

Alliance for Learning SCITT Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 22 May 2017 Stage 2: 25 September 2017

This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty’s Inspectors in accordance with the ‘Initial teacher education inspection handbook’. This handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from September 2015.

The inspection draws on evidence from each phase and separate route within the ITE partnership to make judgements against all parts of the evaluation schedule. Inspectors focused on the overall effectiveness of the ITE partnership in securing high-quality outcomes for trainees.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is requires improvement; grade 4 is inadequate

	Early years ITT (EYTS)	Primary and Secondary QTS
Overall effectiveness How well does the partnership secure consistently high-quality outcomes for trainees?	2	2
The outcomes for trainees	2	2
The quality of training across the partnership	2	2
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	2	2

Overview of the ITE partnership

The overall effectiveness of the ITE partnership is good in early years ITT and in the combined primary and secondary training routes.

This is because good-quality training enables trainees to demonstrate valuable professional attributes. Trainees are sought after by employers because they are well prepared for their roles as teachers. The partnership's clear vision and rapid improvements made to training and outcomes provide evidence of this partnership's excellent capacity to continue to improve.

Key findings

- The attention paid to the recruitment and selection process ensures that only those with the potential to become good teachers are selected for training.
- The partnership places a strong emphasis on equality and diversity. Trainees gain from rich experiences in a range of contrasting schools and settings during their training.
- Trainees' commitment, reflection and strong professional attributes demonstrate they are well prepared for their teaching roles.
- Trainees demonstrate particularly well-honed skills in behaviour management and in planning and structuring learning experiences.
- The collaborative partnership draws on the expertise of settings- and school-based colleagues to provide consistently good quality training.
- Partnership settings and schools share the partnership's vision and leaders' and managers' ambition to grow and continue to improve.

To improve the ITE partnership should:

- use feedback from trainees, former trainees, newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and employers to improve the usefulness of the partnership's career entry profile document.

Information about this ITE partnership

- The partnership offers early years ITT and primary and secondary training in conjunction with settings, schools and sixth-form colleges across a number of local authorities in the North West region. It is led by the Alliance for Learning teaching school alliance and the Bright Futures Education Trust.

- This newly accredited SCITT was inspected at the end of its second year in existence.
- Early years ITT was being offered for the first time in 2016-17.

The early years ITT phase

Information about the early years ITT partnership

- The Alliance for Learning SCITT works in partnership with nine early years settings across three local authorities. The programme is planned and delivered in partnership with St Bede's Primary Academy, Bolton.
- Two programmes leading to early years teacher status (EYTS) were offered for the first time during 2016/17. Seven trainees were on the part-time employment-based route and two trainees were on the full-time graduate entry route.
- The partnership is offering one graduate employment-based route in 2017/18. It has recruited six trainees.

Information about the early years ITT inspection

- This inspection was undertaken by one inspector. He visited six early years settings and schools to meet current and former trainees. During some of these visits he observed trainees' teaching jointly with the trainees' tutor or mentor.
- Through a range of meetings, setting and school visits and telephone calls, the inspector spoke with almost all of the trainees from the 2016/17 cohort. He discussed their perceptions of their training, their experience of placements and the impact of support from their mentors and tutors.
- The inspector met regularly with leaders and managers to discuss their development and oversight of the programme. He reviewed the partnership agreements, the SCITT's self-evaluation, handbooks, a sample of trainees' portfolios and former trainees' career entry profiles.
- The inspector took account of the views of six trainees, made in response to Ofsted's online trainee questionnaire. He also considered responses from nine trainees to a questionnaire used by the partnership.
- The inspector considered evidence of compliance with statutory requirements, including safeguarding and the early years ITT requirements.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan HMI (lead inspector)

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

Key strengths of the early years ITT partnership

- The partnership recruits trainees who are passionate, committed and determined to improve their understanding of children's care, development

and learning. They bring much existing expertise to their training and adapt quickly to the demands of the programmes and placements.

- Trainees have a good understanding of child development, the requirements of the early years foundation stage and safeguarding. They use a range of strategies well to develop children's abilities in early mathematics and in reading and phonics.
- Trainees' skills in supporting and managing children's behaviour are very well developed through their training.
- Trainees demonstrate high levels of personal and professional conduct. They are highly committed to becoming successful early years teachers and improving practice across schools and early years settings.
- The good-quality training ensures that trainees are prepared effectively to deliver the early years foundation stage across different early years settings and schools. Trainees also understand the continuum of children's learning in key stage 1. Trainees have a good understanding of how to adapt their teaching to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Training is underpinned strongly by research and good early years practice. It is provided by professionals who are skilled in supporting practitioner development in the early years.
- Leaders and managers take prompt action to review the quality of the training experience. The capacity to continue to improve early years ITT is excellent.

