Canterbury Christ Church University

Canterbury Christ Church University, North Holmes Road, CANTERBURY, Kent CT1 1QU

Inspection dates   15 to 18 May 2023

Inspection judgements

	Primary age-phase	**Secondary age-phase**	**Further education age-phase**
Overall effectiveness	Good	Good	Good
The quality of education and training	Good	Good	Good
Leadership and management	Good	Good	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement	Requires improvement	Inadequate

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

Trainees experience a curriculum shaped by leaders' unwavering commitment to improving educational outcomes for pupils in the southeast of England. This is the case for all trainees, regardless of their route or phase. Trainees are enthused by leaders' aspirational vision. They like how leaders make their expectations clear from the outset, and how these expectations support and motivate them in equal measure.

Working closely with partner schools and colleges, leaders ensure that trainees have the knowledge they need to make a successful start to their teaching careers. This includes being ready to deal with the day-to-day realities of the role. Trainees appreciate the strong support that they receive from both centre-based tutors and school-based mentors. This is working especially well in the further education and skills (FES) phase. In other phases, some of the feedback from mentoring is too broad. It is not focused on helping trainees to apply what they have been taught about teaching their phase or subject.

Leaders have designed an ambitious ITE curriculum. All trainees, regardless of their route, benefit from this curriculum. Overall, they are prepared effectively to teach their subject and phase. This includes the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics in the primary phase. Trainees learn about behaviour management, inclusion and safeguarding early on. Their understanding of these areas is developed well throughout the course. Contrasting placements help trainees to build up their confidence and expertise, for example in adapting teaching to the different needs of the pupils in their classes. Obtaining experience in

specialist settings also enables trainees to further their understanding of how to create an inclusive classroom.

Information about this ITE provider

- The provider currently has 653 trainees in the primary-age phase, 177 in the secondary-age phase and 243 in the FES phase.

- The primary and secondary phases have trainees on the School Direct (salaried and unsalaried) route and Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) route. The primary phase includes a PGCE with mathematics specialism. The primary phase also has trainees on the undergraduate, Bachelor of Arts (Hons) with qualified teacher status, route and undergraduate, Bachelor of Arts (Hons) with qualified teacher status with mathematics specialism, route. The secondary phase also has trainees on the undergraduate, Bachelor of Science (Hons) with qualified teacher status with mathematics specialism, route. Some routes offer the opportunity for trainees to study part time or full time.

- In the primary phase, trainees can opt for either the three to seven primary-age phase, the five to 11 primary-age range, or the seven to 11 primary-age phase.

- This year there are trainees enrolled on the following secondary courses: art and design, biology, chemistry, computing, English, geography, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, music, physical education, physics, religious education (RE) and social sciences. Trainees opt for either the 11 to 16 secondary-age phase or the 14 to 19 secondary-age phase.

- The FES phase has trainees on a variety of pre-service (full time) and in-service training routes (part time). These training routes are the Diploma in Education and Training, the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and Training and the PGCE.

- The provider offers the assessment-only route to candidates in the primary and secondary phases. Typically, the number of candidates on this route is low, and currently, there are no candidates on this route.

- At the time of the inspection, primary-phase trainees were placed in 185 partnership schools, secondary-phase trainees were placed in 54 partnership schools and FES-phase trainees were placed in 25 colleges.

Information about this inspection

- When Canterbury Christ Church University was last inspected by Ofsted in May 2022 it was judged as requires improvement for provision in the primary and secondary phases and inadequate for the FES phase. This was a reinspection of all three phases.

- The inspection was carried out by 13 of His Majesty's Inspectors and one Ofsted Inspector.

- Inspectors met with leaders, including the deputy vice-chancellor, the pro-vice-chancellor and dean of the faculty of arts, humanities and education, and the head of school. Inspectors also met with the associate heads of school and the heads of the primary, secondary and FES routes. In addition, meetings were held with members of the faculty executive group, the ITE partnership group and the School Direct group.

- Inspectors held meetings with trainees, school mentors, school professional mentors, subject tutors, visiting tutors and early career teachers.

