

Merseyside, Manchester and Lancashire SCITT ITE Partnership

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 11–13 May 2015

Stage 2: 9–11 November 2015

This inspection was carried out by one of 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 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

	Secondary QTS
Overall effectiveness How well does the partnership secure consistently high-quality outcomes for trainees?	1
The outcomes for trainees	1
The quality of training across the partnership	1
The quality of leadership and management across the partnership	1

The secondary phase

Information about the secondary partnership

- Tarleton Academy, operating as The Merseyside, Manchester and Lancashire SCITT (known as MML), provides school-centred initial teacher training in the secondary phase. The partnership currently comprises Tarleton Academy and one other school, both of which are in West Lancashire. The partnership recruited its first trainees for the 2013/14 academic year.
- The partnership offers a full-time, one-year programme leading to the award of qualified teacher status (QTS). All trainees follow the provider-led route and study academic modules that lead to the award of a postgraduate diploma in education. Up to 2014/15, postgraduate credits were awarded by Edge Hill University.
- At stage 1 of the inspection, trainees were training in either English or physical education. All four of the trainees subsequently completed the programme successfully. Training for both subjects focuses on the 11–16 age range.

Information about the secondary ITE inspection

- Over the two stages of the inspection, the inspector observed the teaching of four trainees and two newly qualified teachers (NQTs).
- The inspector held meetings with the partnership's managers, as well as headteachers, school-based ITE coordinators, induction tutors and subject mentors in two training schools and three employing schools. He received written information from the one employing school that was not visited.
- The inspector scrutinised evidence relating to the training and assessment of trainees, together with a wide range of documentation supplied by the partnership's managers.
- The inspector was unable to take account of the national NQT survey as there were too few responses. He took note of the views of past trainees as collected by the partnership's managers and trainees' views expressed during stage 1 of the inspection in the online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Paul Chambers HMI

Lead Inspector

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

The key strengths of the secondary partnership are:

- the excellent completion rates that reflect well on the rigorous selection process and the high quality of personal support during the training
- managers' thorough understanding of schools' employment needs that contributes to consistently high employment rates
- trainees' and NQTs' outstanding personal qualities and professional attributes that help them to make rapid progress in developing their teaching skills
- the high-quality training that enables trainees and NQTs to plan and teach well-structured lessons, selecting and/or developing resources that aid students' learning very effectively
- the consistency of training across the partnership that ensures all trainees benefit from the same high-quality experience
- the strong strategic leadership that has established outstanding provision in a short space of time
- the drive and vision of the partnership's leaders, including the headteachers of the partner schools, that enable all involved to understand the partnership's commitment to excellence
- the outstanding training that helps former trainees to make a strong impression in their employing schools.

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

The partnership should:

- monitor and evaluate thoroughly the effectiveness of the revised audit of trainees' subject knowledge.

Inspection judgements

1. All trainees who complete the course exceed the minimum levels of expectation outlined in the teachers' standards. NQTs demonstrate teaching that is at least good and, overall, the quality of their teaching is consistently stronger than would be expected from an NQT in the first term of their career. Senior managers in employing schools expressed many positive views about the characteristics of NQTs. For example, the induction tutor in one employing school commented, 'We are very pleased and impressed by the way she has started.'

2. Trainees and NQTs demonstrate outstanding personal qualities and professional attributes. NQTs are keen to involve themselves in the life of their employing school and to take advantage of opportunities to develop their expertise. They are enthusiastic about their chosen career. From the first few weeks of their employment, they make contributions to the department they are working in such as through joint planning or sharing resources.
3. In their teaching, trainees and NQTs show outstanding skills in many of the teachers' standards. For example, they plan and teach well-structured lessons, selecting and/or developing resources that aid students' learning very effectively. By their manner and approach, they motivate and challenge students to do their very best. For example, one NQT was described as having, in the first half-term of her appointment, 'a major impact' on raising participation levels in sport for the older female students.
4. While some NQTs are still developing aspects of their practice, there is no pattern of weaker performance across the group. For example, while some trainees show excellent practice in marking and providing feedback, others continue to build their expertise in this area.
5. Trainees and NQTs are appropriately aware of the teacher's role in safeguarding children. Because of their thorough training, they know the signs that may indicate that a child is a victim of bullying or abuse, including cyber bullying, and know how to respond.
6. Because selection is rigorous and training is highly effective, trainees' attainment is high. The majority of trainees have been assessed as outstanding at the end of their training in each of the last two years. No trainees have given cause for concern.
7. At the end of the 2013/14 training year, the attainment of male trainees was lower than that of female trainees although, because of the small numbers involved, the differences need to be treated with caution. The partnership's managers analysed the reasons for the differences and strengthened the selection criteria in the most recent recruitment cycle to ensure that, in future, male trainees do as well as female trainees. Early signs suggest that this has had a positive impact.
8. Completion and employment rates are consistently high. Rigorous selection and high-quality support during the training contribute to the successful maintenance of completion rates, which stand at 100% for each year that the partnership has been in operation. Similarly, all trainees have gained employment.
9. The training programme provides an excellent framework on which trainees can build their skills and work towards demonstrating and exceeding the

expectations of the teachers' standards. Trainees' views, as expressed in the online questionnaire and reinforced in discussions with the inspector, are universally positive about the quality of the training. Among many strengths identified by trainees and NQTs are: the quality of placement experiences; how to use data to support lesson planning; and learning how to use subject teaching to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

