

University of East London

School of Education and Communities, University of East London, Stratford Campus, Water Lane E15 4LZ

Inspection dates

22 to 25 April 2024

Inspection judgements

	Primary age-phase	Secondary age-phase	Further education age-phase
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	Good	Outstanding
The quality of education and training	Outstanding	Good	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding	Good	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good	Good	Good

What is it like to be a trainee at this ITE provider?

Trainees are very well prepared for a career in teaching and many secure jobs in partner schools. They are attracted to study at an 'anchor' institution in East London. Trainees come from diverse backgrounds, with many from the surrounding area. They are keen to work in their local community, sharing the university's ambition of providing excellent education to pupils in East London and beyond.

Trainees are extremely well supported by university staff. When recruiting trainees, the university looks for applicants' potential as excellent future teachers. Any additional needs that trainees may have are identified swiftly and appropriate support plans are implemented. The university has built exceptional links with their partner schools. As a result, mentors are knowledgeable about the ITE curriculum, and build on what trainees learn at the university. Strong communication helps to promote trainees' success.

The way in which the university has integrated its curriculum at the centre and on placements, particularly in the primary and further education and skills (FES) phases, is impressive. Trainees are taught in depth about their subject and phase at the university, including early reading and phonics in the primary phase. Mentoring expands on this work in a highly constructive manner, developing trainees' knowledge and skills in the classroom. The ITE curriculum is particularly well developed to prepare trainees to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those with English as an additional language (EAL).

Information about this ITE provider

- The provider currently has 204 primary trainees, 163 secondary trainees and 11 FES trainees.
- The primary phase has trainees on the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) route, the undergraduate, Bachelor of Arts (Hons) with qualified teacher status route, the School Direct (salaried) route and the apprenticeship route. The secondary phase has trainees on the PGCE route, the School Direct (salaried) route and the apprenticeship route. The FES phase has trainees on the PGCE route only.
- The provider offers the assessment-only route to candidates in the primary and secondary phases. Thirty-three candidates have completed this route during this academic year and 55 candidates are currently going through the assessment process.
- The provider has 80 partner schools in the primary phase, 142 partner schools in the secondary phase and fifteen partner colleges in the FES phase. At the time of the inspection, primary-phase trainees were placed in 52 partner schools, secondary-phase trainees were placed in 66 partner schools and FES-phase trainees were placed in five partner colleges. The majority of schools are graded as good or outstanding by Ofsted and there are a small number graded as requires improvement.
- There are 11 level 6 teacher apprentices in the primary and secondary phases combined. These apprentices are studying the standard: Educating young people to achieve the highest possible standards.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by 11 of His Majesty's Inspectors and one Ofsted Inspector.
- Inspectors met with partnership leaders, including the dean of the school of education and communities, the head of department for teacher education, the responsible officer and the leaders of the primary, secondary and FES phases. Inspectors also met the postgraduate teacher apprentice and school direct leader as well as the provost and representatives from the partnership advisory board.
- Inspectors held meetings with trainees, school-based mentors, university tutors, early career teachers and teacher apprentices.
- Inspectors spoke to 32 primary-phase trainees across the undergraduate, PGCE, School Direct (salaried) and apprenticeship routes. Inspectors spoke to 35 secondary-phase trainees across the PGCE, School Direct (salaried) and apprenticeship routes. Inspectors spoke to nine trainees in the FES phase. Inspectors also spoke to 15 early career teachers across the three phases. Some of these discussions took place remotely.
- In the primary phase, focused reviews were carried out in early reading, mathematics, art, history, music, physical education and science.

- In the secondary phase, inspectors carried out focused reviews in English, mathematics, geography, religious education, music, design & technology, science and modern foreign languages.
- In the FES phase, evidence was gathered from trainees specialising in English, mathematics, media, visual arts, sociology, politics, fashion, information technology and computing.
- Inspectors visited 13 primary-placement settings, 17 secondary-placement settings and four FES-placement settings.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to the trainee and staff surveys.