- Inspectors scrutinised the provider's documentation, including information relating to improvement planning, curriculum content and compliance.

- Inspectors reviewed the responses to the trainee survey and the staff survey.

- Inspectors spoke to 49 primary trainees, 29 secondary trainees and 28 FES trainees.

- In the primary phase, focused reviews were conducted in early reading, art and design, computing, history, mathematics and music. In the secondary phase, focused reviews were conducted in art, English, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, RE and science. In the further education phase, focused reviews were conducted in arts, English, engineering, English as a second language, mathematics, special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and vocational subjects.

- Overall, inspectors spoke with 12 primary schools, 11 secondary schools and 7 further education colleges.

Primary phase report

What works well in the primary phase and what needs to be done better?

Leaders have put in place an ambitious ITE curriculum. It is well designed, with trainees' development organised carefully into three phases. Each phase builds up trainees' thinking and knowledge logically. Trainees learn, rehearse and refine fundamental ideas about teaching primary-aged pupils. Through this approach, trainees receive a strong grounding in educational theories and practice and are well supported to become confident and successful teachers.

The curriculum is underpinned by credible research and taught by skilled and knowledgeable tutors and lecturers. What is taught at the university connects closely with what leaders expect trainees to learn and practise on school placements. Trainees receive comprehensive guidance from university staff, including link tutors, on how to apply learning about educational theories to everyday practice in the classroom.

The core content framework (CCF) is woven seamlessly through each of the three phases of the curriculum. Key ideas, for example in relation to how pupils learn, are introduced first at university-based training. Trainees' understanding is then developed cumulatively through assignments and focused tasks on placements, as well as wider reading and research. Partnership schools value the expertise that trainees bring to their settings, for example through their up-to-date knowledge of adaptive teaching. Trainees are well supported to promote pupils' well-being. They become confident in being able to fulfil their responsibilities towards keeping pupils safe and promoting high expectations for all.

Trainees are well prepared to teach all subjects in the primary national curriculum. They develop a firm understanding of how to support all pupils, including those with SEND, commit what they have learned to their long-term memory. Trainees put what they have learned into practice by planning and delivering sequences of lessons in a subject, including in early reading. How to teach pupils to read using systematic synthetic phonics is prioritised. Trainees receive comprehensive training. Their understanding is extended through carrying out focused early reading activities in each phase of the ITE curriculum. For example, trainees learn about the importance of identifying and correcting misconceptions in pupils' knowledge early on, and why this is important for reading fluency.

Leaders have established clear expectations for how school placements should contribute to trainees' development, including the purpose of observations and weekly meetings with mentors. Guidance from link tutors is typically well focused. However, some school-based mentoring sets targets that are too broad. At times, these targets are overly focused on generic teaching approaches rather than developing trainees' subject knowledge. Work to develop the mentor training strategy further is underway.

Assessment of trainees' progression is thorough. Trainees' views are included every step of the way. School-based mentoring and visiting tutors support trainees to critique their

practice and seek feedback. This supports trainees to develop the professional behaviours expected of a teacher. Formal progress review points at the end of each phase of the curriculum align closely with what trainees have been taught. This, together with ongoing assessment, means that everyone has as a clear picture of how well trainees are progressing. Deadlines for assignments and dissertations are planned carefully so that trainees' workload and well-being are supported. If needed, link tutors step in quickly to provide extra support.

Leaders have implemented effective quality assurance systems. They know the programme's strengths and astutely identify the areas in need of further development. Trainees' views are valued and acted on. For example, leaders' plans to improve the mentoring programme have been shaped by what trainees have told them about their experiences.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

■ Leaders' current work to further develop the quality and consistency of support provided by school-based mentoring is at an early stage of implementation. This means that mentoring does not consistently provide all trainees with precise enough feedback or targets, especially in relation to trainees' knowledge of how to teach each subject. Leaders should ensure that their work to strengthen school-based mentoring focuses on making sure that trainees are provided with consistently effective feedback and targets.

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

■ The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

Secondary phase report

What works well in the secondary phase and what needs to be done better?

