

George Abbot SCITT

Initial teacher education inspection report

Inspection dates Stage 1: 14 May 2018 Stage 2: 15 October 2018

This inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty’s Inspectors (HMI) 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

	Primary and 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

Primary and secondary routes

Information about this ITE partnership

- George Abbot partnership is a school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) provider. It is based at George Abbot School, Guildford. George Abbot School is the lead school for the Guildford Educational Partnership (GEP) multi-academy trust. The ITE partnership is led by the trust.
- The training programme works in partnership with George Abbot Teaching School under the leadership of the ITT leadership team.
- The programme is overseen by a partnership steering group, which includes representatives of key stakeholders.
- The partnership consists of approximately 60 primary, secondary and independent schools. These schools are mainly situated in Surrey local authority, with a small number in Hampshire and Slough.
- George Abbot SCITT offers several different routes into primary and secondary teaching. This inspection focused on three routes; School Direct, the core postgraduate route to qualified teacher status (QTS) and the Teach Independent (TI) route. Other routes being offered at the time included part-time models and Researchers in Schools (RIS). These additional routes were subject to innovation status and were not reviewed as part of this inspection.
- At the time of stage 1 of the inspection, there were 23 primary trainees specialising in the five to 11 age range and 32 secondary trainees, most of whom specialised in the 11 to 16 age range. Just under one half of the trainees were completing the School Direct (salaried) route alongside other SCITT trainees. One primary trainee and nine secondary trainees were following the TI route.
- Successful trainees are recommended for QTS at the end of the programme. Some trainees are also awarded a postgraduate certificate of education by the University of Kingston on successful completion of assignments.

Information about the primary and secondary ITE inspection

- Over the two stages of the inspection, inspectors made visits to a total of nine partnership schools, which included two independent schools. In addition, during stage 2, inspectors observed former trainees teaching in three non-partnership schools and visited two current trainees at their placement in a special school.
- Twelve trainees/newly qualified teachers (NQTs) were observed teaching during the two stages of the inspection process. At stage 1, seven trainees were observed teaching. At stage 2, a further five were observed as NQTs. Two trainees were observed at both stages.
- During school visits, where possible, inspectors met with the headteacher and/or senior leaders responsible for professional development. These meetings helped

to gather leaders' views on the quality of training offered by the partnership and its impact on staff recruitment.

- Meetings were held with programme leaders, members of the partnership steering group, primary and secondary tutors, professional mentors and with the director of education and chief executive of GEP.
- Across both stages of the inspection, inspectors considered a range of other evidence related to trainees' and NQTs' training and outcomes, for example their files, assignments and work in pupils' books. Inspectors scrutinised information on trainees' attainment, completion and employment rates. Inspectors also reviewed the partnership website and checked safeguarding arrangements, as well as compliance with initial teacher training (ITT) criteria and other requirements.
- Inspectors met with a group of trainees at stage 1 and held telephone conversations with a further six NQTs at stage 2 to seek their views on how well the programme had prepared them for teaching. Although there were no responses to Ofsted's trainee online questionnaire in 2018, inspectors reviewed the responses to the partnership's own surveys.

Inspection team

Matthew Newberry HMI (lead inspector), stage 2; (assistant lead inspector), stage 1

Simon Hughes HMI (lead inspector), stage 1

Stephen Long HMI (assistant lead inspector), stage 2

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

Key strengths of the primary and secondary partnership

- Outstanding recruitment and selection procedures mean that nearly all trainees gain QTS and many excel when assessed against the teachers' standards.
- Very high-quality training leads to resilient and self-reflective trainees who are well prepared for life in school. Employment rates are high.
- High-quality experiences boost trainees' understanding and provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The partnership is gaining a reputation for success in this area.
- Well-planned and rigorous quality assurance procedures, coupled with strong communication, ensure that any issues are identified quickly. Leaders then flexibly adapt provision to address matters as soon as possible.
- Trainees have strong subject knowledge and can apply it well to create interesting and engaging sequences of lessons.

- The TI route has become highly valued by local independent schools. It has become their preferred model of training for gaining QTS status and underpins the professional development of their new staff.
- Trainees, mentors and stakeholders hold the programme in very high regard. The programme is making an invaluable contribution to the recruitment challenges in the local area and promoting wider collaboration and training across a range of schools.