Primary phase report

What works well in the primary phase and what needs to be done better?

Across all routes, trainees are exceptionally well prepared to begin their teaching career. The quality of training is excellent and delivered by highly knowledgeable, experienced experts. The university carefully selects partner schools and ensures that they engage fully with the curriculum. Partners work in close collaboration to ensure that trainees get the best possible advice and guidance to support them on their journey to becoming a teacher.

The curriculum is highly ambitious, far exceeding the requirements of the core content framework (CCF). The professional knowledge trainees need to know is skilfully aligned with subject-specific content. Information is sequenced logically to support trainees to build their understanding cumulatively over the course of their chosen route into primary teaching. Trainees deepen and enhance their knowledge in an area of their choice. This helps develop confidence and expertise to support future career aspirations. The curriculum is informed by discerningly pertinent, research-informed theories about how pupils learn.

The curriculum has a distinctive focus on inclusion. The importance of respecting everyone's rights and valuing diversity are firmly embedded. Trainees are taught to use assessment to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and modify approaches to address any misconceptions. Trainees learn about the necessity to make suitable adaptations for pupils who may need it. This includes pupils with SEND or English as an additional language. Provision for pupils with SEND is meaningfully and expertly integrated into all aspects of the curriculum. The necessity to create the right environment for learning and the importance of safeguarding all pupils' welfare are made clear.

On all routes, the teaching of reading is given high priority. Trainees are expected to engage with a wide range of children's literature. This is to motivate trainees' enthusiasm for reading and foster a love of reading with pupils. Trainees receive a strong foundation in the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics. This training is revisited deliberately during the course, including as part of the 'festival of phonics' event organised by the university. This focused, in-depth training means trainees are very well prepared for teaching early reading, including while at their school placements.

Leaders have an unwavering ambition for excellence. They regularly collaborate and consult with schools and trainees, checking, reviewing and refining the curriculum. The training and support for school-based mentoring is detailed and focused. As a result, school-based colleagues understand fully the skills and knowledge that trainees need to learn and develop while on placement. Leaders keep a close watch on the quality of mentoring. For example, leaders monitor weekly target setting to ensure the ongoing assessment of trainees is effective. Leaders also use assessment information well to make adjustments to the delivery of the curriculum or to provide tailored, sensitive support for trainees who need it.

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

The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

Do apprenticeships in the ITE provider's primary phase satisfy the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision?

The provider meets the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision in the primary phase.

Apprentices in the primary phase are assessed at the start and throughout the programme. Apprentices receive detailed feedback and support consistent with the high quality that is provided through the other routes into primary teaching. As a result, apprentices acquire significant new knowledge and develop professional behaviours that enable them to complete their training successfully.

The primary curriculum supports apprentices to build strong knowledge and skills to begin their teaching career. The curriculum introduces trainees to pertinent, up-to-date educational research and subject knowledge to enable them to develop their practice. Training across the primary route is delivered by highly knowledgeable subject experts. Apprentices receive training away from the workplace to develop into confident teachers. This training mirrors the PGCE programme, but it is tailored to meet the specific needs of the apprentices.

Secondary phase report

What works well in the secondary phase and what needs to be done better?

In the secondary phase, the core curriculum is ambitious and carefully sequenced. It provides trainees with the knowledge and skills to become effective teachers. For example, trainees learn to critique different theories of learning. Typically, through the subject curriculum, trainees are introduced to the scope and richness of the knowledge that pupils should encounter in their subject. However, on occasions, this high ambition is not realised as consistently in the curriculum thinking of a small number of secondary subjects. In these cases, trainees are not as well prepared for their first school placement on the programme as they might be. They have not had sufficiently rich opportunities to apply generic pedagogical principles to their subject-specific learning. However, trainees' overall curriculum experience is strong, and it prepares them sufficiently well for teaching their subject.

