

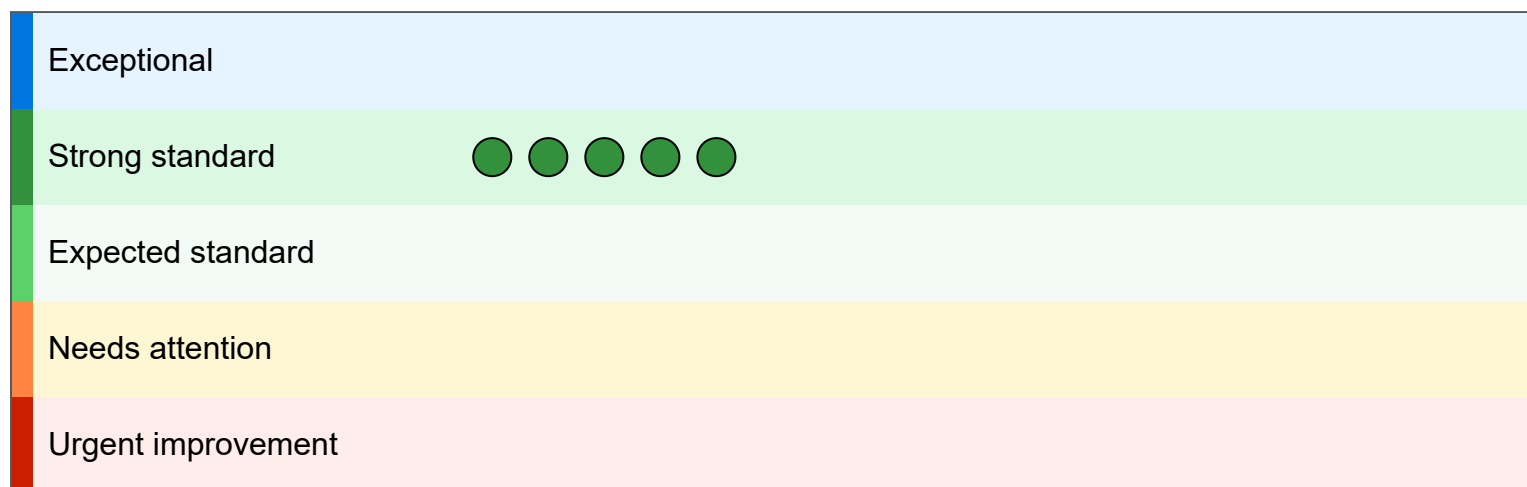
Gloucestershire Initial Teacher Education Partnership (GITEP)

Address: Balcarras School, East End Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

Unique reference number (URN): 70026

Inspection report: 2 February 2026

1. Primary



✓ **Compliance, including safeguarding: standards met**

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Trainees make rapid progress from their differing starting points, developing the confidence and subject knowledge needed to teach skilfully. This includes crucial elements of the primary phase, such as the teaching of early reading. Trainees demonstrate secure understanding of primary and early years practice, including successful behaviour management strategies.

Trainees have a well-developed understanding of their own progress through the programme. They use regular and high-quality feedback, precise targets and centre-based input to reflect on their strengths and priorities for improvement. They link their academic

learning, feedback and classroom practice in a purposeful way that enhances the development of their teaching impressively as they move through the programme.

Through clear expectations from both the provider and schools, trainees are very well prepared for the realities of teaching in the primary phase. By the time they complete the course, trainees are ready for their next stage of employment. This is reflected in the high completion rates, as well as the high proportion of trainees that secure their first teaching post.

Curriculum, teaching and training

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed a high-quality and ambitious primary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) curriculum that clearly identifies what trainees need to know about teaching in the primary phase, including in the early years. It is rooted in high-quality research, ensuring that trainees learn the most relevant knowledge needed to teach. The curriculum is successful because leaders tailor it to trainees' varied starting points in school experience and subject knowledge, while ensuring it meets statutory requirements.

The intensive training and practice (ITAP) element of the programme is highly effective. Leaders design the content and timing of ITAP input with precision so that trainees develop a strong and secure understanding of specific areas of classroom practice. They adapt these so that the content aligns precisely with trainees' and schools' changing needs. For example, there is now a sharper focus on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, reflecting local schools' priorities.

