

# Bluecoat SCITT Alliance Nottingham ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates    Stage 1: 15 May 2017    Stage 2: 27 November 2017

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This inspection was carried out by a Senior Her Majesty's Inspector (SHMI), Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and an Ofsted Inspector (OI) 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

	<b>Primary and secondary QTS</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b> How well does the partnership secure consistently high-quality outcomes for trainees?	2
<b>The outcomes for trainees</b>	2
<b>The quality of training across the partnership</b>	2
<b>The quality of leadership and management across the partnership</b>	2

## Primary and secondary routes

### Information about the primary and secondary ITE inspection

- The Bluecoat SCITT Alliance Nottingham ITE Partnership provides school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) in the primary and the secondary phase. The partnership includes 11 primary schools and 10 secondary schools within the East Midlands. Bluecoat Aspley Academy, Nottingham is the lead school. The range of schools includes schools judged by Ofsted to be outstanding schools, good schools and schools judged to require improvement. Some of the schools in the partnership are located in areas of socio-economic disadvantage. The partnership recruited its first trainees for the academic year 2015/16.
- The partnership provides training through School Direct, salaried and non-salaried. The training provided for both routes is identical. Trainees who complete their training successfully are recommended for qualified teacher status (QTS) and gain a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE), awarded by Sheffield Hallam University. At the time of stage 1 of the inspection, 34 trainees were in training: six primary trainees, 26 non-salaried secondary trainees and three secondary salaried trainees.
- The partnership is an accredited provider for five to 11 (primary) and 11 to 16 (secondary) phases. Secondary trainees gain some post-16 teaching experience. At stage 1 of the inspection, training was being provided in: art and design; chemistry; English; geography; biology; design and technology; history; mathematics; modern foreign languages; primary education; religious education and physics.
- Bluecoat SCITT Alliance Nottingham ITE Partnership is part of the Archway Learning Trust.

### Information about the inspection

- Over the two stages of the inspection, inspectors met with both primary and secondary trainees from the 2016/17 cohort. During stage 1 of the inspection, they jointly observed 11 trainees teach with the trainees' mentors. They also observed mentors providing feedback to the trainees following the lessons observed. Inspectors also reviewed trainees' files. At stage 2, inspectors observed 13 newly qualified teachers (NQTs), including those employed in schools beyond the partnership.
- Inspectors held meetings with headteachers, other senior leaders, school-based tutors and mentors in the seven partnership schools visited during stage 1. They also met with senior staff in the nine schools visited at stage 2, including at the five schools visited beyond the partnership. The lead inspector spoke by telephone to the external moderator appointed by the partnership.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders from the partnership. They reviewed a range of documentation, including the partnership's self-evaluation and improvement

plans, the partnership agreement, equalities policy and a report by an external examiner. They also scrutinised the provider's assessment information, and records relating to training and the safeguarding of children. The 16 responses to Ofsted's online trainee survey for the year 2015/16 and the 33 responses for the year 2016/17 were also reviewed. They also checked that the partnership was compliant with the statutory requirements, including safeguarding and the initial teacher training (ITT) criteria.

## **Inspection team**

Zarina Connolly HMI (lead inspector, stage 1)

Emma Hollis-Brown OI (assistant lead inspector, stage 1)

Jayne Ashman HMI (lead inspector, stage 2)

David Carter SHMI (assistant lead inspector, stage 2)

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Grade: 2**

### **Key strengths of the primary and secondary partnership**

- Leadership of the provision is a strength, particularly the leadership of the head of the SCITT. Leaders have a clear moral purpose and an ambition to ensure that the provision best meets the needs of trainees. There is strong commitment, passion and skill to train the very best teachers and for them to be employed within the East Midlands.
- There is very strong and effective engagement of schools within the partnership, which is evident in their key role in the recruitment of trainees and in their contribution to strategic planning and strong understanding of the partnership's priorities.
- Completion and employment rates have rapidly improved in the two years since the partnership opened. Completion rates are broadly in line with the national average. Employment rates are above the national average. The provider is meeting local needs well, by providing good-quality teachers in a region where it is difficult to recruit.
- Trainees have high standards of professionalism, which are demonstrated by their high expectations of themselves and their pupils, their rigorous planning, excellent professional conduct and wider contribution to their employing schools.
- Trainees receive high-quality and tailored support in response to their emerging needs. This ensures that any trainees experiencing difficulties are quickly identified and then supported effectively.
- High-quality subject training takes place weekly. This is well planned and carefully focused so that trainees are quickly able to apply their learning and research in classroom situations.

