

Pioneers Partnership SCITT

Middleton Technology School, Kenyon Lane, Middleton, Manchester M24 2GT

Inspection dates

9 to 12 May 2022

Inspection judgements

Primary and secondary age-phase combined

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education and training

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to be a trainee at this ITE provider?

Trainees in the Pioneers Partnership SCITT thrive. Leaders ensure that trainees are well prepared to embark on a career in teaching.

Trainees across both the primary and secondary age-phases benefit from a high-quality, coherently planned, ambitious initial teacher education (ITE) curriculum. Each aspect of the ITE curriculum is well designed to ensure that trainees are furnished with clear, consistent messages about their subject and age-phase from a range of specialist practitioners.

Leaders reflect on trainees' developmental needs, including any gaps in their subject knowledge for teaching. They successfully adapt the ITE curriculum to reflect these priorities. Trainees said that they have a voice in shaping the ITE curriculum.

With the support of mentors, trainees reflect on how the training programme informs their everyday teaching. Trainees confidently integrate pertinent research into their teaching practice.

In the primary age-phase, trainees learn about the importance of systematic synthetic phonics when teaching pupils to learn to read. Secondary age-phase trainees benefit from the rich opportunities they have to enhance their subject knowledge.

Trainees experience appropriate, contrasting school-based placements that enable them to develop and hone their skills in relation to behaviour management and adapting the

teaching of the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Equally, trainees learn how identify barriers for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL).

Trainees benefit from secure training in how to safeguard pupils and how to promote the protected characteristics through the resources that they prepare for pupils.

Leaders' strong, unswerving pastoral support for trainees' well-being permeates all elements of the training programme. Trainees fully understand the realities of being a teacher, including how to manage workload.

Information about this ITE provider

- Trainees at Pioneers Partnership SCITT follow either the postgraduate School Direct or School Direct salaried route.
- Trainees who follow the primary-phase programme are trained to teach the five-to-11 age range. Trainees on secondary programmes are trained to teach the 11-to-16 age-range, with a post-16 enhancement. Secondary trainees choose a subject specialism from art and design, biology, chemistry, computing, design and technology, drama, English, geography, history, mathematics, music, physical education or religious education.
- All trainees gain qualified teacher status. Since September 2020, Pioneers Partnership SCITT has been working in collaboration with Manchester Metropolitan University to enable all trainees to complete a Post Graduate Certificate in Education.
- In the 2021/22 academic year, there were 25 trainees enrolled on the provider's ITE programmes. This included seven primary-phase trainees and 18 secondary-phase trainees.
- Pioneers Partnership SCITT is based at Middleton Technology School, which is the lead school. Middleton Technology School is part of the Great Academies Education Trust.
- The provider works with 10 primary and 16 secondary schools across four local authorities.
- The provider works with schools covering the full range of Ofsted judgements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team consisted of three Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one Ofsted Inspector (OI).
- Inspectors spoke with SCITT leaders, including the chief executive officer of the Great Academies Education Trust. Inspectors met with several members of the SCITT's strategic board, subject coaches and headteachers from schools within the partnership. An inspector also met with representatives from Manchester Metropolitan University. Some of these meetings were held remotely.
- In the primary phase, inspectors completed focused reviews in early reading and English, the foundation subjects as a whole, mathematics and science. In the

secondary phase, inspectors completed focused reviews in mathematics, English and history.

- Inspectors considered a wide range of information provided by SCITT leaders, including information about policies, management systems, safeguarding arrangements, trainee placements, staff development, and documentation relating to the ITE curriculum.
- As part of the inspection, inspectors spoke with seven primary-phase trainees and 18 secondary-phase trainees from 14 partnership schools. Inspectors also met with subject and professional mentors and spoke with three early career teachers who had previously studied at the SCITT.
- Inspectors visited three secondary schools and two primary schools as part of this inspection. Inspectors visited a further two primary schools remotely.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for trainees and Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors considered information relating to the Department for Education (DfE) ITT criteria and supporting advice.

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

Leaders have designed a high-quality ITE curriculum that clearly defines the knowledge that trainees must learn and the order in which this knowledge should be taught. Leaders' careful consideration of the ITE curriculum content means that trainees across both the primary and secondary age-phases gain the knowledge that they need to begin their careers in teaching. In the same way, leaders are resolute in their aspirations to prepare trainees to be future curriculum leaders.

Leaders have ensured that the core curriculum is ambitious, underpinned by up-to-date research and delivered by experts. In the secondary phase, leaders have sourced high-quality subject coaches to deliver a coherent and well-sequenced package of subject-specific training. Primary-phase trainees are equally well prepared to teach the full range of national curriculum subjects.

Each of the subject sessions is designed to align fully with, and to complement, the professional studies programme. Leaders and mentors from partnership schools have significant input into the design of the ITE curriculum. The ITE curriculum extends beyond the full entitlement of the DfE core content framework.

