

Leicester & Leicestershire SCITT

Address: Rushey Mead Academy, Melton Road, Leicester, LE4 7AN

Unique reference number (URN): 70283

Inspection report: 16 March 2026

1. Primary

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ● ●
Expected standard	● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

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

Strong standard ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders and staff create a culture where inclusion lies at the heart of all they do. Right from the initial stages of the recruitment process, leaders welcome trainees warmly and swiftly identify any barriers to trainees' learning and/or wellbeing. This enables trainees to feel valued and have the confidence to share their needs.

Deliberate adaptations in centre-based and school-based training ensure that barriers to trainees' learning and/or wellbeing are addressed swiftly. Leaders work with trainees closely to secure reasonable adjustments for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders collaborate sensibly with schools, so the right help is in place in both settings. This joined-up approach, combined with an open culture, means trainees can ask questions confidently and provide feedback that shapes ongoing improvement. Provision for

trainees' wellbeing, such as signposting to external professional support, shows a deep commitment to care.

Leaders' systematic promotion of diversity is a strength, with strategic recruitment processes increasing the diversity of backgrounds the trainees come from. Clear messages about inclusion run across the partnership, encouraging positive relationships and collegiate working. These actions make a demonstrable difference to the opportunities and experiences of trainees, regardless of their needs and backgrounds.

Leadership

Strong standard ●

Leaders establish partnerships that are rooted in a clear vision, shared values and a strong commitment to high-quality teacher development. The partnership board provides skilful, strategic oversight and governance. They offer constructive challenge and hold leaders stringently to account. They ensure the initial teacher education provision is compliant and meets relevant statutory duties. Leaders regularly review partnership representation to maintain diverse perspectives. The partnership's vision and values are lived out in practice and are rightly a point of celebration.

Mentors receive high-quality guidance and tailored support. They value this bespoke approach and describe training as impactful and well organised. Mentors appreciate the quality assurance work of lead mentors and the feedback they receive on their work.

Leaders run rigorous, well-managed recruitment and selection processes, ensuring that safer recruitment practices are followed. School leaders enjoy participating in interviews and praise the provider for producing well-rounded professionals. Long-standing school relationships reflect the trust leaders have built, with one school describing the provider as 'the best and most flexible' they have worked with.

Leaders are highly evaluative and have a clear focus on ensuring decisions are in the best interests of trainees. Leaders systematically reflect on the impact of the decisions they make. The apprenticeship route is at an early stage but shows a positive trajectory. Leaders have taken a strategic and informed approach, establishing effective partnerships and improved systems for monitoring progress. While the curriculum has been refined and sequencing strengthened, leaders have rightly prioritised developing and enhancing the apprenticeship pathway further.

Leaders foster a culture of mutual respect and shared responsibility. Staff and mentors feel their feedback is acted upon and feel valued within the partnership.

Professional behaviours, personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders set clear expectations for trainees' professional conduct and provide timely support when individuals struggle, including with attendance. This approach leads to rapid improvements when intervention is needed.

Trainees value the course structure, which prepares them incrementally for the realities of teaching. They receive regular insights into professional expectations. The learning, engagement and assessment system records their wider experiences, such as attending

parents' evenings, contributing to assemblies and communicating with families. Trainees speak positively about support for workload and mental health and wellbeing, and note that leaders are transparent from the outset about the demands of the profession.

Clear policies guide trainees on reporting concerns, and they trust leaders to act robustly. Strong pastoral systems reduce barriers to learning, build resilience and enable trainees to model high levels of professionalism. Leaders respond swiftly to emerging trainee needs, including strategic school placements and financial support when needed. Trainees feel well supported, and leaders balance this very well with developing trainees' independence as they transition into teaching roles.

Leaders have created a consistently caring and respectful environment. They make policies on bullying, harassment and discrimination clear and accessible. Trainees express full confidence that leaders would act rapidly and robustly on any concerns.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Primary trainees make ongoing and secure progress through the curriculum. They become reflective practitioners and identify well what they know, what they are learning and what they need to improve next. This fosters habits of openness to feedback and continuous improvement, which helps trainees to refine their teaching. Early career teachers demonstrate preparedness for their next steps.