What does the early years ITT partnership need to do to improve further?

The partnership should:

- improve the skills of mentors in evaluating trainees' work against the teachers' standards (early years) and in giving precise feedback so that trainees' teaching has a greater impact on children's learning and progress
- ensure that all trainees have a full understanding of teaching and learning in Reception classes
- strengthen the quality and use of the career entry profile to identify precise strengths and areas for new early years teachers' professional development.

Inspection judgements

1. The overall effectiveness of the early years partnership is good. The SCITT's self-evaluation of the early years programmes is honest, self-critical and precise. Much has been achieved in the first year. Leaders know what they need to do to develop the quality of training further.
2. Leaders and managers check carefully trainees' qualifications, experience and suitability to work with children before confirming any places on the training programmes. The partnership makes very clear its expectations of trainees for their conduct and participation in the training.
3. Thorough recruitment arrangements mean that trainees selected for early years programmes are well-suited to further study and training. Trainees are dedicated to improving their knowledge and status. All trainees who began their training successfully completed their programmes and were awarded EYTS. Employment rates are strong.
4. All trainees meet the minimum expectations set out in the teachers' standards (early years). One third of trainees in 2016/17 showed excellent attainment and two-thirds showed good attainment by the time they completed their training. There are no differences in attainment between different groups.
5. Early years training links firmly to the SCITT's overall vision for the partnership. Early years settings and schools are delighted with the SCITT's commitment to deliver high-quality early years ITT. The partnership is making increasingly good use of links to maintained primary and nursery schools, early years settings and local authorities to share best practice.
6. Leaders, managers and trainers have proven expertise in early years ITT. They link well with school-based colleagues, who already successfully provide early years education and training for early years practitioners. This combination of expertise is used effectively to carefully design and deliver programmes rooted in research and up-to-date evidence about early years education.
7. Leaders and managers select placements carefully to help fill gaps in trainees' experience and knowledge. Trainees gain practical experience of teaching children in different year groups. This helps trainees to develop a good understanding of the care and learning needs of babies and toddlers.
8. Well-selected placements ensure that trainees also gain valuable insights into the primary school curriculum at key stages 1 and 2 and experience working with pupils who have English as an additional language. Partner schools have worked determinedly to develop trainees' understanding of the continuum of children's learning beyond the early years.

9. Leaders and managers arrange visits to a range of additional settings for trainees and involve a range of different providers in contributing to taught sessions. Trainees gain a clear insight into the assessment of children across the age range, from birth to age five, including how to complete two-year-old progress checks.
10. Trainees enhance their knowledge by researching education topics, visiting different settings and by sharing their insights from placements with other trainees and tutors.
11. Practitioners' expertise is used well to develop, deliver and continually improve the training. For example, the headteacher of an outstanding maintained nursery school, familiar with providing a high-quality learning environment and offering excellent levels of challenge for children of different backgrounds, helps trainees to understand the teachers' standards (early years).
12. Tutors' and mentors' assessments of trainees are accurate. This is because trainers make full use of a wide range of information to review trainees' attainment against the teachers' standards (early years). The SCITT makes sure that assessments of trainees are well supported by evidence. The partnership uses the challenge from external experts well and reviews trainees' professional development carefully.
13. All trainees benefit from the advice and support of mentors during their placements. Employment-based trainees benefit further from the additional support provided beyond their own workplace.
14. There is a lack of precision when some mentors give feedback to trainees about their teaching, particularly in relation to children's learning and progress. Programme leaders are responding to this issue. Last year, mentors did not always take up the offer of training to develop their skills. The SCITT has established a clear expectation that every mentor must be trained for their role. Leaders and managers have plans to sharpen the content of mentor training and to increase the opportunities for networking further.
15. Training sessions are well designed to meet the needs of the cohort and to provide coherent, well-organised programmes. Clear improvements have been made to strengthen the programme for 2017/18. Plans are in place to improve further the quality of trainees' placements and trainees' insights into the work of schools and settings that are less than good.
16. Leaders and managers are aware that communication with settings and trainees was not always prompt and helpful during the first year of the training programmes. Leaders have extensively revised how the partnership communicates with all those involved for the 2017/18 cohort.