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

The partnership should:

- improve mentors' target-setting and feedback to trainees to boost the impact of their strategies to:
 - stretch all groups of pupils, particularly the most able
 - embed aspects of professional studies such as the provision for pupils with SEND
- deepen primary trainees' understanding of the sequence and progression of key knowledge across the different subjects of the wider curriculum.

Inspection judgements

1. George Abbot SCITT is an outstanding provider of ITT for primary and secondary trainees. The high cost of housing locally means that teacher recruitment in the area can be particularly challenging. The partnership provides a regular supply of high-quality teachers and is making a very strong contribution to meeting the employment needs of local primary and secondary schools.
2. Highly effective leadership has developed teacher training programmes that regularly produce excellent teachers who are skilled, very committed and reflective practitioners. Consequently, NQTs emerging from the programme make a strong start to their career. Headteachers and senior leaders from partnership schools, and other local schools, value the high quality of most trainees.
3. Working with partner schools, leaders ensure recruitment and selection procedures are rigorous. Many trainees have been talent-spotted by the partnership. Some have worked in non-teaching roles in schools. As part of the selection process, candidates are required to demonstrate the commitment to be an effective teacher and the resilience required to meet the needs of the role. Consequently, trainees and NQTs are positive, highly motivated and quickly establish themselves as part of the staff teams they join.

4. Well-structured training programmes ensure that trainees gain the wide range of knowledge and skills that they need to become successful teachers and to teach their subject specialism well. By the end of the training, all trainees exceed the minimum level of performance expected for the award of QTS.
5. Leaders know their trainees extremely well, both in terms of their teaching strengths and weaknesses, and their personal circumstances. Leaders do all they can to meet the needs of individual trainees, frequently offering additional coaching or flexibly adapting the programme to meet individual needs. Trainees and NQTs were unanimous in their appreciation of the support that they receive and their praise for course leaders.
6. Trainees and NQTs report feeling well looked after by leaders. Consequently, nearly all trainees complete the programme and completion rates are consistently above the national average. Nearly all trainees progress into teaching jobs. Most find employment in their chosen location and subject specialism and settle quickly into their NQT induction year.
7. Transition documentation provided by the SCITT is valued by NQTs and school-based mentors as a useful tool for setting and tracking NQTs' professional targets and to ensure that they continue to have the highest aspirations. Regular updates and newsletters from the SCITT are particularly valued by NQTs as they embark upon their careers.
8. The professional conduct of trainees and NQTs is first class. They confidently establish effective classroom rules and routines and quickly gain the respect and trust of the pupils that they teach. They listen carefully to feedback from mentors and colleagues and proactively respond to improve their practice. Headteachers told inspectors that NQTs were already making strong contributions to their new places of work, for example through assisting with planning or running a range of extra-curricular activities.
9. Inspectors found no discernible difference between the outcomes for trainees in different groups. The very few candidates from minority ethnic groups and those who choose to declare a disability do equally well on the programme. Trainees who enter the profession later in life typically do as well as younger graduates.
10. Primary trainees/NQTs successfully gain the skills that they need to teach across the early years and primary curriculum. They model reading and writing well, teach phonics effectively and confidently teach early mathematics. The training ensures that there is a strong emphasis on the physical education curriculum and that all primary trainees are well prepared to teach this subject.
11. Although primary trainees receive a comprehensive package of subject-specific training, they are not challenged enough by mentors and assessors to ensure

this training has maximum impact. Trainees do not consistently extend pupils' subject-specific vocabulary and knowledge across the wider curriculum to the very highest levels or stretch the most able pupils.