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

### **The partnership should:**

- make sure that improvement planning is sharply focused on the critical actions required to improve provision further, and ensure that self-evaluation documentation is updated
- ensure that completion rates are above the national average and employment rates continue to be above the national average
- strengthen further the accuracy and robustness of assessment for those trainees who are awarded the highest grades by the end of their training; leaders should ensure that these final assessments predict more accurately how well the most skilled trainees will teach in their NQT year
- strengthen trainees' skills in teaching lessons and series of lessons which are more ambitious and which stretch and challenge the most able pupils
- ensure that secondary trainees are well prepared for the examination demands of teaching at key stage 4.

### **Inspection judgements**

1. SCITT leaders are committed to ensuring that they train high-quality trainees to be successful teachers within the partnership and within primary and secondary schools across the East Midlands. In particular, the head of the SCITT is determined to ensure the very highest quality of training. Trainees and NQTs are unanimous in their praise for the quality of the support, care and guidance they receive and the importance of this.
2. SCITT leaders are motivated and determined. In a short amount of time since the provision opened in 2015/16, they have rapidly improved outcomes for trainees. They have improved the quality and the impact of training. The provision is attracting more trainees and numbers are due to increase. Plans for the future are ambitious and exciting. Leaders have shown the capacity to ensure the success of these planned developments. Some aspects of strategic planning, however, are not as sharply focused as is needed. For example, aspects of improvement planning do not accurately reflect the significant actions undertaken by leaders to continue to improve provision.
3. In the two years since the partnership began training its first recruits, outcomes for trainees have improved. Most trainees secure teaching posts in the schools in which they train or in other schools within the partnership. Senior leaders from schools beyond the partnership, including those in particularly challenging circumstances or in areas of great socio-economic disadvantage, report high

levels of satisfaction with the quality of NQTs they have recruited from the partnership.

4. The provider is keen to ensure trainees' high standards of personal and professional conduct. Rigorous quality assurance is in place and trainees' standards are checked very regularly. Senior leaders are quick to intervene if any issues arise or if standards slip. They are quick to praise and to share positive practice. A wide range of support is on hand so that trainees rapidly gain the help and advice that they need. Trainees and NQTs are highly reflective about their practice and are confident that their views and requests are quickly responded to.
5. Collaboration across the partnership is strong and effective. All partners contribute to decisions about recruitment and training, with senior staff from partner schools and staff from Sheffield Hallam University all playing a key role. The rigour and effectiveness of recruitment contributes to trainees' improving completion rates. Leaders are creative in their actions to attract the very best talent. They are ambitious to ensure the very best primary and secondary teachers for schools across the East Midlands region. Leaders are determined to continue to improve the completion and employment rates for trainees, particularly as the number of trainees continues to rise.
6. The quality of training is good and some aspects are outstanding. Leaders and managers keep all aspects of training under regular review to ensure that changes are made where it is judged to be less effective. Trainees' opinions are regularly canvassed. For example, training for the PGCE element has been significantly adapted in response to the views of trainees. This training is now delivered on-site so that it responds more effectively to trainees' needs. This is judged by trainees to now be of high quality.
7. Trainees benefit from good quality of training in behaviour management. As a result, most trainees demonstrate good skills in managing pupils' behaviour. They combine high expectations of pupils with strong interpersonal skills and a good understanding of how best to motivate pupils to work hard. A very small minority of trainees and NQTs occasionally lack confidence and tenacity in ensuring that the pupils they teach behave well, listen to their teacher and, for example, do not 'shout out' their responses inappropriately. Most of the NQTs observed by inspectors had quickly developed a positive rapport with pupils and established a calm and productive classroom climate. Pupils exhibited positive learning behaviours as a result and were enjoying their learning.
8. Trainees also hold in high regard the weekly 'Friday sessions'. These are full days of training. Academic sessions are skilfully provided by Sheffield Hallam University. These are then built on carefully by enabling trainees to consider how they will apply the findings of educational research effectively in the classroom. Sessions are positioned thoughtfully through the training to ensure

that the content closely reflects the trainees' stages of development as they work towards QTS.