Leaders plan and sequence the primary curriculum with precision, enabling trainees to deepen their knowledge of key concepts throughout their training. For example, trainees continuously revisit how to adapt their teaching for pupils who face barriers to their learning. Leaders weave this learning purposefully into school placements. As a result, trainees understand how these concepts are put into practice in contrasting primary settings.

Safeguarding is embedded well within the ITE curriculum. Trainees learn how to recognise concerns, follow procedures and keep pupils safe. Mentors revisit this during school placements so that trainees apply safeguarding principles confidently.

Leaders draw on carefully selected expert facilitators to deliver important content. They ensure that all input aligns closely with the rest of the ITE curriculum, resulting in high-quality training that deepens trainees' subject expertise and meets the curriculum's ambitions. Leaders continuously use feedback from trainees to shape and refine future training.

Assessment of trainees is timely and developmental. Staff and mentors provide precise feedback that identifies clear next steps. This approach consistently enables trainees to understand their strengths clearly and address any gaps in their knowledge and skills swiftly.

Leaders have established a high-quality mentoring process. This is strengthened by professional leads, who provide effective quality assurance of trainees' progress as well as ensuring there are productive working relationships between all parties. Regular meetings give trainees structured opportunities to review their progress. Mentors' secure knowledge of the ITE curriculum allows them to provide well-judged support that tightly matches each

trainee's stage of learning. The close partnership between schools and the provider ensures that any additional support for individual trainees is put in place promptly.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders and staff create a highly inclusive environment where trainees quickly develop trust and feel part of the GITEP community from the outset. They place great emphasis on getting to know trainees well. Leaders model open communication consistently. Consequently, trainees feel confident to talk to staff openly and to ask for help when they need it. Trainees report that leaders respond sensitively and promptly, helping them to feel understood and supported.

Leaders consistently identify trainees' learning and support needs with precision. Frequent contact between staff and trainees, and well-established systems help leaders to recognise emerging needs at an early stage. They act promptly when trainees' needs change, ensuring that support remains well matched throughout the programme. Bespoke support, such as additional training and flexible timetabling, ensures that trainees get the right help at the right time.

Trainees receive comprehensive information about sources of internal and external guidance to help them with their own learning or wellbeing. As a result, trainees receive advice that helps them to succeed.

Leaders quickly implement reasonable adjustments for trainees with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Leaders do this in a carefully considered way. They work closely with placement schools to ensure that school staff understand and apply adaptations for trainees appropriately.

Leadership

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a clear and purposeful vision for a programme that, although relatively new, already demonstrates well-embedded values of collaboration, inclusion and ambition. Their belief that trainees of all backgrounds can succeed is widely shared across the partnership. Relationships between parties involved in the partnership are highly productive. A culture of mutual respect and challenge ensures that decision-making is principled and consistently focuses on securing the best possible outcomes for trainees.

Leaders from partner organisations describe the programme as having 'a culture of togetherness', which reflects the unified ethos established by leaders. As new schools are added to the partnership, leaders check diligently that schools share their inclusive ethos. This ensures that trainees receive the same high-quality training in placements across the partnership.

Leaders have a clear and confident grasp of what the programme does well and what needs to improve, drawing on a wide range of evidence to inform their evaluation. This enables them to respond swiftly and tackle robustly any emerging issues.

Leaders ensure that all staff involved in the partnership strive to provide highly effective input. Mentors, professional leads and facilitators benefit from structured training,

development days and regular updates, including the 'Mentor Memo'. This carefully structured approach strengthens consistency across all elements of the course and reinforces leaders' high expectations for all those involved in supporting trainees.

Those responsible for overseeing the provision carry out their roles with rigour. The partnership board provides highly effective challenge to leaders. This secure oversight has been established swiftly, supporting the programme's early growth. Leaders meet DfE mandatory requirements and ensure that statutory duties are followed consistently across both centre-based and school-based training. They understand safer recruitment well and apply the required checks for all trainees.

Leaders create a welcoming and supportive culture across the partnership. They take effective steps to support staff workload. For example, leaders have taken deliberate steps through the move to Mosaic and the introduction of 'Mosaic 101' guidance sheets to help users navigate the system and save time.