17. Rapid improvements to the programme in the second half of the summer term and the clarity of a revised strategic oversight for training show that the capacity for further improvement is excellent.
18. The high quality of face-to-face training, assignments and placements combines to give trainees a firm basis on which to develop their skills and knowledge. Trainees attain particularly well in the standards relating to the teachers' role in planning, supporting and adapting their teaching.
19. Much of trainees' teaching over time is good and some is outstanding. Trainees develop the key skills necessary to be leaders of early years settings. They understand how children learn. Trainees develop a good understanding of how to create and refine a curriculum for children in the early years. They also understand the need to review their work with team colleagues and to access further training to help to continue to improve their teaching.
20. Trainees speak positively about the beneficial impact of their training. They are particularly positive about their training in managing children's behaviour, understanding early childhood development and equality and diversity.
21. Trainees learn how to give skilled support to children to help them manage their own feelings and behaviour. Where children need extra support, trainees learn to be sensitive and patient. Trainees draw on a wide range of effective strategies to manage their rooms and settings.
22. Tutors' careful assessment and training means that all trainees develop a much-improved understanding of child development. This is particularly strong for those on the employment-based programme, where trainees bring good existing knowledge as a starting point.
23. Trainees have a very good understanding of the requirements for the care and protection of children. They make full use of their placements and their learning alongside other trainees to develop their own existing understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the early years foundation stage. They have a good understanding of issues such as neglect and the need to protect children from exposure to radicalised views of the world. From their visits and placements in schools, they learn much more about child protection policies and the links to wider issues such as e-safety.
24. The partnership complies fully with statutory requirements for early years ITT. Leaders and managers take great care in ensuring that policies, procedures and behaviour by staff and trainees promote equality and respect for others and keep children safe. This approach results in trainees who have a good understanding of inclusion.
25. Trainees develop detailed knowledge on how to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They also learn to work closely

with children's families when specific concerns about child development arise. Trainees develop much confidence and apply their skills well in their teaching of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They did, however, indicate that they would like even more training in this area.

26. Trainees show a strong understanding of the teaching of early reading skills. They understand how to develop children's speaking, listening and attention activities in Nursery. They know how to organise and introduce teaching for children about the sounds that letters make. They understand the curriculum requirements about literacy and phonics in Reception.
27. Trainees develop a good understanding of teaching and learning strategies and the resources they can use to develop the mathematics curriculum. School placements add extra value to trainees' knowledge and understanding of children's learning in mathematics in the early years and key stage 1.
28. Although trainees have a good grasp of the teaching of literacy and numeracy in Reception, not all have a clear understanding of teaching and learning across the wider curriculum for four- to five-year-olds. Leaders moved quickly to provide extra information and training about Reception class practice in the second half of the summer term. They recognise the need to make sure that this aspect of the programme is as strong as others.
29. Trainees show high standards of personal and professional conduct during their placements. Employment-based trainees demonstrate similar attributes in their own workplace. Trainees are respected for their commitment and skills in improving children's learning. They are complimented for their dedication to developing not only their own knowledge but the expertise of their workplace colleagues.
30. Trainees' teaching demonstrates many strengths that they continue to develop as they move into their new roles as early years teachers. For example, they gain a secure grasp of the need to use a range of teaching strategies to teach different groups of children.
31. Employers of trainees on the employment-based route comment very favourably on the significant improvements in trainees' expertise and knowledge, brought about by their training. As early years teachers, they are gaining promotion, taking on new roles or pursuing further training to enhance their skills even further.
32. Former trainees respond well to the need to support and extend children's learning in their self-chosen activities. They understand the challenges faced by children from different contexts and consider this carefully when planning activities. Former trainees adapt their work well to the personal, social and emotional needs of children in their care.

33. The partnership provides trainees with a career entry profile at the end of their training period. Leaders and managers do this because they are determined to assist trainees as they move forward in their careers as early years teachers. However, the quality of documentation is variable and not all trainees or employers fully understand how to use the information provided.