Trainees' knowledge develops well. They have a secure understanding of subject-specific and general pedagogy. Early on in the programme, trainees across both phases are taught about concepts such as working memory and recall. Through subject-specific sessions, leaders carefully model curriculum thinking. Trainees are taught the importance of identifying the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn and how to teach this effectively. The well-thought-out structure of the ITE curriculum means that trainees build their knowledge sequentially, routinely reviewing and applying their learning in the same way in which they expect pupils to do.

A particular strength is leaders' focus on ensuring that trainees understand the importance of helping pupils to build on their prior knowledge, particularly in response to the gaps in learning created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Principles of cognitive science are embedded successfully into the ITE curriculum, and trainees engage in plentiful, meaningful debate about curriculum and pedagogy with tutors and mentors. This helps to shape trainees' practice and their understanding of the curriculum as a progression model, including in early years or sixth form.

Trainees across both phases, irrespective of their subject specialisms, learn about systematic synthetic phonics and the importance of developing pupils' vocabulary. Primary and secondary age-phase trainees deepen their understanding of phonics and develop an in-depth understanding of how to teach early reading, including for pupils with SEND or pupils who speak EAL.

The ITE curriculum teaches trainees how to encourage pupils to behave well. The principles of inclusive practice are woven through all strands of the training programme. Trainees readily engage with different pedagogies and learning theories. Through their contrasting placements, trainees successfully learn how to adapt the delivery of their subject curriculums to meet the needs of all learners.

High-quality communication between programme leaders, mentors and trainees means that all strands of the ITE curriculum are delivered effectively across all settings. Leaders ensure that mentors are appropriately trained to understand the granular knowledge that trainees must learn within the ITE curriculum. They provide weekly briefings to enable mentors to link key resources and the centre-based training to the school placement training. Leaders' high expectations for the quality of mentoring, coupled with their strong communication systems, mean that mentors are well prepared to support and consolidate trainees' learning.

Leaders' assessment systems are closely linked to the knowledge and skills in the taught ITE curriculum. For the most part, mentors successfully use these systems to check how well trainees are learning the ITE curriculum. Trainees' misconceptions are quickly identified and addressed. However, some of the language in the assessment policy lacks clarity and is open to misinterpretation. Therefore, in a small number of cases, mentors are not clear about how leaders intend them to assess trainees' progress through the curriculum or how to identify where components of the ITE curriculum are not secure.

Leaders have robust mechanisms in place to check the quality of training programmes and the delivery of the ITE curriculum. This enables leaders and tutors to intervene quickly when mentors or trainees need further support. That said, a small amount of target-setting is uneven in quality. Some targets set by mentors are too broad and lack specificity. While trainees make secure progress through the ITE curriculum, these targets do not help some trainees to progress as quickly as they could.

Leaders are passionate about addressing local contextual and employment needs through the programme. Partner schools are heavily involved in the recruitment process in both phases. Leaders, including those on the strategic board, have a clear moral purpose. They are deeply committed to the ongoing improvement of the SCITT. Fully cognisant of the strengths and areas for development in the partnership, leaders respond rapidly to internal and external feedback to secure an even more effective ITE curriculum.

What does the ITE provider need to do to improve the primary and secondary combined phase?

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- Aspects of leaders' assessment policy lack clarity. This means that sometimes, leaders' systems to assess how well trainees are learning the ITE curriculum are not fully understood by all mentors. This can hinder how quickly mentors support trainees in identifying where component parts of the ITE curriculum are not secure. Leaders should ensure that they convey their assessment system clearly, ensuring that it is fully understood by all trainees and mentors.
- A small amount of target-setting is too general and lacks subject specificity. For a minority of trainees, targets are too broad and generic, which is unhelpful in aiding them in progressing through the subject content of the ITE curriculum. As leaders roll out their enhancements to the subject-specific curriculums, they should ensure that mentors are setting targets that closely match the subject-specific knowledge and skills outlined in the ITE curriculum.

Does the ITE provider's primary and secondary combined phase comply with the ITE compliance criteria?

- The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70227
Inspection number	10217259

This inspection was carried out in accordance with the 'Initial teacher education inspection framework and handbook'.

This framework and handbook set out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from September 2020.

Type of ITE provider	SCITT partnership
Phases provided	Primary and secondary combined
Date of previous inspection	14 to 17 May 2019

Inspection team

Rachel Goodwin, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Janette Walker	Her Majesty's Inspector
Simon Hunter	Her Majesty's Inspector
Erica Sharman	Ofsted Inspector

Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools, either on site or remotely, as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phase(s)
Walsden St Peter's Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School	135862	Primary
Brownhill Learning Community	105861	Primary
Silver Springs Primary Academy	137951	Primary
Castleton Primary School	105765	Primary
Falinge Park High School	105837	Secondary
Great Academy Ashton	135508	Secondary

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Piccadilly Gate
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M1 2WD

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