

Suffolk and Norfolk Secondary SCITT

120 Star Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 1JN

Inspection dates

19 to 22 June 2023

Inspection judgements

Secondary age-phase

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education and training	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to be a trainee at this ITE provider?

Trainees benefit from leaders' focus on preparing them for all aspects of being a teacher. They learn, for example, about how to manage pupils' behaviour and about supporting the different needs of pupils in their classes. Trainees also learn how to help those pupils at the early stages of learning to read. Over time, trainees develop the skillset they need to teach with confidence.

If trainees have difficulties with their own well-being, help is on hand. For example, they can speak to a mental health first-aider. Most trainees find the training they receive helpful. They value the support they get from SCITT staff and school-based mentors and feel well prepared for the start of their teaching careers.

Trainees' progress through ITE is steered by joined-up working between the SCITT and its partners. Regular contact with personal tutors makes it hard for trainees to fall behind. Most school-based mentors know what they should be doing to support trainees and help trainees apply what they have been taught. A minority of trainees have less positive experiences than their peers because their mentors are not as familiar with the training curriculum as they should be.

Information about this ITE provider

- At the time of the inspection, there were 34 trainees on School Direct (tuition fee) and four on School Direct (salaried) training routes. All of these trainees complete a Postgraduate Certificate in Education.
- In addition, there were three trainees following an assessment-only route.

- All trainees are secondary phase.
- Most of the schools in which trainees are placed are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team consisted of three of His Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspections met with the executive leader of the Suffolk and Norfolk SCITT partnership and the secondary SCITT leader. Inspectors met with representatives of the SCITT steering group and the SCITT strategic board. They met with a range of school partners.
- Inspectors spoke with 26 trainees and two early career teachers.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews in mathematics, modern foreign languages, drama, English and business studies.
- Inspectors visited five schools and one sixth-form college. They held online meetings with mentors or professional tutors from a further nine schools.

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

Leaders' training programme connects the theory of teaching to its practical application. It covers all aspects of the core content framework and incorporates up-to-date and relevant research. Leaders have structured the course so that the three main elements through which it is delivered are joined up. Trainees' professional studies are built on in subject training. Trainees try this out in their school placements. They reflect on, and discuss with mentors, what they are learning about and how it is working for them. Mentors and trainees use their observations of, and reflections about, trainees' level of expertise to determine targets for trainees to work on.

Leaders have selected when different aspects of the course should be delivered so that trainees get information when it is most pertinent. Over time, content is revisited and built upon. Trainees develop an increasing level of expertise as the course progresses.

Leaders have secured the expertise needed to deliver and check on most aspects of the ITE programme. Subject trainers are experts in their field. Personal tutors check that trainees have completed the work they should, including their own reflections on their experiences of using different education theories and approaches while in school. Subject tutors periodically check that mentors are working well with trainees. All of this is overseen by a quality assurance team and subject to feedback from partner schools and trainees. Combined, these checks ensure trainees who fall behind are quickly identified and supported.

Trainees learn about the theory of teaching their subjects. Leaders make sure mentors have the detail of what they should work on with trainees and they train mentors in how

to support trainees. However, some mentors have not attended the training, and some do not know the ITE curriculum well enough. This does not stop trainees from applying and reflecting on what they have been taught, but it does mean some of them miss the opportunity for professional discussion with an expert. Because leaders' quality assurance systems rely on periodic visits, they take longer than they should to identify weaker mentoring.

Leaders make changes when something is not working as intended. This year has seen several changes to the structure of the course, including the tightening of links between different aspects of the training. When they identify a problem with the way a mentor and a trainee are working together, leaders step in to find a solution. They use the feedback they get from stakeholders to help inform next steps.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

Leaders' quality assurance systems do not tell them in a timely manner if a trainee is not getting sufficient support from their mentor. This means that some trainees' mentoring is not as structured or extensive as leaders expect. Leaders should ensure that their systems give them the information they need to ensure mentors support trainees in line with leaders' expectations.

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

- The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70147
Inspection number	10277773

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	Secondary
Date of previous inspection	20 to 23 May 2013

Inspection team

Andrew Hemmings, Lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Bessie Owen	His Majesty's Inspector
Liz Smith	His Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Placement schools and colleges

Inspectors visited the following schools and colleges as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phase
Mildenhall College Academy	139867	Secondary
Stoke High School - Ormiston Academy	140032	Secondary
Ipswich Academy	136453	Secondary
Thorpe St Andrew School and Sixth Form	143278	Secondary
One Sixth Form College	142283	Secondary
Wymondham High Academy	137461	Secondary

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