

Associated Merseyside Partnership SCITT

Building 1000, Vortex Court, Enterprise Way, Wavertree Technology Park, Liverpool L13 1FB

Inspection dates

25 to 28 March 2024

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

Good

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

Trainees have a strong affiliation to the Associated Merseyside Partnership SCITT. They value the all-encompassing support and guidance available to them throughout their training. This includes well-thought-out support for their workload and well-being. Communication between different partners is strong. Leaders are alert to trainees who experience difficulties. They intervene appropriately to support trainees to experience success on the course.

Trainees spend much of their training year in schools. They are immersed in school life from the outset and gain a well-grounded understanding of the rigours of classroom life. Trainees are amply prepared for their future careers.

Trainees benefit from high-quality central training. They quickly learn how to create safe and welcoming classrooms. Equally, trainees develop a detailed knowledge of how to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Trainees understand the particular value of breaking learning down to meet pupils' additional needs.

Trainees are well prepared to teach their chosen subject and age-phase. In the primary age-phase, trainees develop the knowledge and skills to teach reading competently over time. They gain a confident understanding of the importance of systematic synthetic

phonics in supporting pupils to read fluently. Secondary age-phase trainees learn about effective subject-specific pedagogy in carefully chosen school contexts.

Information about this ITE provider

- The Associated Merseyside Partnership (SCITT [School-centred initial teacher training]) has provided initial teacher education (ITE) since September 2015. It provides both primary and secondary teacher training programmes.
- The SCITT forms part of the Lydiate Learning Trust. Deyes High School is the lead school in the partnership for the secondary phase. Green Park Primary School and Hudson Primary School are lead partner primary schools.
- Since the last inspection the partnership has expanded to include Ashton Teacher Training Partnership (TTP) as a lead partner for primary teacher training programmes.
- The partnership offers a one-year School Direct (tuition fee) training programme which, on successful completion, leads to qualified teacher status (QTS) and a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE). The PGCE is validated by Liverpool Hope University.
- Primary age-phase trainees qualify to teach ages three to seven, seven to 11 or five to 11 years. Secondary age-phase trainees qualify to teach ages 11 to 16 in different subjects or ages 14 to 19 in business studies.
- In the 2023/24 academic year, there were 81 trainees enrolled onto the partnership's ITE programmes. There were 41 primary- and 40 secondary-age phase trainees.
- In 2023/24, primary trainees chose from a general PGCE in primary education, or they could choose to follow the primary physical education specialist PGCE route. Secondary trainees chose from the following PGCE subject specialisms: art and design; biology; business studies; chemistry; computing; dance; design and technology; drama; English; geography; history; mathematics; modern foreign languages; music; physical education; physical education with EBacc physics; physics or religious education.
- The partnership includes 50 primary schools and 23 secondary schools. These settings span 11 local authorities.
- Schools in which trainees are placed have been judged as outstanding, good and requires improvement by Ofsted.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by two of His Majesty's Inspectors and one Ofsted Inspector.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of SCITT leaders, including the head of the SCITT and the SCITT manager. The lead inspector met with members of the SCITT's governance committee, including the chair of the committee. Inspectors also spoke with a range of staff and other partners within the SCITT.

- Inspectors sampled a wide range of documentation relating to the ITE training programme. This included curriculum documentation, trainees' assignments, records of target setting and information relating to the Department for Education's (DfE's) ITE criteria and supporting advice.
- Inspectors also reviewed a wide range of information relating to the leadership and management of the partnership. These documents included leaders' records of self-evaluation and improvement planning.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of Liverpool Hope University to discuss the PGCE element of the training programme.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online trainee and staff surveys.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews for the primary age-phase in early reading, mathematics and primary foundation subjects. In the secondary age-phase, focused reviews included physics and modern foreign languages.
- Inspectors spoke with 32 trainees individually or in small groups to discuss their experiences of the training programmes. They also spoke with 22 home coaches (mentors).
- Inspectors visited six schools as part of the inspection. During school visits, inspectors spoke with professional mentors, home coaches, trainees and headteachers. They also visited lessons that the trainees were teaching and observed the feedback given to trainees by home coaches.
- Inspectors spoke with five early career teachers, who had previously completed their initial teacher training with the provider.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum, underpinned by an unwavering commitment to equip local schools with high-quality early career teachers. The expansion of the partnership to include Ashton TTP has strengthened this moral purpose by meeting a training need in the northeast Manchester area. Across the partnership, trainees are prepared very well to join the teaching profession.

Leaders ensure that the ITE curriculum goes beyond the requirements of the DfE's core content framework. The curriculum's spiral design means that trainees build securely, and at pace, on their core subject and pedagogical knowledge over the course of the programme. Key elements, including supporting pupils with SEND and assessing what pupils have learned, are skilfully interwoven. Masters-level modules enable trainees to deepen their understanding further. As a result, trainees know how to adapt their teaching to support pupils, including those with SEND, to learn well. Similarly, trainees are attuned to the small steps of progress that pupils make within lessons.

In the primary age-phase, trainees develop a strong understanding of pedagogy and curriculum design, particularly in English, mathematics and science. They learn about the

latest research, including how to help pupils know more and remember more in these subjects. For example, trainees understand the importance of providing all pupils, including pupils with SEND, with enough structured practice to secure fluency in reading. However, in a small number of foundation subjects, the aims and content of the subject-based training have not been identified and communicated to trainees and partner schools as well as in core subjects. As a result, the knowledge that a few trainees have of these subjects and how to teach them is not as secure as it is in other subjects.

Trainees in the secondary age-phase learn an appropriate depth of subject knowledge, delivered by subject specialists who are experts in their field. Across both age-phases, well chosen, contrasting school-based experiences serve to strengthen trainees' knowledge. Trainees make strong connections between their centre- and school-based training.

Leaders have developed suitably rigorous systems for assessing trainees' progress through the ITE curriculum. Leaders' high-quality programme materials, including weekly newsletters, keep trainees abreast of the expectations and timings of assessments. In the main, home coaches' weekly lesson observations and collaborative setting of targets help trainees to identify areas for development to strengthen their practice. However, in some instances, coaches do not provide trainees with targets that are precise enough to successfully address gaps in their knowledge and to improve their teaching.

Leaders continually reflect on the effectiveness of the training programme and how to improve it. They value trainees' feedback and make changes when something is not working as intended. The governance committee supports and challenges leaders very effectively.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum for a small number of foundation subjects in the primary age-phase is not as clearly defined as it is in other subjects. This means that a small number of trainees do not deepen their knowledge of how to teach these subjects over the course of the programme. Leaders should ensure that curriculum content is planned, sequenced and communicated so that trainees are equally well equipped to teach the full range of primary national curriculum subjects.
- Leaders have not ensured that the targets that some home coaches set are of a consistently high quality. In some instances, targets are too broad and generic and lack the precision necessary to support trainees to hone their craft. Leaders should ensure that home coaches are equipped to set effective targets, so that trainees benefit from the precise guidance that they need to improve.

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

The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number 70330

Inspection number 10308779

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 SCITT

Phases provided Primary and secondary combined

Date of previous inspection 12 June and 13 November 2017

Inspection team

Jackie Stillings, Lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Barraclough

His Majesty's Inspector

Valerie Elson

Ofsted Inspector

Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phases
Childwall Sports & Science Academy	138787	Secondary
Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School	104940	Primary
Meols Cop High School	149828	Secondary
St Finbar's Catholic Primary School	104640	Primary
St Francis de Sales Catholic Infant and Nursery School	104651	Primary
Whiston Willis Primary Academy	145613	Primary

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