton and Crompton Academy	146316	Secondary
The Blue Coat CofE School	137133	Secondary

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