Annex: Partnership schools/settings

The following schools were visited to observe trainees' and former trainees' teaching

Heathfield Primary School, Bolton
Little Explorers Nursery and Pre-School, Chorley
Little Rainbows, Leigh
Little Rainbows 2, Leigh
Richmond House Kindergarten, Hale
The Hollies, Poynton

Primary and secondary routes

Information about this ITE partnership

- The Alliance for Learning SCITT is a school-led partnership providing primary (5 to 11) and secondary (11 to 16) initial teacher training (ITT) for graduates. It was previously known as the Greater Manchester Bright Futures SCITT.
- The SCITT has provided ITE since September 2015. The partnership was inspected for the first time at the end of its second year as an accredited provider of qualified teacher status (QTS).
- The accredited entity responsible for the SCITT is the Bright Futures Education Trust. The SCITT and secondary training are based at Altrincham Grammar School for Girls. Primary training is supported by St Bede's Primary Academy, Bolton.
- Trainees who successfully complete their training are recommended for QTS and gain a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) from the University of Manchester.
- During 2016/17 the SCITT trained 25 postgraduate and school direct trainees. Twelve were primary and 13 were secondary. Secondary specialisms included: mathematics, English, biology, chemistry, physics, history and geography.
- During 2017/18 the SCITT is training 28 trainees. Thirteen are primary and 15 are secondary. The partnership continues to offer postgraduate and school direct training in both phases and the same secondary subjects as in 2016/17. It also offers school direct (salaried) training for one mathematics trainee.
- The SCITT is also involved in the delivery of the Researchers in Schools programme, a paid undergraduate intern scheme for those considering a career in teaching, the Future Scholars Scheme and the school experience programme.

Information about the primary and secondary ITE inspection

- Inspectors visited seven schools at stage 1, observing seven trainees teach. They also reviewed trainees' teaching and standards files.
- Inspectors held discussion meetings with trainees, mentors, headteachers, trainers, leaders and managers, members of the SCITT's consultative, operational and strategic boards and the chief executive of the trust.
- Inspectors checked that the partnership was compliant with statutory requirements, including the ITT criteria. They also reviewed a wide range of evidence provided by the partnership. This included: self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, recruitment and selection records,

stakeholder evaluations, trainee tracking and assessment information, minutes of meetings, the partnership agreement, external examiner reports, handbooks and the content of the training programmes.

- Inspectors also took into account 14 responses to the trainee online questionnaire received in the summer term 2017.
- At stage 2, inspectors visited four schools and one sixth form college. One of the schools was visited during both stages of the inspection. Inspectors observed seven NQTs teach. They also held discussions with headteachers, induction tutors, trainers, NQTs, current primary and secondary trainees, staff involved in the final moderation process and colleagues involved in mentor training.
- Inspectors reviewed NQTs' career entry profiles and the actions taken by leaders and managers to improve the quality of training and outcomes between the two stages of the inspection. The lead inspector also observed a primary English training session for the 2017/18 cohort taking place in one of the partnership's schools.

Inspection team

Angela Milner HMI (lead inspector)

Neil Dixon HMI (assistant lead inspector) stage 1

Denah Jones HMI (assistant lead inspector) stage 2

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

Key strengths of the primary and secondary partnership

- Partnership colleagues share the SCITT's ethos and vision for growth and continued self-improvement. They value their involvement in this highly collaborative partnership and praise the quality of communications. The SCITT's director and manager are rightly held in high regard.
- Leaders and managers are ambitious, demonstrate an excellent capacity for improvement and are highly responsive to stakeholders' views. They use a range of evaluations, quality assurance visits and feedback from an external examiner to continually improve provision and outcomes, as well as to inform the partnership's comprehensive self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- Detailed, clear and current partnership policies and user-friendly documentation meet statutory requirements, including the ITT criteria, and place a strong emphasis on equality of opportunity, eliminating discrimination and safeguarding.

- Thorough, up-to-date, high-quality training, delivered by experts from partnership schools, has been carefully audited against recent ITE expert reports including 'developing behaviour management content' and the 'framework of core content for ITT'.
- The stringent recruitment and selection process, induction and pre-course training place a strong emphasis on identifying trainees' individual strengths and areas for development in relation to the teachers' standards and the partnership's high expectations for trainees' personal and professional conduct.
- Trainees have good opportunities to work in a range of diverse and contrasting schools. They also gain useful practical experience of the preceding and subsequent key stages to the age phase they are training to teach. This, together with their understanding of summative assessment and progress data, ensures that they make effective use of pupils' prior learning and their knowledge of curriculum requirements in their planning and teaching.
- NQTs are regarded as an asset by employing schools because they are well prepared to begin their career in teaching. They establish positive and respectful relationships in their classrooms and use well-chosen resources and careful questioning to engage pupils in their learning.
- NQTs and trainees are committed to teaching as a career and are critically reflective. Trainees listen to and act upon advice and complete a range of useful tasks and PGCE assignments. These have been carefully designed to develop their understanding, refine their practical teaching skills and provide evidence in relation to the teachers' standards.