Trainees have a clear understanding of their role in keeping pupils safe.

Trainees achieve well and feel suitably prepared to start teaching. They know how to adapt their teaching to suit different pupils' needs and have skills in managing classroom behaviour. Early career teachers agree that the programme helped them to develop confidence and to understand the realities of teaching. Bespoke support for job applications, including guidance around reasonable adjustments, helps trainees take the next step into employment.

Curriculum, teaching and training

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a primary phase curriculum that is coherent and well planned. Centre-based and school-based training are closely aligned, enabling trainees to make purposeful connections between theory and practice. The collaboration and communication between leaders and partner schools are strengths, enabling lead mentors and mentors to have a secure knowledge of what trainees have learned and will learn. Intensive training and practice are integrated well into this structure. As a result, trainees benefit from purposeful opportunities to rehearse essential elements, such as phonics and modelling, before applying them in the classroom.

Trainees benefit from subject-specific training from skilled experts. The training programme prepares trainees effectively to teach across key stages 1 and 2. However, it provides less

clarity on how learning in the early years foundation stage connects to progression into Year 1 and beyond. Although trainees value the discrete early years input and describe it as high quality, minor inconsistencies remain in how well embedded early years content is across the subjects. As a result, there is some variability in the depth of knowledge that some trainees have in this aspect of the primary curriculum.

Leaders implement robust and well-thought-out assessment processes. Trainees have a clear understanding of their strengths and areas for development, supported by effective use of professional development reviews. Mentors are knowledgeable about their role. They provide helpful feedback to trainees that is developmental, precise and linked to future learning. This results in rapid trainee progress. Information is shared well between placements, ensuring continuity of mentoring support for trainees as they move through the programme.

Leaders weave training on how to teach pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who may face other barriers to learning throughout the curriculum. Trainees benefit from revisiting this learning at key points, which prepares them well to adapt their teaching to support pupils with additional needs.

Safeguarding is prioritised in the primary curriculum and is understood well by trainees. Training covers essential statutory areas, so trainees feel well prepared to keep pupils safe. Leaders integrate local safeguarding issues skilfully into training and ensure experts deliver key sessions. Induction processes ensure that trainees arrive in schools with appropriate awareness of statutory duties, which is then reinforced throughout placements.

Next steps

Leaders should further refine their training and support for teacher degree apprentices to ensure that the programme consistently supports their learning of the initial teacher education (ITE) curriculum.

Leaders should ensure that the primary ITE curriculum enables trainees to gain a strong understanding of the areas for learning and development in the early years.

2. Secondary

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

 Compliance, including safeguarding: standards met

Strong standard

AchievementStrong standard

Trainees are knowledgeable about the theory and practice of teaching. They expertly apply their knowledge of research in the classroom. They are enabled to reflect on all aspects of their learning, using the ‘what, so what, what now’ methodology. This further supports their development as highly reflective practitioners. Trainees are clear about classroom priorities, high expectations, managing behaviour and meeting differing learner needs. They are extremely well prepared to teach their subject in the secondary phase.

Leaders meticulously craft trainees' assessments and developmental next steps. Consequently, trainees are absolutely clear about how well they are progressing. They are supported in this by expert mentors and subject leads. Trainees are extremely well prepared for the wider duties and responsibilities of teaching. As a result, nearly all trainees complete the programme successfully, and most are quickly snapped up by partner schools and secure a teaching post.

Curriculum, teaching and trainingStrong standard

The curriculum is ambitious and expertly constructed. All elements of the taught programme are fully integrated and make complete sense to trainees. Trainees are offered a well-sequenced learning experience that offers a careful balance of professional learning, subject knowledge, practice and reflection, which is consistently well taught and supported by effective mentoring. The research-informed curriculum enables trainees to develop a secure understanding of the principles that underpin teachers’ choices in their subject and phase. Intensive training and practice opportunities are deliberately sequenced and expertly bridge theory and practice, helping trainees understand both the ‘why’ and the ‘what’ of effective

teaching. As a result, trainees develop strong analytical skills, critically evaluate teaching approaches and adopt reflective, evidence-based practices.

