

# Teach First

6 Mitre Passage  
London  
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## Inspection dates

13 to 16 January 2025

## Inspection judgements

Early career framework (ECF) inspection

### Overall effectiveness

**Outstanding**

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The quality of professional development and training

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

## What is it like to be an early career teacher (ECT) at this lead provider?

The Teach First ECF curriculum is meticulously designed to provide trainees with a well-rounded view of highly relevant topics which impact on their teaching. Education as a tool to eradicate disadvantage and inequality is at the core of everything that Teach First, alongside its delivery partners, achieve. Highly effective communication between the lead provider and their delivery partners ensures that there is an attuned understanding of the programme goals, at all levels.

ECTs continually build and enhance their knowledge and skills through the precise activities within the programme modules. For example, some ECTs are directed to well-thought-out 'stretch' activities in their self-study, while others are given further high-quality support, where necessary. The use of development cycles allows ECTs to thoughtfully reflect on what they are learning. In this way, they build confidence and independence over the two-year programme and have a crystal-clear understanding of their strengths and areas for development. ECTs skilfully build clear behaviour management routines which, for example, develop helpful strategies to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the classroom.

The exceptional exemplification of generic principles, into specific subject and phase contexts, enables ECTs to adeptly apply their knowledge to their teaching. ECTs strengthen their confidence and understanding through highly effective meetings with their mentor. As a result, ECTs are extremely well prepared to teach in their chosen phase and subject(s).

## Information about this lead provider

- There are 7,744 ECTs undertaking the ECF programme. Of these 3,830 are in their first year of the ECF programme and 3,914 are in their second year.
- Teach First works with 22 delivery partners, who deliver training to 6,791 ECTs.
- The delivery partners include 14 teaching school hubs, seven multi-academy trusts and one university.
- Teach First provides direct delivery to 953 ECTs.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by five of His Majesty's Inspectors. The inspection was carried out through in-person meetings, online meetings and on-site visits to delivery partners.
- Inspectors met with the lead provider's representatives, including the director of programme quality and the head of initial teacher training. Inspectors also met with the head of curriculum design, the head of regional partnerships and other senior leaders. Inspectors also met with representatives from the board of trustees and the executive leadership team.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews within eight delivery partners. For each focused review, inspectors held discussions with delivery partner leaders and facilitators, spoke to early career teachers, spoke to school leaders and mentors and considered any appropriate documentation. Some inspectors also visited live training sessions.
- In addition, inspectors also carried out a focused review that considered Teach First's direct delivery of the ECF programme.
- Inspectors also considered Ofsted's online survey responses from ECTs, mentors, delivery partners and school leaders.

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

The vision of Teach First, to support and empower the most disadvantaged children, is realised through a research-informed curriculum that is at the heart of all aspects of the ECF programme. The curriculum is precisely mapped against the ECF. General principles and theories of education, grounded in the research of expert organisations and individuals, mean that ECTs build a rich body of knowledge. For example, ECTs in the primary phase can clearly articulate the ways in which theories around cognitive overload are useful to them in planning activities and reviewing the learning of pupils in their classes.

Teach First conscientiously supports delivery partners to select skilled facilitators to work with ECTs. Therefore, ECTs are exposed to expert individuals, with the credibility to deliver the programme. From the outset, facilitators build positive relationships with the ECTs they work with. Subject and phase specialist groups in Year 2 of the programme deepen this support further. These relationships, and the information that facilitators routinely gather,

allows for skilful tailoring of individual sessions. As a result, ECTs quickly develop secure knowledge that they successfully translate into skilful classroom practice.

Strategic oversight of the quality of the ECF programme seamlessly leads to ongoing quality improvements. For example, quality assurance processes result in specific, highly ambitious improvement strategies which are fully understood at governance and operational levels. Leaders regularly seek the views of all stakeholders. These trusting, open relationships between Teach First and delivery partners leads to a relentless focus on the continuous improvement of what is already an incredibly strong offer for ECTs. For example, leaders have further enhanced facilitator training modules, enabling programme facilitators to build on their expertise, including specific units on how to teach adult learners. This means the quality of teaching provided to ECTs is constantly improving.

Mentors benefit from a high-quality training programme that includes succinct materials to help them to understand what the ECTs are being taught. For example, the recordings mentors receive keep them fully abreast of relevant research. Consequently, mentors can build their expertise and provide invaluable support to trainees while minimising any impact on their own workload. Mentors speak highly of the professional development they receive from Teach First.

Leaders make sure that it is easy for ECTs to raise concerns about safeguarding and equalities issues, if required. Within the parameters of the programme, leaders have ensured that training is accessible and flexible so that delivery partners can thoroughly meet the needs of the ECTs they work with. Furthermore, the programme attentively blends the duties and responsibilities of working in a school and so supports ECTs to manage their workload effectively.

## Lead provider details

**Unique reference number** 2680062

**Inspection number** 10365439

This inspection was carried out by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) in accordance with the [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

**Dates of previous inspection** 6 to 9 March 2023

## Inspection team

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