The phase specificity of the curriculum is clear. There is an emphasis on trainees developing subject knowledge even before they begin the course. Through the ITE curriculum, trainees consider the implications of teaching older pupils. They learn to prepare pupils not only for examinations but also the importance of delivering a broad and balanced curriculum which prepares pupils for life. The CCF is woven into all aspects of the curriculum.

Trainees are particularly well prepared to teach pupils with EAL and SEND. For example, at the university's 'festival of inclusion', trainees learn how pupils are identified as EAL. They begin to consider strategies to support these pupils to learn well. Trainees meet with the special needs coordinator on arrival at their first school placement to understand more about pupils' needs and these are assessed and planned for. Over time, they try out different methods of adapting their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils.

The university has ensured that the centre-based curriculum is purposefully aligned with the work of schools. Phase leads provide useful guidance to professional coordinating mentors, which they consider when planning their own school-based training. Leaders have developed a suite of mentor training and a mentor programme with clear weekly foci. They are piloting helpful video 'shorts', which mentors and trainees access each week as a focus for their discussion and target setting. These highlight recent and pertinent research.

Mentors value the documentation which supports their ongoing assessment of trainees. On occasion, the weekly targets that mentoring provides lack precision. They are too broad and therefore unhelpful to trainees in refining their practise. In some subjects, university subject tutoring works alongside mentoring to refine target setting as part of the quality assurance process. This approach is not consistently in place or effective in all subjects. Trainees are also assessed through the 'professional passport' and at three review points during the year. Leaders use the intelligence gained at review points to adjust the

curriculum. They recognised, for example, that several trainees needed support in how to use additional adults in the classroom.

Leaders of the secondary phase have a clear vision of excellence. Through their quality assurance processes, they have identified that there is still work to do to develop the curriculum thinking in a small number of subject areas.

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

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, there are aspects of the curriculum which do not provide a rigorous introduction to important educational research, practices and debates. Sometimes, trainees do not get sufficiently comprehensive opportunities to apply and rehearse their core knowledge in a subject-specific context. While trainees are overall well prepared to teach their subject, this does affect their ability to recall important learning. Leaders should ensure that the subject curriculum is more closely aligned with the core studies programme in each subject.
- Leaders have not ensured that mentoring routinely leads to effective target setting for trainees. Sometimes, targets are too broad and, consequently, are not supporting trainees to apply their knowledge of the curriculum as effectively as they could to their classroom practice. Leaders should ensure that the processes and procedures that they have introduced are embedded consistently and securely to ensure that trainees receive a consistently high-quality experience of mentoring.

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

The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

Do apprenticeships in the ITE provider's secondary phase satisfy the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision?

The provider meets the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision in the secondary phase.

From the initial assessment point, leaders have ensured that the programme for apprentices is aligned with that of trainees on other routes in their subject. Subject tutors draw on apprentices' prior knowledge and experiences in school. Apprentices benefit from supportive school-based mentoring, which enables them to acquire new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Weekly targets enable them to become confident practitioners.

The university works with apprentices to organise a second school placement. This ensures that apprentices are well prepared for the end-point assessment and their future careers in

teaching. Apprentices are informally assessed through weekly mentoring and more formally at three review points during the year. Leaders work closely with employing schools to ensure that they are aware of the requirement to release apprentices for off-the-job training. As a result, apprentices have the time they need to study and to manage their workload effectively.

Further education and skills phase report

What works well in the further education and skills phase and what needs to be done better?

Leaders have made excellent use of their relationships with partner colleges to create a highly ambitious curriculum. Centre-based input and guidance aligns very closely with the teaching trainees do on placements. Trainees are highly motivated. This is because leaders have made sure that every part of the training is logically designed and taught. As a result, trainees are not only committed to their studies, but also build their pedagogical knowledge and teaching practice across three modules over the academic year. Tutors expertly build and refine trainees' knowledge, revisiting topics initially taught as trainees gain more teaching experience. Tutors skilfully teach lessons by modelling pedagogical techniques so that trainees can quickly and purposefully apply what they have learned to their placements.

