

Teach First

6 Mitre Passage, London SE10 0ER

Inspection dates

20 to 23 May 2024

Inspection judgements

National professional qualifications (NPQs) inspection

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of professional development and training

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

N/A

What is it like to be an NPQ participant at this lead provider?

Participants gain exceptional professional development and training when completing an NPQ with Teach First. The curriculum meticulously supports participants to deepen their knowledge and develop their leadership skills in their chosen specialism. Throughout the NPQ programmes, participants flourish in confidence and competence when implementing and influencing positive change in their schools or settings. Participants especially benefit from expertly led discussions with peers in similar contexts to their own. Each programme fosters rich professional networks that enable participants to hone their professional practice.

Facilitators are highly skilled experts in their fields. They deftly adapt seminar and conference materials to meet participants' individual needs and contexts. Participants unreservedly praise the perceptiveness with which curriculum content is adapted to maximise their professional development. An example of this is the excellent input on raising outcomes and aspirations for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Leaders have explicitly woven the principles of inclusion, diversity and equality through all NPQ programmes. This empowers participants to strive for the greatest possible impact on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils when applying what they have learned in school.

Leaders consider workload in all aspects of the NPQ delivery. Online materials are easy to access and simple to navigate. In addition, diagnostic self-assessments at the start of each online module enable participants to prioritise the learning material most suited to their prior knowledge. Teach First's flexible approach to the timings of assessments, seminars and conferences also supports participants very well in managing their time.

Information about this lead provider

- There are 7,069 participants undertaking one of the lead provider's nine NPQ programmes.
- Teach First works with 21 delivery partners nationwide. Delivery partners consist of teaching school hubs, multi-academy trusts and other education establishments, including another lead provider.
- Teach First provides direct delivery of all nine of its NPQ programmes to 402 participants.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by seven of His Majesty's Inspectors. The inspection was carried out through in-person meetings, online meetings, on-site visits to eight delivery partners and online visits to four delivery partners. Inspectors also visited Teach First's centrally delivered programme. Inspectors held meetings with leaders and participants from a range of additional delivery partners.
- Inspectors met with the lead provider's representatives, including the head of initial teacher education, the director of programme quality, the director of design and a range of other senior staff. The lead inspector also met with two members of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer, and two other executive leaders.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews in eight NPQ programmes. For each focused review, inspectors met with delivery partner leaders, met with a group of NPQ participants, participant sponsors and programme facilitators. Inspectors reviewed a range of programme documentation and training materials and visited one online live training delivery session. Inspectors also met with a group of participants of the NPQ Leading Primary Mathematics programme, which did not have a focused review.
- Inspectors carried out twelve focused reviews in total with twelve of the lead provider's delivery partners. They also carried out a range of inspection activities to review Teach First's centrally delivered programme.
- The inspection team considered the responses to the Ofsted online surveys for NPQ participants, delivery partners and school leaders.

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

Leaders at Teach First work with an unwavering moral purpose. They use their NPQ programmes as a vehicle to tackle the barriers to educational equality in the schools that they work with. This core vision underpins all aspects of NPQ delivery. For instance, participants from schools with the highest proportion of disadvantaged pupils benefit

further from one-to-one expert coaching. Teach First is rigorous in its selection of delivery partners. Delivery partners must not only demonstrate expertise in NPQ curriculum content, but also have the same unwavering commitment to challenging educational disadvantage and securing the best possible outcomes for vulnerable pupils. Relationships between Teach First and their delivery partners are exceptionally strong.

Leaders expertly design and refine course materials, making sure that they cover the core curriculum principles of each NPQ programme in an inspiring and purposeful manner. Leaders' work is highly effective, with participants skilfully supported to apply salient educational theories and principles, both in their current roles and in readiness for future careers. For example, through online seminars and face-to-face conferences, participants put their learning into practice through contextual examples and case studies. Examples have been thoughtfully designed to help participants translate and adapt their learning to a range of similar and contrasting situations. School leaders are overwhelmingly positive about the impact that training has on participants and their schools.

The effective use of assessment enables facilitators to be agile in their response to participants' emerging needs. For instance, facilitators use seminar discussions to identify how well participants are engaging with new learning and applying it to different contexts and scenarios. When needed, facilitators swiftly intervene to address misconceptions or gaps in participants' knowledge. NPQ programmes also focus on 'persistent problems' which face leaders in schools today. Participants emerge from the NPQ course with the confidence and knowledge to become highly impactful leaders and practitioners in schools and settings.

Participants speak highly of how the course galvanises their mindset to shape and improve practice through their roles. They explain how they are now able to consider their actions and influence over a wider sphere compared to when they started the programme. For example, participants leading teaching and development in their schools learn to think beyond their own classroom to lead whole-school pedagogical development. Facilitators know course materials extremely well. They skilfully enhance seminar discussions with examples from their own real-life experience. Many facilitators are national experts on their subject matter.

Leaders take a meticulous approach to evaluation and development of the curriculum and its delivery, collecting a wealth of quantitative and qualitative information. These insights enable leaders to have absolute clarity about any adjustments that may be needed to each course and how best to bring these about. Delivery partners value highly the numerous opportunities to collaborate on and feedback into programme design and delivery.

Reporting to executive leaders and trustees is regular and thorough. Trustees and the executive leadership team have a detailed understanding of the strengths and areas of current development. This allows them to challenge and support leaders with appropriate vigor. Leaders ensure that there is rigorous compliance with all relevant legislation, including in relation to safeguarding and equalities.

Lead provider details

Unique reference number	2680062
Inspection number	10326119

This inspection was carried out by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) in accordance with [early career framework \(ECF\) and national professional qualification \(NPQ\) framework and handbook](#).

The framework and handbook set out the statutory basis for ECF and NPQ inspections in England.

Lead provider programmes offered	ECF and NPQ
Date of previous inspection	N/A

Inspection team

Annabel Davies, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
James Broadbridge	His Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Favager-Dalton	His Majesty's Inspector
Emma Gater	His Majesty's Inspector
Shaheen Hussain	His Majesty's Inspector
Malcolm Kirtley	His Majesty's Inspector
Lynne Williams	His Majesty's Inspector

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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

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