

University of Portsmouth

St George's Building
141 High Street
Portsmouth
PO1 2HY

Inspection dates

29 January to 1 February 2024

Inspection judgements

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

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

The provider successfully realises its deep investment to meet the needs of local schools and colleges. Trainees are helped to get off to a strong start in their teaching career because the university carefully adapts the curriculum to meet their individual needs.

Trainees are well prepared to teach in the phase in which they are training. They are inspired by high-quality training that cohesively links across the university and placements. Staff expertly model the professional behaviours they expect from trainees. Trainees strengthen their practice through informed use of pertinent research. They deepen their understanding by observing experts in schools and colleges before applying their learning in classrooms. Secondary trainees, in particular, acquire excellent subject knowledge. Primary trainees develop a secure understanding of how to teach early reading. As trainees become early career teachers (ECTs), they are confidently prepared for the complexities of teaching in different contexts.

The university understands trainees' individual needs. They are well supported by everyone in the partnership. Staff take trainee well-being seriously and provide very strong pastoral support. All trainees, including further education and skills trainees who work at partner colleges, value strong professional relationships with staff. Effective communication between the university, schools and colleges ensures that everyone understands the part

that they play in contributing to trainees' development. They all share the aspiration to cultivate the next generation of teachers.

Trainees are well prepared for the realities of teaching, building their resilience so that they are more likely to remain in the profession. Trainees are provided with clear guidance on how to manage pupils' behaviour and how to support those with additional needs. Trainees develop a secure understanding of how to support the high proportions of disadvantaged pupils in the local community. Schools and colleges appreciate how trainees are prepared for the professional world of work. Trainees become strong role models for the learners they teach.

Information about this ITE provider

- The University of Portsmouth offers several routes to gain qualified teacher status (QTS) in either primary, secondary or further education and skills (FES). Trainees study to teach pupils aged either 5 to 11 years, 11 to 16 years or young people aged 16 to 19.
- At the time of the inspection, there were 113 trainees on the primary route, 63 in the secondary phase and 109 following the FES route.
- In the primary phase, most trainees complete an undergraduate route leading to QTS with a smaller proportion completing a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).
- In the secondary phase, most trainees complete the postgraduate route. A small number of trainees complete the School Direct route. A few trainees follow the undergraduate pathway, which means they start an undergraduate degree in their chosen subject and later opt for the QTS pathway.
- In the FES phase, trainees can complete a one-year full-time PGCE taught at the university. Trainees who are already in a teaching role are taught at one of four partner colleges. Trainees on these in-service routes can work towards the level 5 Certificate in Education, level 6 professional graduate certificate or level 7 PGCE.
- The University of Portsmouth works with 56 primary schools, 39 secondary schools and 14 further education and skills colleges across nine local authorities.
- Almost all partner schools were judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted at their most recent inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was conducted by eight of His Majesty's Inspectors and one Ofsted Inspector.
- Inspectors met with a range of leaders, including the director of initial teacher education, course leaders, subject tutors, mentors and headteachers.
- Inspectors spoke to 69 trainees, 47 mentors, 12 ECTs and 39 headteachers or senior college representatives. The inspection team visited 17 schools or colleges as part of the inspection.

- The inspection team carried out focused reviews in all phases to help them understand how well trainees are prepared to teach. In the primary phase, they focused on early reading, mathematics, science, history and computing. In the secondary phase, the focus subjects were geography, modern foreign languages and mathematics. The further education and skills team explored psychology, criminology and sociology. They also reviewed how well trainees are prepared to teach business, mathematics, engineering and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Primary phase report

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum that prepares trainees well for teaching in the primary phase. It is fully underpinned by the core content framework (CCF). Leaders are determined in their efforts to continually improve the programme. They listen to feedback from all stakeholders, including trainees, and take swift action to strengthen the quality of the provision. Schools welcome the genuine partnership with the provider. Headteachers value the effective two-way communication between schools and the provider. Consequently, schools are highly engaged and committed to working with the university for the benefit of trainees.