Meticulous planning by leaders ensures that school placements provide trainees with a thorough understanding of different school contexts and their demands. Learning about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those with additional vulnerabilities is deliberately woven throughout the training. Curriculum enhancements extend this further, providing trainees with valuable insight into a range of specialist settings. Expert support from mentors and subject leads gives trainees meaningful opportunities to identify pupils' needs and adapt learning accordingly.

Leaders plan carefully to ensure that the initial teacher education curriculum supports trainees to become confident teachers who understand the role well. Leaders ensure that trainees participate in meaningful opportunities to engage in wider school life. Trainees benefit from regular and thorough safeguarding training to ensure they have the knowledge they need to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

Trainees are full of praise for the consistently high-quality support and care their mentors and subject leads provide. They value the openness of these expert colleagues, which helps them feel safe as they develop their classroom practice. Lead mentors play a critical role and ensure the high standard and coherence of mentoring over time. Weekly briefings ensure that mentors are well informed so that the curriculum is seamlessly implemented in the classroom.

Leaders ensure that assessment processes are clear and robust. Mentors give precise feedback that leads trainees to clear and appropriate next steps. This enables trainees to reflect comprehensively on all aspects of their learning, using the 'what, so what, what now' strategy. Trainees quickly become highly evaluative as a result and are ambitious to continually improve and be the best teachers that they can be.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders are extremely proud to serve a highly socially and culturally diverse community. They are absolutely committed to ensuring that inspiring teachers educate pupils locally, making a real difference to their lives. They make purposeful decisions to attract the community to train, to teach and to succeed in the role. They have expanded the range of training pathways, including part-time options, to attract trainees who may wish to take a more flexible approach to training, including those with families.

Leaders foster an open and accepting culture in which trainees feel able to raise issues or concerns. They have carefully designed a range of opportunities for trainees to disclose any barriers, beginning at the start of the course and continuing throughout the year. Their approach to inclusion is thoughtful and grounded in an accurate understanding of trainees' individual circumstances. Leaders work closely with school partners, for example to support trainees with special educational needs and/or disabilities, ensuring that reasonable adjustments are in place, are regularly reviewed, and are having the intended positive impact. Additionally, specialist support or information is signposted. Trainees said they feel

genuinely valued and that their health, welfare and sense of self-worth are taken extremely seriously.

Leadership

Strong standard 

Leaders have been successful in enacting their plans for the initial teacher education (ITE) provision. They have expanded one secondary-phase programme to a two-phase teacher-training partnership that is coherent and highly effective. Leaders ensure that their coherent vision and values are communicated across the partnership with clarity. These are well understood and valued by all stakeholders. Leaders prioritise trainees' best interests and take decisive action to ensure the programme meets their individual needs and prepares them well to teach.

Leaders pay due regard to Department for Education compliance and guidance. They work with a range of experts, including those from the University of Leicester, to ensure that the required trainee recruitment checks are robust.

Leaders are extremely evaluative. They use high-quality information, including the views of partners, trainees and external experts, to review the quality and the impact of the provision. They have clarity about their next steps and have absolute commitment from partners and stakeholders, who hold the provider in extremely high regard.

Governance of the ITE provision is highly effective. Members of the partnership board are knowledgeable and carry out their roles with high levels of rigour. They provide well-informed challenge and maintain sharp oversight of the quality of provision, including holding leaders to account to ensure statutory duties are met.

Staff, including mentors, are well trained and supported. Mentor training is of a high quality and appropriately pitched. Mentors consider communication from leaders as a real strength. This includes the weekly communications to facilitate their support for trainees.

Staff do not fear harassment, bullying or discrimination. They know that there is high-quality support available if it is ever needed. They said that they feel extremely proud to work for the provider.