Trainees benefit from an ambitious curriculum. Carefully selected curriculum content means that trainees gain strong foundations in how to teach their specialism. Right from the start, they learn about how to promote pupils' progression in a subject. For example, they are taught about what pupils will have learned at primary school and how to build on this successfully. Visits to special schools and alternative provisions also develop trainees' understanding of how to teach their chosen subjects in different settings.

The ITE curriculum is carefully planned and sequenced around 10 thematic 'spotlight questions'. Within these questions, trainees receive subject-specific pedagogical and professional input which is linked purposefully to the best available educational research. The spotlight questions are sequenced to build trainees' confidence over time. Each question ensures that trainees learn about and critique the fundamental principles of being a successful teacher. For example, trainees are taught about the role of setting and maintaining clear expectations when they explore the spotlight question linked to behaviour management. The entitlement of the CCF is covered in full.

The course is designed so that trainees revisit important ideas. For example, trainees learn about inclusion and helping pupils to overcome any barriers to learning in a subject. During school placements, 'pupil bundles' encourage trainees to reflect on how their teaching enables all pupils, including those with SEND, to progress effectively through the planned curriculum in their schools.

Leaders make sure that the centre- and school-based training are integrated effectively. To support this, they engage with and communicate regularly with partner schools. Feedback from trainees and schools is regularly sought. Leaders use what they find out purposefully. They refine how each part of the curriculum works in tandem to support trainees' development as teachers. The introduction of a new 'e-portfolio' has added additional rigour to this process. Through this, subject mentors and professional mentors design personalised programmes of in-school training for each trainee, underpinned by the key messages of the CCF and the spotlight questions. Assessment is also linked well to the curriculum that trainees have been taught. Regular progress reviews against the spotlight questions help leaders to identify and support those trainees who are finding certain aspects of the course hard to master.

While most aspects of the training programme join together well, some school-based mentoring is not as effective in supporting trainees' development. At times, feedback to trainees does not link closely enough to what they have learned through the spotlight questions. Leaders' oversight of trainees' experiences means that this is something they are already working to improve. For example, a comprehensive suite of training has been introduced to bring about greater consistency in the mentoring programme. Partnership schools have also been given clear expectations for assessment, feedback and target setting during school placements. Subject leaders and professional mentors are checking

that these actions are bringing about improvements. This work is not fully established. Trainees' experiences of mentoring while on school placements remain variable.

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

[Information for the provider and appropriate authority]

■ Some mentoring is not linked closely enough to the ideas and theories that trainees have been taught at the university. This means that some trainees do not benefit from high-quality guidance and support on how to adapt and apply their understanding to the classroom in their placement setting. Leaders should take further steps to make sure that the messages from school-based mentoring match the themes and subject content taught at the university.

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

■ The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

Further education and skills phase report

What works well in the further education and skills phase and what needs to be done better?

Leaders have designed appropriate curriculums across partner colleges that prepare trainees to become competent teachers in the FES setting. They think carefully about the order in which trainees learn new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Trainees first learn about the necessary skills and knowledge that they need to plan and teach their subjects effectively. These foundations are secured before trainees move on to learning about and reflecting on more complex ideas, including in relation to adaptive teaching strategies and behaviour management. In each module, tutors skilfully revisit these ideas in increasing depth.

Leaders have rigorously revised the curriculum so that the centre-based and placement-based components of the programme integrate effectively. They have planned the content of the curriculum so that trainees simultaneously put into practice what they learn in training sessions. Leaders communicate effectively with mentors so that they understand what trainees need to practise, revisit and apply during their teaching placement. Trainees highly value the support provided by the mentoring programme, including the typically strong subject-specialist expertise.

A small minority of in-service trainees on specialist pathways do not benefit from exposure to other further education settings to broaden their experience. For example, trainees in the military do not have the opportunity to practise teaching learners with SEND. Similarly, trainees on the specialist pathway in SEND often complete their placement within their setting. This limits them from gaining teaching experience across a wide range of SEND provision within further education.