Professional behaviours, personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders have high expectations for trainees' professional behaviours, attendance and commitment to learning from the beginning of the programme. Immersion in school life from the first day of term helps trainees quickly learn the routines and realities of teaching. This early experience rapidly builds their confidence and gives them a practical understanding of professional life in the classroom. Engagement with staff from a range of settings, including special schools, further enriches trainees' professional understanding and supports their development into reflective practitioners.

Trainees receive consistent, well-structured support, advice and guidance throughout the programme. Weekly training sessions, mentor meetings and survey provide opportunities for leaders to check trainees' welfare. Leaders respond quickly when concerns arise, offering timely, practical guidance.

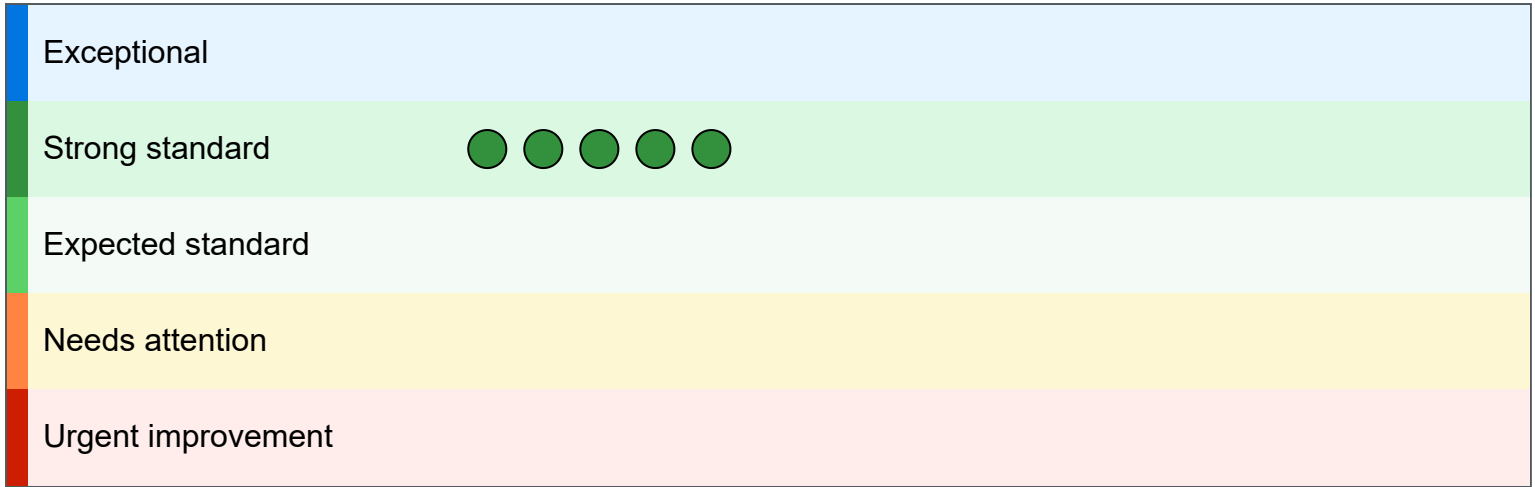
Leaders foster a culture where bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated. Trainees learn in an environment that is highly supportive and respectful, and any concerns are dealt with swiftly. Mentors and professional leads reinforce expectations of conduct and provide consistent messages about appropriate professional behaviours.

The programme prepares trainees very well for their next step. Training on workload and wellbeing is woven through the course, so trainees understand how to manage the demands of teaching. A range of school placements, engagement with relevant research and clear guidance show trainees how to cope with challenging professional situations.

Next steps

Leaders should continue to enhance the expertise of all teacher educators so that they can provide precise support that has an ever-increasing impact on trainees' learning and that of the pupils they teach.

2. Secondary



 Compliance, including safeguarding: standards met

Strong standard

AchievementStrong standard

Trainees consistently complete their training and gain qualified teacher status. The large majority of trainees gain employment locally, many within partnership schools.

