

Sacred Heart Newcastle SCITT

Fenham Hall Drive, Fenham, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 9YH

Inspection dates

18 to 21 March 2024

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?

Sacred Heart Newcastle SCITT is a partnership focused on training highly skilled, resilient teachers for the future. It prides itself on how well the partnership works together to achieve this aim. The ambitious curriculum, wide variety of teaching opportunities and excellent pastoral care combine to provide trainees with much a valued training experience.

SCITT leaders, tutors and school mentors, build strong relationships with trainees. The support that the centre leaders and professional partners give the trainees is highly effective. All trainees are known and valued. Leaders build a strong culture of caring here.

The centre-based curriculum is well planned and prepares trainees well for the teaching profession. It supports them to develop expertise in their chosen subject or phase. Subject and phase specialists from partnership schools share their knowledge and teaching expertise well with trainees. Many of these experts are past trainees at the SCITT.

Trainees' school experience is carefully planned. Trainees are given excellent opportunities to implement centre-based training in a broad spectrum of different placements. Through these placements, they gain extensive experience which supports them to become sought-after early career teachers, who often find employment in the local area.

Leaders ensure that important areas of teaching practice, such as behaviour management, adaptive teaching approaches and the importance of meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are focused on throughout all aspects of the training.

Information about this ITE provider

- The partnership provides training in both the primary and secondary phase.
- There are currently 12 trainees on the primary course and 29 on the secondary course.
- The school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) provider currently places trainees in 58 partner schools. Thirty-eight of these are primary schools and 20 are secondary schools.
- The partnership offers qualified teacher status, with the added option of an employment-based postgraduate certificate in education (ePGCE). The awarding body for the ePGCE is Newcastle University.
- The partnership schools that trainees are placed in currently have received Ofsted gradings of outstanding, good or requires improvement.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by three His Majesty's Inspectors and one Ofsted inspector.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff and partners, including, the director of the SCITT, the SCITT strategic board, other SCITT tutors, senior leaders of partner schools, professional tutors, mentors and expert colleagues who lead training sessions. Some of these meetings were held virtually.
- Inspectors also had a telephone conversation with a representative from Newcastle University regarding the ePGCE programme.
- Inspectors conducted focused reviews in early reading, primary mathematics, primary history, secondary English and secondary modern foreign languages.
- Inspectors visited three secondary schools and five primary schools. On these visits, they visited trainees' lessons, observed learning mentor feedback and held discussions with professional tutors and/or mentors, as well as trainees.
- Inspectors also met with representatives from the SCITT tutors and senior leaders from partnership schools.
- In total, inspectors had conversations with 20 trainees individually, or in small groups, to discuss their experiences of the training programme.
- Inspectors met with a group of early career teachers who had been trained on the programme.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted surveys for staff and trainees that were completed during the inspection.

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

All leaders of Sacred Heart Newcastle SCITT are ambitious and determined to train effective teachers. They continuously look for ways to refine and improve their initial teacher training offer. Leaders make sure that their vision is realised through close working with partners. Their clarity of purpose, to ensure that all trainees finish the course as highly skilled teachers, is well understood across the whole partnership. The strategic board members, who are all school leaders from the partnership schools, are invested in the SCITT. They hold the central team to account in order to ensure that it is successful in meeting its vision.

Leaders have designed an effective ITE curriculum for primary and secondary trainees. They have ensured that the Department for Education's core content framework is threaded through the curriculum. Trainees highly value training sessions, both in the SCITT centre and out in the partnership schools. They benefit from the knowledge gained and from seeing the curriculum in practice across a broad range of settings. Secondary trainees appreciate opportunities to observe each other teaching in their specialist subject areas. Subject-specific mentors provide bespoke guidance across the range of subjects covered. This enables trainees to gain increasing subject knowledge and confidence in their teaching skills.

Leaders ensure that trainees access different teaching experiences to enhance their professional practice. Primary and secondary subject experts, from across the partner schools, support the trainees to see the curriculum in practice in their different settings. This helps trainees to plan effective learning for all pupils. They also identify how to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, such as those with SEND or those for whom English is an additional language. Primary trainees benefit from regular opportunities to extend their understanding of how to teach mathematics, reading and phonics across the primary phase. They gain understanding of the important research that underpins the importance of early reading and phonics in the primary curriculum.

Leaders make sure that SCITT tutors and school-based mentors are well informed about the ITE curriculum. They provide mentors with training on their role, such as how to encourage trainees to reflect on research. However, there remains some variability in the quality of mentoring that trainees receive. Quality assurance systems do not consistently identify variations in how well mentors enable trainees to reflect on their practice.

Leaders have thought carefully about how they assess trainees. Systems have been introduced which identify criteria to be used by mentors to track trainees' development both formatively and at summative assessment points. The central team supports mentors with using this approach. However, while the new system outlines what should be assessed, it is less clear in providing mentors with guidance on how well trainees should be progressing at different assessment points. This leads to some variability in the quality of ongoing target setting and dissatisfaction in a small number of trainees as they feel expectations are not always clear enough.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- The recent changes that the provider has introduced to support the quality assurance systems are not fully embedded. Currently, systems are not consistently used in ways that identify how deeply trainees reflect on their targets or how research is being applied to their emerging practice. This is particularly the case in the primary phase. The provider should refine quality assurance processes to ensure all trainees reflect on their training and apply this to their practice to an equally high standard.
- Leaders have not sufficiently outlined how the agreed approaches to assessing trainees progress should be used at different points of the training journey. This means that, for a minority of trainees, there is not a sufficiently accurate picture of the progress they are making at key assessment points. Leaders should provide clearer guidance to mentors on how to evaluate trainees development as they progress through their agreed learning journey.

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

The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number 1222539

Inspection number 10306336

This inspection was carried out in accordance with the [initial teacher education inspection framework and handbook](#), which sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from September 2020.

Type of ITE provider SCITT

Phases provided Primary and secondary combined

Dates of previous inspection 11 June and 3 December 2018

Inspection team

Andrea Batley, Lead inspector
Marcus Newby, Team member
Malcolm Kirtley, Team member
Susan Timmins, Team member

His Majesty's Inspector
His Majesty's Inspector
His Majesty's Inspector
Ofsted Inspector

Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phases
St Cuthberts Primary School, North Kenton, Newcastle upon Tyne	148978	Primary
St Columba's Catholic Primary School, Wallsend	148816	Primary
St Joseph's Catholic Primary, Stanley, County Durham	148412	Primary
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Blaydon, Tyne and Wear	148910	Primary
St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne	148813	Primary
St Cuthbert's High School, Newcastle upon Tyne	137900	Secondary
St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy, Northumberland	141814	Secondary
Sacred Heart Catholic High School, Newcastle upon Tyne	137708	Secondary

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