Trainees on the specialist pathway programme for teaching learners with SEND gain a sound grasp of learning theories. For example, trainees learn about how to sequence subject content so that learners develop knowledge successfully. They understand the importance of designing a curriculum which builds in time for learners to revisit knowledge and then link new content to what they already know in lessons. However, this approach is more established on some programmes than others. In a few instances, mentoring in some programmes relies on outdated educational research. Mentoring does not guide trainees sufficiently to academic studies that critique these theories.

Leaders have strengthened considerably their oversight of tutors' and mentors' work since the last inspection. For example, leaders have introduced termly meetings where tutors and mentors receive an overview of the following term's programme, including any changes to policies and practice. Leaders evaluate the curriculum regularly and have sensibly prioritised training on the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

Most tutors and mentors make good use of observations to assess the progress that trainees make. They make sure that trainees reflect carefully on the teaching strategies they select and use. However, in a few cases, tutors and mentors do not help trainees think sufficiently about how learners know and remember more.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- While most trainees have opportunities to practise their teaching skills at a range of levels and in different settings, for a few in-service trainees on specialist pathways, this is not the case. This reduces how well these trainees are supported to broaden and deepen their practice. Leaders should make sure that these trainees benefit from teaching or observation experiences in diverse contexts.

- In a few instances, tutors and mentors refer to learning theories in teaching sessions that do not reflect credible and up-to-date thinking. This affects how well trainees are supported to engage with research in a critical and evidence-based way. Leaders need to make sure that they train tutors and mentors in pertinent and credible educational research so that trainees are better prepared to take an evidence-based approach to evaluate and critique their practice.

- Most tutors and mentors give trainees helpful feedback and set useful targets for improvement. However, there are times when feedback focuses mostly on learners' involvement in lessons. Leaders should make sure that they train tutors and mentors so that their guidance is well focused on helping trainees to understand and improve how their practice supports learners' acquisition of skills, knowledge and behaviours.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number   70011

Inspection number   10275662

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   Higher education institution

Phases provided   Primary
Secondary
Further education and skills

Date of previous inspection   16 to 19 May 2022

Inspection team

Mark Smith, Overall lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alison Colenso, Phase lead inspector (primary)	His Majesty's Inspector
Lisa Strong, Phase lead inspector (secondary)	His Majesty's Inspector
Sue Hasty, Phase lead inspector (FES)	His Majesty's Inspector
Alice Clay	His Majesty's Inspector
Allison Weston	Ofsted Inspector
Annabel Davies	His Majesty's Inspector
Julie Wright	His Majesty's Inspector
Noeman Anwar	His Majesty's Inspector
Rieks Drijver	His Majesty's Inspector
Samantha Ingram	His Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Murphy	His Majesty's Inspector
Steve Lambert	His Majesty's Inspector
Viki Faulkner	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
Chartham Primary School	148500	Primary
St Stephen's Infant School	148501	Primary
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	142162	Primary
Wincheap Foundation Primary School	118867	Primary
Preston Primary School	118401	Primary
St Peter's Methodist Primary School	118707	Primary
Stone St Mary's Church of England Primary School	144098	Primary
St Paul's Church of England Primary School	118590	Primary
Wingham Primary School	118403	Primary
St John's Church of England Primary School	137071	Primary
St Nicholas School	119059	Primary
Reculver Church of England Primary School	141216	Primary
Charles Dickens School	144015	Secondary
Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School	118840	Secondary
The John Wallis Church of England Academy	136197	Secondary
Brockhill Park Performing Arts College	137458	Secondary
Chatham and Clarendon Grammar School	136382	Secondary
Simon Langton Boys' Grammar School	118884	Secondary
Norton Knatchbull School	138019	Secondary
Dane Court Grammar School	137474	Secondary
The North School	148712	Secondary
Barton Court Grammar School	137474	Secondary
Dover Grammar School for Boys	118931	Secondary
Canterbury College	130728	FES
University for the Creative Arts - Canterbury	133821	FES
St Dominic's School	145384	FES
Uxbridge College	130446	FES
Brompton Barracks	130726	FES
South Thames College	130448	FES
West Thames College	130447	FES