Trainees are very well prepared to take up their posts as early career teachers. Leaders ensure that trainees understand how to manage their workload and wellbeing so that they can have a sustainable teaching career. Many former trainees thrive as teachers and also now fulfil teacher educator roles within the provider.

Trainees continually reflect on their own progress, identifying where their strengths lie and what they need to do to improve further. The targets they work towards enable trainees to incrementally build their strengths in teaching practice.

Trainees demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of effective behaviour management. They know the importance of adapting lessons so that all pupils learn successfully. Trainees adapt their lessons adeptly for the different needs that pupils may have.

Curriculum, teaching and trainingStrong standard

The Initial Teacher Education (ITE) curriculum is ambitious and coherent. It gives trainees the subject knowledge they need as well as the skills required to teach successfully. The curriculum is designed to enable trainees to build effectively on their emerging knowledge and skills over time. This enables them to develop a deep understanding of how to teach.

Trainees apply their knowledge very well when in their highly structured school placements. Events such as development days and weekly subject bulletins mean that school-based

staff have extensive knowledge of what trainees are learning at each stage. This enables mentors and professional leads to reinforce key learning so that trainees deepen their knowledge.

Leaders make clear what is expected at each stage of the course. Professional leads and mentors understand well how to support trainees' progress, including through the skilful setting of precise and achievable targets.

Leaders use a wide range of high-quality research to underpin the ITE curriculum. This includes research about both teaching generally and about individual subject areas. Trainees apply this research successfully in their own teaching. They know how to make suitable evidence-informed choices when deciding how to teach. The expert training they receive shows trainees how to use these approaches in practice.

Trainees quickly learn about the different barriers that pupils may face, such as having a special educational need and/or disabilities (SEND). They learn evidence-based approaches to removing barriers for pupils, including those with SEND, and how to work with other professionals to secure support when needed.

Trainees benefit from useful feedback throughout the programme. They receive targeted support on how to use feedback to improve their written work as well as well as their teaching. Trainees use this feedback well to accurately and independently recognise their strengths and priorities for improvement.

Trainees learn about their wider professional duties and understand very well the role of the teacher. For example, they know their responsibilities for keeping children safe, including through effective supervision and aspects of the taught curriculum. Trainees develop a deep appreciation of how to teach personal, social and health education.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Trainees past and present feel that their needs are consistently met by the Gloucestershire Initial Teacher Education Partnership. They feel well supported in their placements schools and when attending training run by the provider.

Leaders encourage trainees to share any additional needs they have from the outset of the course. Leaders put adjustments in place promptly. For example, some trainees may build up the time they spend teaching more gradually than others. Helpful information on how to support trainees is shared with mentors and relevant staff when required. Trainees are fully involved in determining who needs to be aware of any additional support they require.

Any adjustments that are made are systematically reviewed and adapted. Leaders ensure that adjustments do not compromise trainees' ability to complete the course. Consequently, trainees are well prepared for the realities of teaching by the end of the course.

Leaders proactively reduce the potential barriers to learning that some trainees face. They monitor trainees' workload and wellbeing closely. As a result, leaders identify pressure points for the cohort as well as when individuals may be in need of extra support. They act

promptly on the insights they gain from monitoring. This protects trainees' wellbeing and reduces their workload.

Leadership

Strong standard 

The provider is highly valued in the local area. For many years, it has provided staff who support the learning of local pupils passionately. Leaders' vision and their values are consistently applied and embedded across all aspects of the provision, including within partner providers and schools. Leaders always consider the best interests of trainees. This includes the development of systems such as 'Mosaic' to support both trainee and staff workload.

Those responsible for oversight of the school-centred initial teacher training provide highly effective and well-informed support and challenge to leaders. They ensure that the Department for Education's mandatory criteria are met and that safer recruitment guidance is followed carefully.

Collaboration across local schools and partners underpins all aspects of the Gloucestershire Initial Teacher Education Partnership. All stakeholders, including mentors, professional leads, provider staff, trainees and headteachers, feel they are included and valued in the partnership. They are routinely involved in evaluating and revising the initial teacher education curriculum. The benefits of this are twofold. Firstly, it enables the partners to check that trainees are consistently well prepared to serve the needs of pupils locally. Secondly, it supports meaningful professional development for mentors and other staff, which means they can support trainees highly effectively.

