

The Cambridge Partnership

c/o Meridian Trust Offices, Swavesey Village College, Cambridge CB24 4RS

Inspection dates

29 January to 1 February 2024

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	Good

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

Trainees benefit hugely from the intricate precision with which their training programmes are planned. Fine details are considered to ensure they develop the essential skills of being a teacher. They learn, when they need to, how to manage pupils' behaviour. They know how to meet the needs of all their pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Primary trainees learn well how to teach early reading.

The protection of trainees' well-being is built into the routine programme of mentoring and support they receive. The innovative way in which they are assessed ensures their focus is on recalling and deepening their understanding while minimising the amount of paperwork they need to produce.

Leaders' flexible approach enables trainees to succeed. For instance, the provider responds well to employers' needs when training apprentices. They make sure that trainees' contrasting placements enhance their work in their base school. Some trainees' courses are extended to allow them to have sufficient experience in different settings. The provider considers how to help everyone to succeed.

Everything the provider does is underpinned by effective joint working. They make sure schools understand and follow their training programme. This means that trainees have a consistently positive experience.

Information about this ITE provider

- The provider currently has 108 trainees over the primary and secondary phases.
- Thirty-four of the trainees are following the level 6 teaching apprenticeship route.
- The provider works with 110 schools in eight local authorities.
- The majority of the schools the provider works with are graded good or better by Ofsted.
- The routes offered by the provider are apprenticeships, Postgraduate Certificate in Education, School Direct (fee paid) and School Direct (salaried).

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team consisted of one Ofsted Inspector and two of His Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspectors met with the director of initial teacher training, the executive principal (secondary), the executive director of SEND and the chief executive officer of Meridian Trust, as well as members of the strategic board.
- Inspectors spoke with programme managers, subject tutors and school-based mentors.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews in the following subjects: early reading, science, history, geography and mathematics.
- Inspectors spoke with 13 trainees and nine early career teachers.
- Inspectors visited eight schools.

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

The provider has a crystal-clear understanding of the needs of schools in the region. Its recruitment and training are tailored to meet these. For example, in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, the provider runs an internship course as a pathway to the teaching apprenticeship. It makes sure that those who are keen to work in special schools learn from experts in the field. The result is that schools' recruitment needs are far more likely to be met than they otherwise would be.

Built around the five pillars of behaviour management, pedagogy, curriculum, assessment and professional responsibilities, the trainee curriculum covers all aspects of the core content framework. It revisits, in deepening complexity, the knowledge and skills of teaching over time. The process for trainees learning the theory of teaching, understanding how it applies to a particular subject or phase and practising it in school is seamless.

The provider is driven by a strong moral purpose to meet the needs of all pupils. They make sure trainees know how to, and that they must, adapt their teaching to meet the

needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. They help trainees to become rounded professionals with skills to meet the multi-faceted demands of the profession.

The Cambridge Partnership works very effectively with others. Its strategic board, representing schools, academy trusts and local authorities, scrutinises their work very well. The partnership works extremely closely with two other ITE providers to maximise the chances of trainees being successful and to minimise the burden on schools. Its mentor training, routine checks of trainees' work and regular visits to schools ensure that mentors follow the programme with fidelity.

It is hard for trainees to fall behind. Close guidance and monitoring of their progress by both mentors and programme managers ensures they have timely guidance on how to develop their practice.

Trainees' understanding is checked well by programme managers in formal assessments. If trainees need additional support, the partnership provides it.

The provider ensures that trainees in the primary phase know how to teach early reading and phonics effectively. They focus on developing trainees' understanding of the phonics approach, regardless of the scheme trainees might encounter as teachers.

Do the ITE provider's primary and secondary combined phases comply with the ITE compliance criteria?

The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

Do apprenticeships in the ITE provider's primary and secondary combined phases satisfy the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision?

The provider meets the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision in the primary and secondary combined phases.

The provider checks on apprentices' knowledge of teaching from the start. It visits apprentices early in the course to check what they can do and what they need to learn. The provider uses this information to inform the training and mentoring apprentices receive.

Leaders make sure that apprentices have at least the minimum amount of off-the-job training. Apprentices, like their colleagues on other training routes, are well informed about up-to-date research and learn how to apply this in their teaching. They develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours of professional teachers.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70232
Inspection number	10313362

This inspection was carried out in accordance with the [initial teacher education inspection framework and handbook](#), which 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	12 June and 9 October 2017

Inspection team

Andrew Hemmings, Lead Inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Crozier	His Majesty's Inspector
Adam Cooke	His Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phase
Bromham CofE Primary	109611	Primary
Gamlingay Village Primary	142638	Primary
Manea Community Primary School	110638	Primary
Isle of Ely Primary School	140483	Primary
Nene Park Academy	137082	Secondary
Springwood High School	136515	Secondary
Comberton Village College	136463	Secondary
Abbey College	136083	Secondary

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