9. Subject-specific training is of very good quality. The subject leaders who devise and deliver this aspect of the training combine good curriculum knowledge with good teaching. This results in sessions which are engaging, challenging and focused on the practical application of subject-specific knowledge. Training within English and mathematics is strong at both primary and secondary level. NQTs are particularly skilled at promoting pupils' literacy and numeracy in subjects that are not English or mathematics. However, training does not yet ensure that secondary trainees fully understand the demands of teaching at key stage 4, in readiness for teaching examination courses as NQTs within their employing schools.
10. The quality of mentoring is high. Trainees value the good-quality feedback provided and the setting of helpful targets accompanied by strong pastoral support. Very occasionally, the feedback observed at stage 1 of the inspection was not closely enough linked to the teachers' standards. By stage 2 of the inspection, senior leaders had provided additional training for all mentors so that much more effective links were made. Quality assurance procedures had been enhanced and regular checks ensured that that all trainees received precise feedback and support against each of the teachers' standards.
11. The provider has high expectations of the trainees and the trainees' professionalism and diligence. Good-quality training ensures that trainees' planning is extremely thorough and always considers the learning needs of groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Resources are consistently of high quality. Learning environments are created to excite pupils' interests, develop their thirst for knowledge and help them progress. In secondary English, NQTs made good use of 'working walls' to provide examination tips, to extend pupils' vocabulary and to insist on the correct use of spelling and punctuation. Many of the primary NQTs creatively celebrated pupils' work in displays within their classrooms.
12. Trainees have a very good understanding of the importance of using accurate assessment to inform their planning and check pupils' progress. At stage 1 of the inspection, inspectors identified that primary trainees needed to improve further their skills in providing pupils' diagnostic and summative assessment. This had been effectively addressed by stage 2 of the inspection through further training. NQTs routinely draw on a wide range of data so that they understand the needs of the individual pupils they teach well. However, a few trainees and NQTs do not make use of this information well enough to plan lessons which are sufficiently stretching, especially for the most able pupils.

13. Primary and secondary NQTs frequently check pupils' progress and learning during lessons. They used questioning well to check pupils' understanding and to address any misconceptions. At times, NQTs' questioning skills did not sufficiently challenge or encourage the higher-order thinking skills of the most able pupils.
14. Trainees' marking is mostly of very good quality and demonstrates their good understanding of the assessment policies of the schools they train in. Some of the trainees' and NQTs' marking is highly effective in helping pupils to improve their work. A minority of NQTs did not demand high enough levels of care and presentation from their pupils. Primary and secondary trainees are well informed about the changes made nationally to how pupils are assessed and how schools are held accountable.
15. Trainees benefit from opportunities to teach in a range of contrasting schools, including schools requiring improvement and those in challenging socio-economic circumstances. The provider plots trainees' school experiences very carefully to ensure that they have opportunities to teach pupils from different backgrounds. Additional opportunities are provided for trainees to develop their understanding of a special school context. Secondary trainees gain experience of post-16 education. They are prepared well to teach. Many NQTs settle quickly and assimilate well into their employing schools. The vast majority of those trained in the first year of the partnership have continued their career in teaching.
16. At stage 1 of the inspection, inspectors identified that trainees needed to deploy teaching assistants effectively. At stage 2 of the inspection, NQTs were observed making very effective use of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning. Their skills in this aspect of their work were also commented on positively by the headteachers in their employing schools.
17. Leaders and managers are well aware of their responsibility to equip trainees with the skills necessary to teach pupils from diverse backgrounds. They have ensured that all trainees regularly have opportunities to teach disadvantaged pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Leaders are continuing to improve this aspect of provision and are reviewing further the formal aspect of primary EAL training.
18. Trainees have a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and are vigilant to signs of potential abuse. They are well informed about the procedures they must follow if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being. They are alert to the signs of possible bullying and are aware of the issues related to child sexual exploitation and the 'Prevent' duty. Trainees also receive expert training in their duties to uphold public trust in the teaching profession.

19. At stage 1 of the inspection, inspectors agreed with the provider's assessment of trainees, including those trainees judged to be teaching at a high level. However, lesson observations, discussions with senior leaders, work in pupils work-books and other evidence gathered at stage 2 showed that a few of the trainees judged to be achieving at a high level by the end of their training had not sustained this quality of teaching as NQTs. Leaders and managers recognise that, while assessments at stage 1 appeared to be accurate, they have not, in a small number of cases, proved to be reliable indicators of the likely quality of an NQT's teaching.
20. The provider complies fully with the statutory criteria which all providers of ITT must meet, including safeguarding and the ITT criteria.

### **Annex: Partnership schools**

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

Bluecoat Aspley Academy, Nottingham

Bluecoat Wollaton Academy, Nottingham

Claremont Primary and Nursery School, Nottingham

Dovedale Primary, Long Eaton

Ellis Guildford School, Nottingham

Ernhale Junior School, Arnold

Fernwood Primary School, Nottingham

Heanor Gate Science College, Heanor

Morley Primary School, Ilkeston

Middleton Primary School, Wollaton Park

Rosslyn Park Primary School, Nottingham

Saint John Houghton Catholic Voluntary Academy, Ilkeston

The Dukeries Academy, New Ollerton

The Nottingham Emmanuel School, Nottingham

## ITE partnership details

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Lead inspector	Zarina Connolly HMI
Stage 1	
Stage 2	Jayne Ashman HMI
Type of ITE partnership	SCITT
Phases provided	Primary and secondary
Date of previous inspection	N/A
Provider address	Archway Learning Trust, Aspley lane, Aspley, Nottingham NG8 5EY



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