What does the primary and secondary partnership need to do to improve further?

The partnership should

- strengthen trainees' ability to:
 - provide appropriate challenge for higher achieving pupils
 - make better use of formative assessment strategies to maximise the progress that pupils make in their learning
- enhance feedback to trainees to ensure that it focuses sufficiently on the impact of trainees' practice on pupils' learning and progress
- ensure that primary trainees gain a deeper understanding and more direct practical experience of teaching the foundation subjects, enabling them to plan for continuity and progression across a greater range of subjects

- monitor the improvements made to the quality of secondary subject training to ensure that it results in a greater depth of trainees' subject knowledge for teaching
- continue to improve secondary completion rates
- improve the quality of information collated in the career entry profile to ensure that it smooths the transition from initial teacher training to induction.

Inspection judgements

34. The overall effectiveness of the Alliance for Learning primary and secondary SCITT is good but its capacity to improve is excellent. Partnership schools share the SCITT's ethos and clear vision. The focus is on developing high-quality, school-led teacher training that has a positive impact on all participants: trainee teachers, teaching colleagues and pupils.
35. Partnership schools value their involvement in this highly collaborative partnership, the quality of communications and the effectiveness of leaders' and managers' support. Mentors praise the quality of training they receive and the clarity of the partnership's documentation.
36. Secondary trainees' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire in 2017 were more effusive than those from primary trainees. Primary trainees raised concerns about age phase organisational and communication issues such as the timeliness of placement arrangements and their lack of practical training in physical education.
37. Trainees and NQTs extol the quality of support and guidance provided by mentors. Trainees listen to and act upon their advice. They complete a range of useful tasks and PGCE assignments. These have been carefully designed to develop their knowledge and understanding and to provide crucial evidence in relation to the teachers' standards.
38. The SCITT's director and manager are rightly held in high regard. They know their trainees extremely well. They are alert to any difficulties and act promptly to provide individualised support throughout and beyond the initial period of training.
39. Partnership leaders and managers have high expectations and are ambitious to grow the partnership and to improve. This can be seen in their determination to resolve any issues and in their drive to continually improve the quality of training and outcomes for trainees. Highly effective actions were taken between the two stages of the inspection to secure rapid improvements.
40. Enhancements to mentor training ensured that trainees received clearer feedback and targets for their professional development during the second

half of the summer term. A greater proportion of trainees achieved the highest levels of attainment. However, more secondary trainees continue to attain at the highest level than primary.

41. The SCITT director's move to an overview role for all age phases of training and the centralisation of communications with the SCITT manager successfully resolved organisational issues reported by primary trainees.
42. The structure, timing and organisation of primary age phase training has been transformed for the 2017/18 cohort of trainees and is much more coherent. Primary trainees' professional development is being carefully tracked through the use of subject knowledge audits for the primary core subjects and the submission of regular online reflections on well-timed school-based tasks.
43. For the current cohort, a move to joint primary and secondary sessions on professional issues has enabled the bringing forward of the start of the final school experience for primary trainees. The partnership has made this change to create more time for trainees to hone their practical teaching skills, teach across a greater range of the curriculum and practise their skills in planning and teaching sequences of lessons.
44. It is too early for inspectors to judge the impact of this significant change to the final placement in ensuring that primary trainees gain a deeper understanding and more direct practical experience of teaching the foundation subjects, including physical education, and whether it enables them to plan for continuity and progression across a greater range of subjects.
45. The 2017/18 cohort of primary and secondary trainees are appreciative of their induction and training experience to date. Well-organised induction training ensures that trainees understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe and raises their awareness of issues such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and social and emotional abuse.
46. Partnership schools provide high-quality training placements and effective mentoring. Training is thorough and provides good opportunities to learn from good and outstanding practitioners. Trainees are immersed in schools from day one of their training. They are importantly perceived by school colleagues and pupils as additional members of staff.
47. NQTs are well prepared for teaching roles in schools, within and beyond the partnership, by the wide-ranging opportunities during their training to work in schools serving diverse communities. These include schools in challenging socio-economic circumstances, those judged to require improvement and those where significant numbers of pupils come from differing cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds.

