

Leeds SCITT

Leeds Trinity University, Brownberrie Lane, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5HD

Inspection dates

9 May to 12 May 2022

Inspection judgements

Secondary age-phase

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?

The Leeds school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) programme provides a caring, nurturing environment for trainees. Trainees told inspectors the support for their well-being is 'fantastic'. Inspectors agree. For example, trainees told inspectors that leaders are incredibly responsive when trainees contact them and that there is an effective support programme in place when trainees need additional help.

Communication between partnership schools and SCITT leaders is timely and effective. Leaders have created a culture of openness which encourages trainees to raise concerns. A role of 'trainee representative' has been created to provide a forum for trainees to give their views anonymously.

Trainees' academic work ensures that they engage with educational research around, for example, provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The course structure ensures that trainees apply this research to practical activities in the classroom as part of the training programme. Weekly reflective journals allow trainees to consider their development as classroom leaders, among other aspects, and hold meaningful conversations about the next steps with mentors.

The provision of enrichment and immersion experiences exposes trainees to the variety of educational settings that exist within the sector. For example, trainees visit an alternative provision setting and receive training from experts in supporting pupils who speak English as an additional language. This structure means that trainees complete the course with a

rounded view of the current educational landscape and of their role in developing the skills, talents and interests of all pupils.

Information about this ITE provider

- At the time of the inspection, 36 trainees were on the course. All trainees follow the SCITT route.
- Almost all trainees complete a Postgraduate Certificate in Education with Leeds Trinity University. A small number, after discussions with SCITT leaders, complete a Professional Certificate in Education.
- Trainees train to teach secondary-age (11 to 16 years) pupils.
- Leeds SCITT currently has six lead schools and is in partnership with 16 other schools. All providers are secondary schools. Some of the lead and partnership schools have post-16 provision.
- Leeds SCITT is based at Leeds Trinity University and is overseen by board members comprised of leaders from Leeds Trinity University and the six lead schools.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.
- Inspectors met with the course director and deputy director, as well as board members with strategic oversight of the course, including the chair of the board.
- The inspection team conducted focused reviews in English, history, modern foreign languages and art and design. They met with subject leads, scrutinised course documents and visited four schools to talk with trainees, mentors and senior leaders. They looked at evidence of trainees' learning and observed them teaching the subject being reviewed.
- Inspectors spoke with 34 trainees, either in their placement schools or at in-person meetings at the SCITT base in Leeds Trinity University.
- Inspectors took account of seven responses to Ofsted's online survey for trainees and 11 responses to the online survey for staff.

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

The design of the curriculum is a key strength of Leeds SCITT. Leaders have considered key knowledge that trainees need as they start the course and then build the curriculum into 'implementation' and 'adaptation' phases. This ensures that trainees' understanding of the principles of teaching becomes deeper and more sophisticated as they move through the course. The curriculum incorporates and goes beyond the core content framework in ensuring that trainees connect the knowledge that they gain to classroom practice.

An incredibly successful element in the design of the course is the use of 'lead schools' as subject hubs. Leaders in these schools share the vision and passion of SCITT leaders in developing the best teachers possible for the local area. The communication between SCITT leaders and lead schools is clear, regular and timely. As a result, the curriculum focus for each week is well understood by leaders and mentors in schools. Trainees are helped to gain theoretical knowledge which they can then observe and apply in placement schools. This element goes beyond the core content framework in its vision of how trainees should work with expert colleagues.

Leaders' vision is that mentors' most important role in the training programme is to develop the subject expertise of trainees. School-based mentors have a clear understanding of their role because there is a comprehensive training programme in place to develop mentoring skills. The mentor is understood by all to have a key role in ensuring trainees understand the subject they are training to teach. Therefore, trainees feel well supported while on placement in developing their subject expertise.

Leaders have implemented a consistent approach to subject curriculum design to focus on the most important concepts in each subject. In some subjects, such as modern foreign languages, these concepts help trainees to understand the range of knowledge that pupils need to develop. These core concepts are most helpful for trainees when clearly rooted in key debates within the subject. In a small number of subjects, the core concepts are too narrow or not clearly enough linked to important pedagogical knowledge that trainees need to develop. Therefore, trainees in these subjects may not develop a fully rounded view of the most important aspects that they will need to understand to teach their subject.

Leaders have a range of quality assurance systems in place. Mentors are carefully selected based on clear criteria around subject expertise. Subject leads, while based and employed in lead schools, have their nominations discussed and ratified by the SCITT board. These actions ensure a focus on the quality of trainers that work with trainees.

Leaders have access to all records of mentor meetings. Joint observations between mentors and school initial teacher training coordinators mean there is a strong understanding of the quality of mentoring, and leaders take steps to make improvements where they notice weaknesses, for example around target setting.

Trainees are assessed against curriculum milestones which map the expectations of trainees at each stage of training. Trainees understand this system very well. Leaders have recently made improvements to make targets more specific for trainees. There is clear evidence of the impact of this work. However, some targets for trainees are not clearly linked to specific milestones because the system of recording and setting targets does not make this aspect explicit enough. This risks trainees focusing only on the task rather than reflecting on how they are developing the skills and knowledge required to become good teachers.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that targets from some mentors clearly link to the milestones in the curriculum. This means that some tasks are not as purposeful in helping trainees to progress toward these milestones. Leaders should ensure that mentors consistently set targets which are clearly connected to curriculum goals to support trainees' progress.
- Some subject curriculums do not focus on the full range of the most important aspects of subject knowledge that trainees will need. This is because leaders do not routinely seek the views of a range of subject experts to quality assure the subject-specific aspects of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the most important knowledge is identified in each subject curriculum.

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

- The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70165
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This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) in accordance with the 'Initial teacher education inspection framework and handbook'.

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

Type of ITE provider	School-centred initial teacher training
Phases provided	Secondary
Date of previous inspection	19 June and 6 December 2012

Inspection team

Matthew Vellensworth, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tim Jenner	Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Placement schools

Inspectors visited the following schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phase
Carr Manor Community School	108059	Secondary
Horsforth School	137775	Secondary
Leeds West Academy	135935	Secondary
St Mary's Menston, a Catholic Voluntary Academy	139351	Secondary

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