

Brunel University London

Brunel University London, Gaskell Building, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 3PH

Inspection dates

12 June to 15 June 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

Outstanding

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

From the outset, trainees benefit from a curriculum that focuses on developing the professional conduct and behaviours expected of a teacher. Trainees value the emphasis placed on promoting inclusion and ambition for all pupils. Those in the primary phase learn why it is so important to make sure that pupils get a strong start in learning to read. The course enables trainees to see themselves as lifelong learners who seek to improve and hone their practice. They recognise that they must be effective role models for their pupils.

Trainees are well prepared for the realities of a career in teaching. They understand how the ITE curriculum, for example in relation to planning a series of lessons in a subject, will benefit them later in their careers. Many trainees juggle work and family responsibilities with the demands of the course. They feel well supported by university staff in doing so. Trainees enjoy particularly positive relationships with their university tutors who check in on them regularly. However, in some cases, trainees do not receive consistently high-quality guidance from school-based mentoring. On occasion, this leads to missed opportunities for trainees to translate their learning from the university to their teaching practice.

Through the ITE curriculum, trainees gain a thorough grounding in how to adapt their teaching for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Their understanding is consolidated through the lens of their phase or subject. In the same way, trainees revisit key messages about managing behaviour. They benefit from applying their training in contrasting schools. Trainees also appreciate the alternative placement week which they spend in a specialist provision. They become increasingly confident in reflecting on their own practice because of this exposure to different settings.

Information about this ITE provider

- The provider has 44 primary trainees and 61 secondary trainees.
- Primary trainees are on the five to 11 route and secondary trainees are on the 11 to 16 route.
- All trainees are studying for the one-year Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) with recommendation for qualified teacher status (QTS).
- The provider has 58 partnership schools in the primary phase and 50 partnership schools in the secondary phase. It works with two all-through schools.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by three of His Majesty's Inspectors and two Ofsted inspectors.
- Inspectors met with partnership leaders, including the head and deputy heads of the education department, the heads of the primary and secondary phases and members of the partnership management group.
- Inspectors held meetings with trainees, early career teachers, school-based mentors and subject tutors.
- Inspectors reviewed the provider's documentation, including information related to curriculum content, improvement planning and compliance.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to the trainee survey and the staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke to 16 primary trainees, 19 secondary trainees and 13 early career teachers. Some of these discussions took place remotely.
- In the primary phase, focused reviews were conducted in early reading, mathematics, history, geography and design and technology. In the secondary phase, focused reviews were conducted in English, mathematics and science. Other aspects of the ITE curriculum were also covered as part of this inspection. This included general professional education across the primary and secondary phases, as well as modern foreign languages and physical education in the primary phase.
- Overall, inspectors visited eight primary placement settings and nine secondary placement settings.

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

In both phases, the ITE curriculum is broad, ambitious, and informed by pertinent research. Primary and secondary trainees gain a strong understanding of the subject knowledge and pedagogy they need to teach each subject well. Primary trainees learn about pupils' experience in early years. Secondary trainees are taught about the key stage 2 and post-16 subject content that pupils learn. Through this, trainees understand the importance of making sure that their teaching builds well on pupils' prior knowledge.

Subject tutors are experts in their field. They have ensured that the curriculum is underpinned by the core content framework, integrating how pupils learn in theory with guidance on how to translate this to teaching practice. The general professional education provision starts by covering overarching educational themes, for instance in relation to safeguarding. Following these foundations, the curriculum develops trainees' knowledge of how these themes apply to the primary or secondary phase. Subject training also helpfully revisits this curriculum content. For example, trainees address how to promote positive behaviour and attitudes in the context of each subject. Well-planned weekly professional learning activities direct trainees to relevant wider reading on pedagogy and professional behaviours. This is explored purposefully alongside subject-specific research. All of this means trainees' understanding builds and deepens logically. They become confident connecting their learning at the university to placements in contrasting school settings.

A particularly strong feature of the programme is the way that the curriculum revisits and extends trainees' learning about cognitive science and adaptive teaching. Consequently, trainees have a strong understanding of how pupils learn. They use what they learn to design and refine series of lessons, considering which approaches are needed to meet individual pupils' learning needs. This includes those with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language.

Primary-phase trainees access a well-planned programme to develop their understanding of early reading. The curriculum is logically sequenced. Trainees learn key terminology, the structure of systematic synthetic phonics programmes and a typical lesson structure. Whether they begin by teaching key stage 1 or 2 on placement, trainees become confident and competent in the teaching of early reading by the end of the course.

Trainees value the on-going assessment process, which includes meeting with their mentor each week to review and agree targets. The interim assessment on each school placement helps to get trainees ready for final assessment. Trainees also value the regular dialogue that they have with school-based mentors and their visiting tutor from the university. Leaders evaluate tutors' observations from their visits to schools and act on any concerns. Additional support is swiftly provided for trainees where needed. Leaders regularly seek feedback from trainees and make adaptations to the course as a result. Leaders engage well with partner schools and involve them in the design of the ITE curriculum.

Through their work to quality assure trainees' experiences, leaders have prioritised improving the approach to school-based mentoring. This includes altering the suite of training in place for school-based mentors. For instance, there is now additional input for mentors new to the programme. The training ensures that mentors are well informed about the paperwork and processes that they need to complete. It is less effective in enabling mentors to understand the content that is being taught at the university. On occasion, the targets set for trainees through mentoring are too broad. Trainees can receive mixed messages about pedagogy that conflict with their learning at the university.

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

- At times, school-based mentoring is not linked closely enough to the principles and theories that trainees have been taught at the university. This can reduce the suitability of targets and the guidance that some mentors provide to develop trainees' pedagogical methods. Leaders should take further steps to ensure that school-based mentoring plays a consistently constructive role in developing and strengthening trainees' readiness to teach.

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

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| Unique reference number | 70009 |
| Inspection number | 10275682 |

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.

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| Type of ITE provider | Higher education institution |
| Phases provided | Primary and secondary |
| Date of previous inspection | 27 April and 30 September 2015 |

Inspection team

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Lisa Strong, Lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Andrea Bedeau, Team inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Elaine Long, Team inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Mahbubur Rahman, Team inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Mark Smith, Team inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |

Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

| Name | URN | ITE phases |
|---|--------|------------|
| Cannon Lane Primary School | 102204 | Primary |
| Westbrook Primary School | 139889 | Primary |
| Pippins School | 110095 | Primary |
| The Langley Academy Primary | 142173 | Primary |
| Newfield Primary School | 101522 | Primary |
| Hillingdon Primary School | 141055 | Primary |
| Rabbsfarm Primary School | 102408 | Primary |
| Lake Farm Park Academy | 140391 | Primary |
| St Bernard's Catholic Grammar School | 110084 | Secondary |
| Slough and Eton Church of England Business and Enterprise college | 137287 | Secondary |
| Preston Manor School | 139319 | Secondary |
| Eden Girls' School | 141970 | Secondary |
| Haydon School | 136519 | Secondary |
| Oak Wood School | 102449 | Secondary |
| Swakeleys School for Girls | 136631 | Secondary |
| The Langley Academy | 136531 | Secondary |
| Villiers High School | 101928 | Secondary |

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