48. Primary training is delivered by expert practitioners in carefully selected schools. Trainees receive high-quality input, access to practical resources and opportunities to observe different practitioners and to work with a variety of age groups. This provides a rich, immediate and contextualised training experience. Trainees develop their understanding, practise their teaching skills and complete carefully structured tasks and reflections based on these progressive 'hands on' experiences.
49. English training for primary trainees focuses on early reading, language, communication and the use of systematic synthetic phonics. Trainees are confident and competent in teaching phonics. They have extensive opportunities to teach phonics and to reflect on these experiences. Trainees and NQTs pay very good attention to subject-specific vocabulary. For example, in a Year 1 lesson on instructional writing, observed at stage 2, pupils carefully followed verbal instructions to make a jam sandwich and then used time connectives well to explain the order in which they had completed the activity.
50. Trainees and NQTs value the quality of their training in mathematics. They have a good understanding of 'mastery' and experience of the different schemes schools are using to teach 'Singapore mathematics'. Trainees make effective use of a range of practical resources and teaching strategies. For, example, in a Year 3 class, observed at stage 1, timelines were used well to enable pupils to count forwards and backwards in fives.
51. Secondary trainees specialising in the science subjects, geography, mathematics and English are required to undertake subject knowledge enhancement courses before commencing their training. Secondary subject training has been further enhanced for the 2017/18 cohort. It now places a greater focus on more structured use of the subject knowledge audit, provides greater access to online subject resources and makes use of experienced specialist subject leaders in education to tailor support to develop trainees' subject knowledge.
52. Trainees develop good subject knowledge and the necessary understanding of curriculum and assessment arrangements, including examination specifications. Secondary trainees and NQTs use subject-specific vocabulary proficiently to provide detailed explanations and to respond to pupils' questions and misconceptions.
53. Primary and secondary trainees praise the training they have received in personal, social and health education (PSHE). Secondary trainees willingly engage in form tutor activities and useful tasks such as tracking a pupil for a day. This prepares them well for the pastoral aspects of their role as a secondary teacher. Secondary trainees and NQTs promoted confidently pupils'

literacy and numeracy skills through their subject teaching, including paying great attention to pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar skills.

54. Employment rates have improved and are in line with national norms. Most trainees gain employment in schools within Greater Manchester. NQTs from this SCITT are regarded as an asset by employing schools because they are well prepared to begin their career in teaching. They demonstrate high standards of personal and professional conduct, are committed to teaching and are highly reflective.
55. Trainees and NQTs are particularly skilled at establishing positive and respectful relationships with pupils and support staff. They use well-chosen resources, including information and communication technology, and careful questioning to motivate and engage pupils effectively in their learning.
56. Training, delivered by behaviour experts, draws on the 'developing behaviour management content' report. Trainees have the opportunity to learn about theoretical approaches and also benefit from opportunities to observe strategies being used successfully by experienced teachers.
57. Almost all trainees and NQTs set high expectations and model expected behaviours well. Their calm and 'firm but fair' approach develops invaluable classroom working relationships. Almost all trainees and NQTs use school procedures and policies well to deal with unacceptable behaviour and encourage pupils to work together collaboratively. Safe working practices are also promoted in practical lessons.
58. Trainees gain essential practical experience in the preceding and subsequent key stage to the age phase they are training to teach. This ensures that trainees make effective use of pupils' prior learning and their knowledge of curriculum requirements in their planning and teaching.
59. Schools and NQTs are appreciative of the ongoing professional development opportunities provided by the partnership. This includes the SCITT's bi-annual NQT conferences and training offered by the teaching school alliance and the multi-academy trust (MAT).
60. NQTs were not always clear about the purpose of the career entry profile (CEP) provided at the end of their training. Most induction tutors were able to make use of this document to set targets with their NQTs for their initial induction.
61. NQTs, induction tutors and headteachers indicated improvements were needed to enhance the quality of information collated in the CEP and ensure that it was more useful in smoothing the transition from initial teacher training to induction. The partnership has plans to evaluate the usefulness of the CEP as part of a survey of employers later in the autumn term of 2017.