Tutors are very knowledgeable about teaching in the further education phase. They use their extensive experience to teach a wide range of current, credible teaching theories about how best to foster high-quality learning. Tutors contextualise theoretical content exceptionally well, using examples from their own teaching experience. This helps trainees to develop a thorough understanding of how educational theories apply to classroom practice.

Tutors and mentors help trainees develop a detailed understanding of SEND and the relevant teaching strategies specific to those needs. Tutors provide trainees with ample opportunities to work with diverse groups of students, including those with SEND and EAL in their placements. As part of their course, trainees carry out detailed research and practical work to develop and evaluate strategies which will enable the students with SEND to be successful in their studies. As a result, trainees are very well prepared to teach a diverse range of students within the FES sector.

Tutors provide trainees with highly constructive and developmental feedback on their work and teaching practice. Tutors' feedback is comprehensive and given unambiguously, with mistakes in trainees' work identified and corrected sensitively. This helps trainees to improve their work to a high standard, including making sure that their teaching practice is underpinned by relevant educational theories.

Tutors and mentoring give excellent support to trainees to help them to become confident and successful teachers. For example, mentoring provides trainees with helpful subject-specific guidance on how to teach their subject. Tutors and mentors meet frequently to monitor trainees' progress and set clear targets to help them improve.

Through close collaboration and shared high expectations, university leaders, tutors and mentoring help to ensure that trainees are fully prepared to teach the range of students they may encounter in the FES sector.

Systems to review and refine the breadth and depth of trainees' experiences are well established. Tutors provide trainees with very useful additional placements so that they can practice and refine their teaching skills with different age groups and course levels. As a result of the outstanding quality of training, including the input from tutors and mentoring, trainees feel very well prepared for teaching in this phase. Most gain employment locally on completion of their course.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70077
Inspection number	10327505

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	Higher education institution
Phases provided	Primary Secondary FES
Dates of previous inspection	3 to 6 December 2012

Inspection team

Mark Smith, Overall lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Andrea Bedeau, Phase lead inspector primary	His Majesty's Inspector
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Steve Lambert, Phase lead inspector FES	His Majesty's Inspector
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Sacha Husnu-Beresford	His Majesty's Inspector
Samantha Ingram	His Majesty's Inspector
Rebekah Iiyambo	Ofsted Inspector
Saher Nijabat	His Majesty's Inspector
Sophie Healey-Welch	His Majesty's Inspector
Julie Wright	His Majesty's Inspector

Annex: Placement settings, schools and colleges

Inspectors visited the following schools and colleges as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phases
Lyon Park Primary School	101506	Primary
Devonshire Hill Nursery and Primary School	102087	Primary
Portway Primary School	142632	Primary
Avenue Primary School	102710	Primary
Cypress Hill Primary School	144626	Primary
Greenacres Primary School and Language Impairment Unit	145210	Primary
Park Hill Infants' School	133938	Primary
Cranbrook Primary School	131625	Primary
Shaftesbury Primary School	145627	Primary
West Ham Church Primary School	102765	Primary
Royal Wharf Primary School	143668	Primary
Fullwood Primary School	102833	Primary
Ickburgh School	100312	Primary
Forest Gate Community School	143274	Secondary
Stratford School Academy	136978	Secondary
Harris Academy Falconwood	135677	Secondary
Harris Academy Beckenham	137121	Secondary
Beal High School	140575	Secondary
Valentine's High School	102857	Secondary
Highlands School	132256	Secondary
Buxton School	103080	Secondary
Walthamstow Academy	132727	Secondary
Walthamstow School for Girls	103103	Secondary
Highams Park School	137558	Secondary
Woodbridge High School	102854	Secondary
Seven Kings High School	102856	Secondary
Kingsford Community School	132058	Secondary
Sarah Bonnell School	142646	Secondary
Jo Richardson Community School	133561	Secondary
Lister Community School	102778	Secondary
Newham FE College	130451	FES
UEL Docklands	133814	FES
Southwark College	130552	FES
Leyton Sixth Form College	130457	FES

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