Tutors, who are experts in their field, provide trainees with high-quality guidance and support. They assist trainees to develop a rich understanding of theory based on current research, alongside classroom practice. A key thread running throughout the programme is the sharp focus on trainees developing their knowledge and skills to identify and support pupils with additional needs. The curriculum is carefully interwoven between training at the centre and school placements to give trainees deliberate opportunities to practise skills of planning, teaching and assessing pupils' learning. This is further supported by purposeful opportunities to consolidate and reinforce trainees' understanding through 'intensive training and practise' days.

Primary trainees benefit from first-rate training to teach early reading. Leaders precisely focus on decoding using systematic synthetic phonics. Trainees value the highly structured opportunities to refine their practice in schools and their experiences in seminars. This helps them to develop their understanding of how to support weaker readers.

The approaches to assess trainees' pedagogical understanding are well considered. Their development is continually checked to help them refine expertise as they move through the course. However, the checks on trainees' subject-specific knowledge are not as advanced. In a few subjects, leaders make less effective use of the information that they gather. As a result, trainees are not consistently offered timely support to address gaps in their understanding of some subject-specific content.

School-based mentors speak highly of the clear lines of communication and support provided by the university. They appreciate the recent improvements to their training that has helped them to successfully strengthen trainees' learning. As a result, mentors provide trainees with high-quality guidance, encouraging trainees to develop into reflective practitioners. Leaders' work to assure themselves of the quality of mentoring is usually effective. Many mentors set useful targets that support trainees to master the important content or expertise to be developed. However, a small number of mentors set targets that lack precision, and the university's oversight of this is not well developed.

Pastoral arrangements for trainees are highly effective and ensure that their individual needs are met. Trainees describe course leaders as 'inspirational' and always available. Leaders nurture trainees and provide them with bespoke guidance to give them the best possible start to their careers. One trainee, summing up the views of many, stated, 'We are known as individuals and given the help we need to succeed.'

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

Information for the provider and appropriate authority

- The quality assurance of target setting needs refinement. Some trainees receive targets that are too broad, and they do not develop subject-specific knowledge as quickly as they could. The provider should take action to assure themselves that all trainees have targets that focus sharply on the content and specific expertise to be mastered.
- The assessment of trainees needs refining in some foundation subjects. Trainees are not consistently supported to address gaps in their subject-specific knowledge. Leaders should strengthen their assessment of trainees to support them to gain the intended subject-specific expertise so that they are well prepared to teach across the curriculum.

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 exceptional training programme. The provider's longstanding and successful collaboration with partner schools continues to flourish. The coherent curriculum, refined over a long period, exemplifies ambition, rigour and aspiration. Everyone involved in delivering the programme unites around this vision. Partner schools relish welcoming trainees in as they 'breathe oxygen into our schools'.

The commitment and relentless determination to equip trainees with the very best knowledge and skills are evident throughout. The coherence of all elements of the training programme supports trainees in deepening their specialist subject knowledge. The CCF underpins the ambitious curriculum. A focus on pupils who are disadvantaged, including those with SEND, equips trainees with a deep understanding of the challenges that these pupils face. Trainees learn and practice a plethora of strategies to support disadvantaged pupils. This enhances their teaching for all pupils.

Clearly defined 'phases' support the development of trainees' skills, knowledge and understanding. The precisely designed training is enhanced by research-informed practice. Partner schools value the positive impact that this has on their practice, as mentors and trainees together reflect deeply on critical developments and cutting-edge research. High-quality training by experts from visiting partnership schools enhances trainees' knowledge and understanding of the current critical aspects facing schools.

Dedication, passion and commitment characterise mentoring. Strong relationships enable mentors to provide consistently effective support to trainees. This enables trainees to develop vital knowledge and skills. Mentors receive regular, high-quality feedback on their work. This provides them with valuable professional development and strengthens their support of trainees substantially. The assessment of trainees is inextricably linked to the curriculum. Regular professional dialogue provides high-quality personal and developmental feedback to trainees. Underpinned by accurate target setting and deliberate and meaningful practice, trainees' preparation for the next stage of their career is highly effective.