62. Leaders and managers are extremely responsive to stakeholder views. They use very well a range of evaluations, quality assurance visits and feedback from an external examiner to inform the partnership's comprehensive self-evaluation and improvement plan.
63. The partnership is well-led and managed by knowledgeable and enthusiastic school practitioners and leaders. Different partnership boards function as a representative consultative forum, make operational decisions and provide strategic leadership for the SCITT. Partnership policies are current and easy to use.
64. The MAT's chief executive officer (CEO) is well informed about SCITT developments. He and the SCITT director ensure that the MAT is fully accountable as an accredited provider of QTS. They ensure that the SCITT meets its statutory requirements, including the ITT criteria, and place a strong emphasis on equality of opportunity, eliminating discrimination and safeguarding.
65. Good attention is given to ensuring that trainees make safe use of technology and social media. Trainees and NQTs are well equipped to teach pupils about the values associated with life in modern Britain. They understand their responsibilities in relation to the 'Prevent' duty and the importance of countering extremism.
66. Roles, responsibilities and expectations are clearly explained in the extremely detailed partnership agreement. School practitioners play an active role in designing, delivering and continually improving the quality of training and assessment and in recruiting trainees. This partnership recruits a greater proportion of mature trainees than other providers nationally. Around one third of the trainees are male.
67. Clear criteria in the admissions policy are conscientiously applied by everyone involved in the selection process. Particular attention is paid to applicants' enthusiasm, resilience and to their ability to reflect and communicate. Short teaching activities, interviews, presentations, tests and subject knowledge audits are used very well to assess applicants' potential as teachers.
68. The stringent recruitment and selection process and explicit induction and pre-course training places a strong emphasis on trainees' individual strengths and areas for development in relation to both parts of the teachers' standards. The partnership has high expectations for trainees' personal and professional conduct. Development targets are shared with successful applicants and their mentors, but not as widely shared with colleagues providing age phase training sessions.

69. Most of the trainees recruited have significant experience of working in schools. This means they enter their training with their 'eyes wide open' and under no illusions about the demands of initial teacher training or teaching as a career.
70. However, completion rates for the first two cohorts of trainees were below those of other partnerships nationally. This is because a small number of secondary trainees have withdrawn from or deferred their training due to unforeseen personal circumstances. One primary trainee was completing a deferred final school experience during stage 2 of the inspection.
71. The partnership acknowledges that improving secondary completion rates is an area for improvement. It is already paying greater attention to trainees' pastoral support, well-being and workload. It has also revised part of the selection process for 2018/19 entry to test applicants' ability to respond to new and challenging circumstances.
72. At stage 1, inspectors confirmed the accuracy of the assessments of trainees made by the partnership. By the end of the summer term all trainees exceeded the minimum level of practice expected in the teachers' standards and were awarded QTS.
73. Inspection evidence at stage 2 indicated that although the partnership made accurate, moderated assessments about the award of QTS, some of the assessments around the grade 1 and 2 boundary were overgenerous. The partnership is working hard to ensure that feedback to, and the assessment of, trainees focuses sufficiently on the impact of their teaching on all groups of pupils' learning and progress.
74. Trainees gain valuable practical experience in a special school and a pupil referral unit. They have a good understanding of potential barriers to learning and cater well for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and ensure that they make at least expected progress. Trainees and NQTs do not always provide sufficient challenge for higher-achieving pupils or make effective use of formative assessment strategies to maximise the progress that pupils make in their learning.

Annex: Partnership schools

The following schools were visited to observe trainees' and NQTs' teaching:

Altrincham Grammar School for Girls, Altrincham
Ashton-on-Mersey High School, Sale
Blackshaw Primary School, Bolton
Connell Sixth Form College, Manchester

Essa Academy, Bolton
Dean Trust School, Wigan
Lewis Street Primary School, Eccles
Rushbrook Primary Academy, Manchester
St Wilfred's Church of England Primary Academy, Standish
Wellington School, Timperley
Whalley Range High School for Girls, Manchester.

ITE partnership details

Unique reference number	70308
Inspection number	10022267
Inspection dates	22 May 2017
Stage 1	
Stage 2	25 September 2017
Lead inspector	Angela Milner HMI
Type of ITE partnership	SCITT
Phases provided	Early Years ITT, primary and secondary QTS
Date of previous inspection	N/A
Previous inspection report	N/A
Provider address	Altrincham Grammar School for Girls Cavendish Road Altrincham WA15 2NL



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