Professional behaviours, personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Trainees are absolutely clear about the professional behaviours that are expected of them. They receive and respond very well to graduated support to take on the wider roles demanded of a teacher, including involvement in tutor periods, trips and events. They understand that they are role models in the community and act accordingly.

Pastoral support is a significant strength of the programme. Leaders are determined to adapt provision to meet needs. Trainees say support for their mental health and well-being is readily available. Staff monitor trainees' workload closely. Bespoke support plans are put in place for those who need them; these are reviewed frequently, have clear impact and are highly valued. Leaders maintain meticulous oversight of attendance, using accurate information to help trainees establish the strong routines and habits needed in readiness for a career in teaching.

Trainees do not fear bullying, harassment or discrimination; they feel part of a supportive community at the provider and are made to feel extremely welcome in schools. They are confident that any form of harassment would not be tolerated and that the open-door culture gives them the assurance to speak up and call out any concerns. They said they feel part of an extremely supportive community.

Next steps

Leaders and those with oversight of the initial teacher education provision should continue their effective work with key partner organisations to develop the flexible training approaches and pathways needed to have a transformational impact on trainees' life chances and those that they teach.

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

Trainees are enthusiastic, aspirational and positive advocates for the courses they study. They achieve well because the programmes are ambitious, research informed and carefully structured. Trainees typically follow a clear and purposeful pathway, gaining core knowledge early before applying, practising and revisiting it in school settings. Leaders are refining and enhancing the primary phase teacher degree apprenticeship programme to ensure this is of the same high standard as the other training pathways.

Trainees are prepared well for the practical realities of the classroom, including managing behaviour and adapting teaching for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Intensive training and practice help them rehearse strategies that they later use confidently on placement.

Safeguarding is threaded throughout the curriculum and revisited often, ensuring trainees understand their responsibilities in keeping the pupils they teach safe and able to flourish.

Trainees express high levels of satisfaction with the initial teacher education curriculum. Almost without exception, trainees would recommend the course. They describe it as well organised, logical and supportive of their development. The diversity of the trainees is rightly celebrated. Trainees with identified SEND or other barriers to learning succeed because leaders act quickly to identify needs, complete responsive assessments and put effective adjustments and plans in place.

A real sense of belonging develops across each cohort. Trainees consistently praise the support they receive in taught sessions and on placement, noting that leaders create a culture of openness and safety. They feel able to ask for help and trust that they will be listened to. This culture benefits trainees facing additional challenges, who report feeling understood and valued.

Mentoring is an aspect of the programme to celebrate. Mentors use the provider's effective training and resources to shape their support and set precise, actionable targets. Trainees value feedback and reflection opportunities, framed through the 'what, so what, what now'

approach, which helps them become reflective practitioners with an accurate understanding of their progress.

About this inspection

Trainees in the primary and secondary phases are undertaking a postgraduate route. The postgraduate route is offered in partnership with one training partner.

There are 4 pathways on the postgraduate certificate in education primary route: primary 3-7, primary 5-11, primary with mathematics and primary with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are 15 apprentices studying for the teacher degree apprenticeship or the postgraduate teacher apprenticeship in the primary phase.

There has been significant change since the last inspection. Two providers have merged under the legal entity of the Mead Educational Trust. The provider now offers training in both the primary and secondary phases. New leadership is in place, including the director and deputy director of the school-centred initial teacher training. The governance, in the form of the partnership board, has been established. An assessment committee has been formed. New staff have been appointed, including an additional lead professional mentor.

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 HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the director of The Mead Institute of Professional Learning, the director and the deputy director of the provider and the professional lead mentors. They met with representatives of the partnership board and the assessment committee.

Overall lead inspector:

Jayne Ashman, His Majesty's Inspector

Primary phase lead inspector:

Kirsty Norbury, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Mel Ford, His Majesty's Inspector

Hazel Henson, His Majesty's Inspector

Vic Wilkinson, His Majesty's Inspector

John Spragg, 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 16 March 2026

Number of partners and trainees

Education phase	Number of training partners / partner colleges	Number of trainees
Primary	1	53
Secondary	1	48

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.

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