12. Most secondary trainees join the programme with secure subject knowledge. Leaders carefully plan subject knowledge enhancement courses and activities where appropriate. During the programme, trainees learn how to acquire new subject and assessment knowledge quickly. Consequently, secondary trainees are well informed about curriculum requirements and recent changes to GCSE specifications and examination requirements. For example, an NQT specialising in geography had developed a strong understanding of the requirements and expectations of fieldwork within the GCSE course and used this well to motivate and engage her pupils.
13. The TI programme has quickly developed into a significant strength of the partnership. Several independent schools are key players within the partnership and respect how the route equips their new teachers with a valuable portfolio of teaching skills. Senior leaders of the independent schools visited hold this route in high esteem. They reported that the TI QTS route has now become the bedrock of their training for new staff and the George Abbot SCITT is their preferred provider. Following successful completion of the programme, many of the TI NQTs are motivated to continue working on collaborative research projects run by the teaching school and/or become involved as mentors to other colleagues on the programme.
14. Another strength of the programme is the SEN-focused, week-long placement for all trainees. This experience, together with effective training, has been particularly successful at motivating and inspiring trainees to seek to provide high-quality resources for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Headteachers told inspectors that they recognise NQTs' strengths in this area. Leaders are rightly looking at refinements to the challenge of mentors' feedback to ensure trainees capitalise fully on this already strong practice.
15. Trainees and NQTs understand their role in safeguarding pupils. They know how to identify and respond to issues such as potential neglect, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation. Trainees receive training around their responsibilities under the 'Prevent' duty. They demonstrate a secure understanding of how to promote fundamental British values and keep pupils safe from harm.
16. All work is supported by an appropriate range of up-to-date research-based or evidence-based literature. For those trainees undertaking the postgraduate certificate of education, the University of Kingston provides reliable access to its library systems, so trainees can access texts to support their work.

17. Nearly all the trainees and NQTs seen during the inspection planned, prepared and delivered good or better sequences of lessons. The positive impact of their very effective teaching over time was evident in the pupils' attitudes and work and the good progress that pupils had made over time.
18. Trainees are taught to manage pupils' behaviour well. Inspectors saw no poor pupil behaviour during any of the lessons observed. NQTs were inspiring and engaging pupils to demonstrate very strong attitudes to learning. As one Year 8 girl enthused to an inspector during a music lesson, 'I feel that I have learnt more over the last two months with our new teacher than I did all last year!'
19. Trainees and NQTs are quick to embrace leaders' commitment to raise the achievement of the region's disadvantaged pupils. They understand some of the causes of disadvantage and quickly trial and develop their own range of strategies to support these pupils and narrow any gaps in their progress.
20. In their planning, trainees and NQTs understand the importance of using information about pupils' progress to focus and accelerate pupils' learning. They give feedback on pupils' work conscientiously, in line with the policy of their school, and are familiar with a range of assessment systems used in schools.
21. Trainees are adept at reflecting accurately on their own teaching. Good relationships, together with skilful questioning and coaching by mentors, facilitates this reflection over time. By the end of their training, NQTs usually know exactly when and why things have not gone as well as intended and appreciate why particular strategies and approaches have been successful in promoting good learning.
22. Leaders foster trainees' development of a broader insight into education in wider contexts and ensure that they are suitably prepared to teach in schools outside the partnership. Good consideration is given to ensuring trainees develop an understanding of the issues faced by schools in areas with high levels of socio-economic challenge.
23. The integration of rigorous quality assurance systems into all aspects of training and programme design is particularly effective. Leaders have very high aspirations and standards. They are proactive in seeking written and verbal feedback from trainees and mentors which they use swiftly to identify where any improvements can be made. Leaders' strategic plans identify the right priorities for improvement, which they share with stakeholders. Agreed plans for improvements are implemented systematically and efficiently. The programme is continuously being fine-tuned to meet the needs of specific cohorts and to enable continual improvement.
24. The partnership has invested heavily in enhanced training for mentors and in improvements to the online evidence-gathering system. This has achieved an

even greater consistency in the quality of mentoring, and has facilitated smarter working practices and better communication between trainees, mentors and assessors.

25. Trustees of the GEP, together with members of the steering group, hold partnership leaders to account effectively. They are determined to meet the needs of the local area and are justifiably proud of the wide family of partner schools and how effectively the partnership supports the future of the profession.
26. The partnership complies fully with the relevant criteria for ITT and meets the statutory requirements for promoting equality and diversity, eliminating discrimination and safeguarding.

Annex: Partnership schools

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

Bushy Hill Junior School, Guildford

Cheam High School, Cheam

Christ's College, Guildford

George Abbot School, Guildford

Guildford County School, Guildford

Maybury Primary School, Woking

Pond Meadow School, Guildford

Reigate Parish Church Primary School, Reigate

Royal Grammar School, Guildford

St John's School, Leatherhead

St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School, Guildford

Westfield Primary School, Woking

Worplesdon Primary School, Guildford

ITE partnership details

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Lead inspector	Matthew Newberry HMI
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Phases provided	Primary/Secondary
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Previous inspection report	https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/41/70199
Provider address	George Abbot SCITT Woodruff Avenue Burpham Guildford GU1 1XX



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