10. Trainees' high regard for the training they receive is evident in the fact that they refer back to it when appropriate during their NQT year. For example, trainees learn effectively how to engage and motivate students, as well as how to use a range of strategies to address poor behaviour. For some NQTs, behaviour management is a clear strength and at least on a par with that of experienced teachers in the school. While some needed time to develop effective strategies for dealing with the most challenging behaviour, all have shown they are able to apply strategies over time that have a clear impact on improving behaviour. NQTs said the strategies they learnt in their training year had given them a strong understanding of behaviour management, so that when one strategy did not work as well as they hoped, they had alternative strategies to try.
11. The coherence and consistency of the training are outstanding. All trainees undertake substantial school experience placements in the same two training schools. This ensures that, not only do all trainees benefit from the same high-quality experience, but also that all trainees have an equal opportunity to succeed. Senior staff and subject mentors at the two schools are fully committed to making the training the highest quality that it can be. They understand the needs of the trainees and respond to individual training needs. Through their lesson observation feedback and weekly meetings with trainees, subject mentors provide demanding targets that enable trainees to develop their skills quickly and effectively.
12. Trainees and NQTs have a clear understanding of their role in developing students' basic skills of literacy and mathematics in their subject teaching. Trainees benefit from a training focus on phonics (letters and the sounds they make), particularly through a primary school placement that helps them to understand how to support weaker readers in Key Stage 3.
13. Schools provide suitably contrasting experiences that, together with the training programme, prepare trainees very well for their first year in teaching. Trainees who completed their training in 2015 have made a strong start to their NQT year, across a range of contrasting schools. This is verified by comments from senior staff in the employing schools and inspection evidence gained on school visits.
14. Communication between placement schools, together with the transfer of information, is strong and helps trainees in their transition from one school to

the other. The partnership's managers recognised that stronger links between subject mentors at the placement schools would enhance the quality of training further and they have taken steps to ensure that this happens. It is too soon to see the impact of these strengthened links.

15. Trainees and NQTs show excellent subject knowledge in their teaching. For example, English trainees were prepared well for teaching the revised GCSE in the subject. Nevertheless, the partnership's managers agreed with the findings at stage 1 of the inspection, that the subject knowledge audit process could be strengthened in the training year. A revised process is in place for the current year which enables subject mentors to maintain a clearer overview of trainees' subject knowledge development, but this is yet to be evaluated.
16. Trainees and NQTs understand how schools challenge underachievement by disadvantaged students and contribute to additional support classes. The training enables trainees to build a broad understanding of disability and special educational needs and to know how to adapt their teaching to cater for students' differing needs. A visit to a special school provides additional experience of how teachers cater for such students successfully. While most have limited experience in their training year of teaching students for whom English is an additional language, as NQTs they use the skills needed to enable such students to make progress in line with that of others in the class.
17. Regular lesson observations, tasks and assignments help the partnership's managers to monitor trainees' progress very effectively, to have a clear view of their strengths and development needs, and to assess them accurately.
18. The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. A relentless drive for excellence is evident across the partnership. Leaders and managers have been successful in establishing high-quality provision in a short space of time. Strategic leadership benefits from a strong commitment at headship level to future developments. As a result, the vision for excellence is clear and achievable. Both schools in the partnership are fully involved in the management of the course. The partnership's outstanding capacity to improve is shown by the outstanding outcomes for trainees that have been maintained over time.
19. Managers monitor the quality of provision across the partnership closely. This enables them to analyse the training and outcomes for individuals and groups of trainees. This rigorous monitoring not only promotes excellent training but also demonstrates the partnership's commitment to equality of opportunity.
20. Leaders and managers have a thorough understanding of the needs of schools locally, regionally and nationally. For example, the large majority of trainees on the course have trained in subjects where teacher recruitment is more difficult and this contributes to the partnership's excellent employment rates. The

partnership is making a clear contribution to local and regional needs, including for schools in challenging circumstances. Trainees complete a career entry and development profile at the end of the training year that provides an effective bridge between training and the NQT year. Employing schools regard it as a useful document, particularly the section that summarises targets for the NQT year.

21. Trainees are accepted onto the course only after going through a rigorous selection process, where they display their skills to partnership managers, subject specialists and students. Over time, the profile of trainees recruited includes under-represented groups broadly in line with the proportions nationally.
22. Improvement planning is very good and has an appropriate focus on improving outcomes. Managers take note of where trainees show stronger skills and where they are not so strong. In response, they strengthen training with a view to trainees displaying excellent skills in all areas of the teachers' standards. Similarly, leaders and managers use feedback from trainees and external examiners to strengthen the training, and this has had a clear positive impact on the quality of provision. For example, careful selection of partner schools ensures that all schools now involved in the training are fully committed to the partnership. Managers also responded to feedback by changing the relative timing of the two substantial school placements and this has helped ensure that all trainees are better prepared for teaching in schools in different circumstances.
23. The partnership complies with all statutory requirements, including all criteria relating to entry to the course, training and management.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

The Academy of St Francis of Assisi, Liverpool
Birchwood Community High School, Warrington
The Excel Academy, Stoke-on-Trent
Tarleton Academy, Tarleton
Up Holland High School, Orrell

ITE partnership details

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	Stage 2 09–11 November 2015
Lead inspector	Paul Chambers HMI
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Phases provided	Secondary
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Previous inspection report	Not previously inspected
Provider address	Tarleton Academy Hesketh Lane Tarleton Preston PR4 6AQ



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