The strength of the relationships between the provider and all schools in the partnership results in synergy, consistency and a highly effective approach. Trainees, known personally and individually, strive consistently to achieve the highest standards. The provider is aware of its strengths, but also has a realistic view of where improvements can enhance the provision further. All involved in the partnership are relentless in their pursuit of making improvements so that the training is of the highest quality.

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?

The provider has designed a carefully structured and ambitious curriculum. It successfully supports trainees to acquire the skills that they need to progress and succeed. Staff introduce core topics such as digital skills, SEND and adaptive teaching early in the programme and revisit them frequently to ensure that trainees consolidate and embed their learning. Academic learning and practical teaching skills are interwoven appropriately. As a result, trainees are well prepared to become competent teachers in a FES setting.

The provider uses up-to-date research well to inform the curriculum. For example, trainees learn about the way that artificial intelligence is being applied in the sector. Trainees reflect well on what they are learning. They are supported to adapt and develop their own teaching practice accordingly. For example, they use their learning about teaching strategies to structure lessons. They also use their understanding of how trainees learn best to limit the amount of content in presentations.

Trainees, many of whom are mature learners returning to study, are well supported to achieve. They rightly appreciate the extensive pastoral support that is available to them through the university. This is particularly successful for trainees who have additional needs. Trainees value highly staff support to develop their academic writing skills and benefit from carefully constructed assessment activities which link the theoretical and practical components of the course effectively. Staff provide helpful feedback on academic assignments and teaching practice. As a result, trainees have a secure understanding about the progress they are making.

Most trainees develop their subject specific skills very well through highly effective support from their mentor and wider reading as part of assessments. For a few trainees, leaders do not have sufficient oversight of the quality of mentoring support. In this small number of cases, subject mentors do not provide trainees with timely, challenging and supportive feedback. As a result, these trainees are not enabled to develop their professional and subject teaching skills as well as they could.

Leaders work closely with college partners to ensure that they have a shared vision of excellence. They use feedback from partners well to adapt programmes to ensure that they meet employers' needs. When they identify areas for development, they act swiftly to implement positive changes.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- The oversight of the quality of mentoring needs refining. A small number of in-service trainees do not receive subject mentoring, which would enable them to make the progress that they could. The provider needs to ensure that all trainees experience high-quality, timely feedback from subject mentors which focuses them on activities that will have the greatest impact on the development of their professional and subject teaching skills.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70060
Inspection number	10311016

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	HEI
Phases provided	Primary Secondary Further education and skills
Dates of previous inspection	21 May to 5 November 2018

Inspection team

Laurie Anderson, Overall lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Laura James, Primary phase lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Annemarie Bahaire, Team member	Ofsted inspector
Stewart Jackson, Team member	His Majesty's Inspector
Viki Faulkner, FES phase lead	His Majesty's Inspector
Linda Culling, Secondary phase lead	His Majesty's Inspector
Carolyn Brownsea, Team member	His Majesty's Inspector
Hannah Miller, Team member	His Majesty's Inspector
Kate Fripp, Team member	His Majesty's Inspector

Annex: schools and colleges

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

Name	URN	ITE phases
Barncroft Primary School	136078	Primary
Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School	148528	Primary
Crofton Anne Dale Infant School	115967	Primary
Gomer Junior School	144093	Primary
Westover Primary School	142602	Primary
Bourne Community College	126069	Secondary
Mayville High School	116573	Secondary
Purbrook Park School	116506	Secondary
St Edmund's Catholic School	116505	Secondary
The Portsmouth Grammar School	116583	Secondary
UTC Portsmouth	143430	Secondary
Barton Peveril Sixth Form College	130701	FES
Chichester College Group	130843	FES
City of Portsmouth College	130697	FES
Eastleigh College	130692	FES
Fair Ways School	135240	FES
Havant and South Downs College	130695	FES

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.reports.ofsted.gov.uk.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024