Quality assurance processes are very well developed. They provide leaders with accurate insights into the partnership's effectiveness and help them prioritise what they want to improve further. Leaders act promptly to develop aspects of the curriculum in the light of feedback from trainees and other stakeholders.

Professional behaviours, personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders embed a consistently positive and caring environment for all trainees. Trainees receive very high-quality pastoral support that enables them to thrive.

Leaders systematically evaluate the pastoral support available to trainees to inform, adapt and enhance it. The response of leaders, staff and partner organisations to trainees' changing circumstances is swift and highly effective.

Trainees are certain that any incidents of bullying, harassment or discrimination would not be tolerated if it were to occur. Staff, partner organisations and trainees know how to report concerns they may have.

Leaders ensure that trainees understand the expectations of their conduct as teachers. Trainees consistently display high levels of professional behaviour and standards in all elements of the initial teacher education programme. They build their expertise through exploring scenarios which help them to acquire a deep understanding of the required standards of behaviour, including those which apply to their lives outside work.

Trainees learn how to manage a demanding workload. They put into practice what they have learned about how to protect their own wellbeing.

Next steps

Leaders and those with oversight should continue to further develop their strategic monitoring so that they can ensure that their work is having ever greater impact on trainees' learning.

What it's like to be a trainee at this provider

Current and former trainees are proud to be part of the Gloucestershire Initial Teacher Education Partnership. They appreciate the support they receive and feel very well prepared for their teaching careers. Trainees have highly positive relationships with provider and school placement staff. This enables them to share any concerns they may have with confidence.

Support for trainees' wellbeing is extensive and proactive. Early intervention when potential barriers arise enables trainees to overcome them and complete their training. For example, school placements that are close to home enable trainees who are parents to balance the demands of training and family life.

Trainees feel welcome both at the provider and in their school placements. Their views and experiences prior to training to teach are valued. Trainees know that they have much to gain, but also much to give, especially in their school placements. They are valued as part of the teaching community and educational landscape.

Leaders enable trainees in both the primary and secondary phases to experience education beyond the age range they are training to teach. For example, secondary trainees gain experience of post-16 teaching. Early years practice, including teaching reading, is a focus for all primary trainees. Trainees also benefit from exposure to settings beyond their placement schools. For example, the schools visited as part of intensive training and practice weeks are carefully chosen for the diversity they offer.

Leaders consistently seek feedback from trainees. They use the insights they gain to continuously shape and develop the ITE curriculum. For example, the curriculum now includes more focus on how to teach pupils with English as an additional language in light of trainees' views.

The ITE curriculum prepares trainees very well for their roles as teachers. This ensures that pupils taught by trainees are kept safe and can flourish.

About this inspection

- The school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) offers postgraduate and assessment-only pathways into teaching. All routes lead to qualified teacher status and the postgraduate route leads to a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE).
- The primary route PGCE is through the University of Gloucestershire. The secondary route PGCE is through the University of Bristol.
- In the secondary phase, trainees choose one of 11 subject areas. Trainees specialise in the 11 to 18 age range.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMI.

- Inspectors spoke with leaders of the two training partners, the SCITT director and the programme leads for primary and secondary. They also met with those responsible for compliance and members of the management board.
- Inspectors visited 10 schools, 4 primary and 6 secondary.
- During the inspection, inspectors also spoke with numerous staff, trainees, a lead mentor, professional leads and school mentors.
- Inspectors spoke to secondary-trained early career teachers (ECT) who had completed a course at this provider over the past two years. As the primary phase course ran for the first time in 2025, all primary-trained ECTs spoken completed their training last year.

Overall lead inspector:

Sarah Favager-Dalton, His Majesty's Inspector

Primary phase lead inspector:

Jason Edge, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Marie Thomas, His Majesty's Inspector

Lydia Pride, His Majesty's Inspector

Kelly Olive, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 2 February 2026

Number of partners and trainees

Education phase	Number of training partners / partner colleges	Number of trainees
Primary	1	12
Secondary	1	72

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other providers can learn from it.

Strong standard

The provider reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The provider is fulfilling the expected standard of training. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The provider needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of training.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright