

# Tommy Flowers SCITT

St Paul's Catholic School, Phoenix Drive, Leadenhall, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK6 5EN

## Inspection dates

26 to 29 June 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 benefit from an excellent curriculum, which is taught by experts. This exceptional training programme weaves together theory and practice seamlessly to provide trainees with an experience that is second to none. Ambitious phase- and subject-specific training plays a key role in this. Trainees acquire a very strong understanding of how children learn, of how to promote high standards of behaviour, and of how to safeguard pupils' well-being. Consequently, trainees become confident, reflective teachers.

Leaders' unwavering focus on the standard that all pupils should receive the best education, whatever their different starting points, permeates all aspects of the course. Trainees develop a detailed knowledge of the underlying barriers and challenges pupils may face. They are extremely well equipped to ensure that adaptive teaching is an integral part of their classroom practice.

Trainees are incredibly proud to study here. Many describe the partnership as being 'like a family'. They truly flourish during their training year. Trainees rightly value the highly supportive relationships with partnership leaders and school-based staff that are in place to ensure their success. Well-being is prioritised every step of the way. Trainees learn to efficiently manage their workload as they become familiar with the practical realities of teaching, placing them in a prime position to be successful in their future careers.

## Information about this ITE provider

- The Tommy Flowers school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) is part of the Denbigh Alliance and is based at St Paul's Catholic School. It provides a programme of postgraduate teacher training in primary and secondary phases that, on completion, leads to the award of qualified teacher status. Trainees have the option to also complete a Postgraduate Certificate in Education with Northumbria University.
- This year the partnership has 35 trainees. There are 15 trainees in the primary phase and 20 trainees in the secondary phase.
- Trainees are prepared for work in either the five to 11 primary age-phase, or the 11 to 16 or 14 to 19 secondary age-phase. The partnership is also the accredited provider for a programme run by Bedgrove Infant School for trainees who want to specialise in the three to seven age range.
- The provider works with 25 primary and 13 secondary schools across Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire and West Northamptonshire. Nearly all the schools were judged good or better at their last Ofsted inspection.
- The programme enables trainees to follow either the core, School Direct or assessment-only route. For primary trainees, there is also the option to follow the School Direct (salaried) route.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by one of His Majesty's Inspectors and two Ofsted Inspectors.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of leaders, including the SCITT director, the three to seven route partnership manager, the secondary partnership manager and the primary link tutor. They also met the accounting officer and several members of the executive board.
- In the primary phase, the inspection team conducted focused reviews in early reading, mathematics and history. In the secondary phase, focused reviews took place in mathematics, physical education and social sciences. Inspectors met with subject tutors and visited seven schools, meeting eleven trainees, five early career teachers (ECTs), plus school mentors, professional tutors and headteachers.
- Inspectors also met either in person or online with a further 10 trainees and six ECTs, as well as groups of trainers, subject tutors, professional tutors, a headteacher and school mentors.
- Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team reviewed a wide range of the provider's documents and information on the website, as well as responses to the surveys for trainees and for staff.

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

Leaders have created a first-class programme for trainees. Their unfaltering commitment to provide Milton Keynes and the surrounding areas with exceptional teachers shines through all aspects of their work. Leaders, at every level, lead with integrity, conviction and clarity of purpose. They are highly reflective and have an acute understanding of the partnership's many strengths and how it can positively evolve in their continual strive for excellence. Recruitment processes are rigorous so as to ensure that only high-calibre trainees are enrolled on to the course.

Leaders have established a highly effective multi-layered system to assure themselves of the quality of the provision's work. School leaders are well represented on both the primary and secondary steering committees. Regular and constructive dialogue between the provider, schools and mentors is pivotal in assuring a high-quality experience for trainees. All stakeholders are quick to highlight the quality of Tommy Flowers SCITT trainees. They are fully invested in the partnership. Their voices are heard and valued. In addition, all aspects of the training programme are overseen carefully by the executive board, whose members provide constructive challenge at a high level.

The highly ambitious curriculum is informed by up-to-date and credible research. It is carefully designed around subject and phase and extends beyond the minimum entitlement of the core content framework. Expert leaders ensure that curriculum content is selected and sequenced meticulously. They make certain that the modules in professional studies link up purposefully with the subject-specific training. Placement schools are chosen carefully to help trainees make the most of their experience. This enables trainees' understanding to develop layer by layer so that they achieve highly in all areas of their training.

Leaders' steadfast focus on inclusion means that trainees develop a deep and comprehensive knowledge of how pupils learn. Trainees benefit from first-rate training in early reading. This is specifically tailored towards the age group trainees are preparing to teach. For example, trainees learn that pupils may be early readers at any age and understand the vital role of a systematic synthetic phonics programme. They appreciate the need for structured and regular practice to develop pupils' fluency. Trainees become increasingly confident in using their knowledge to teach pupils to read successfully.

High-quality mentoring is prioritised. Leaders recognise the crucial role this plays in checking trainees' learning and steering them successfully through the training programme. They ensure that mentors are very well-trained, and receive precise guidance about their role and regular quality assurance. Consequently, mentors are adept at consolidating and extending trainees' knowledge. Mentors are highly skilled at helping trainees to identify for themselves what they need to work on next. Where trainees struggle, leaders are quick to provide well-considered support, for example by rearranging or extending placements.

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

- The partnership meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

## **ITE provider details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	70304
<b>Inspection number</b>	10284850

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.

<b>Type of ITE provider</b>	School-centred initial teacher training
<b>Phases provided</b>	Primary and secondary combined
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 June and 20 November 2017

## **Inspection team**

Louise Walker, Lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alison Robb-Webb	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Shelton	Ofsted Inspector

## Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

<b>Name</b>	<b>URN</b>	<b>ITE phases</b>
Bedgrove Infant School	110282	Primary
Broughton Fields Primary School	134072	Primary
Buckingham Park Church of England Primary School	137570	Primary
Middleton Primary School	140734	Primary
Oakgrove School	136454	Primary and secondary
Ousedale School	137052	Secondary
St Paul's Catholic School	110517	Secondary

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