

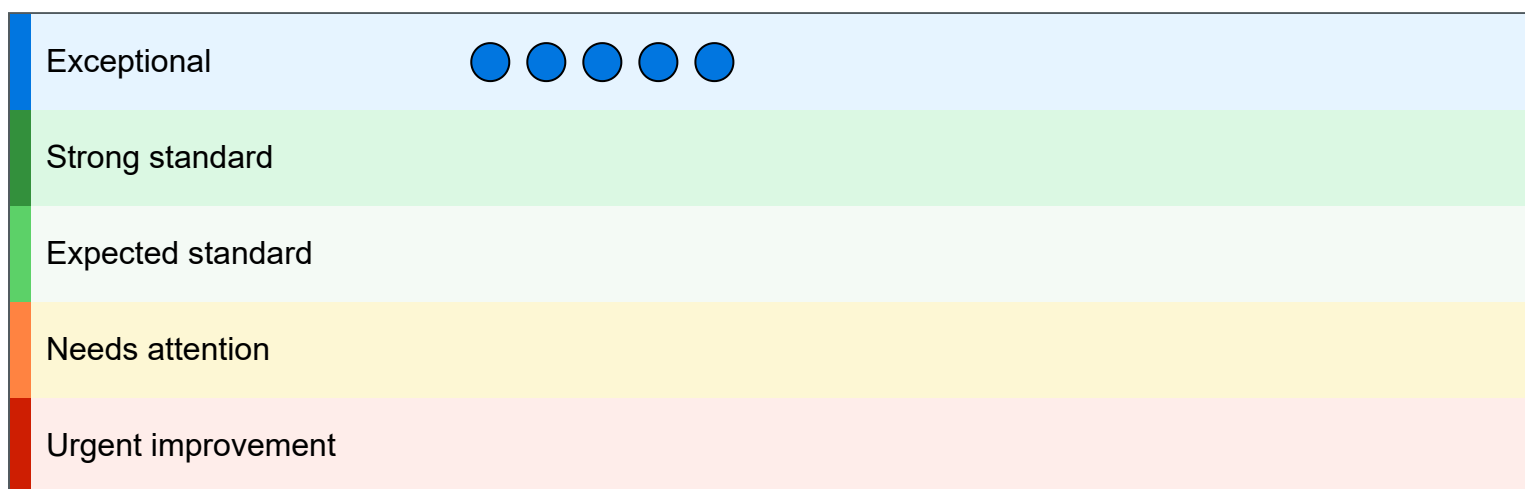
OTT SCITT

Address: c/o The Cherwell School, Marston Ferry Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX2 7EE

Unique reference number (URN): 70327

Inspection report: 2 March 2026

1. Primary



✔ Compliance, including safeguarding: standards met

Exceptional ●

Achievement

Exceptional ●

Trainees complete the programme with very high levels of success and are extremely well prepared for teaching in the primary phase. They accrue impressive knowledge and skills as a result of their training. Trainees are expertly equipped to translate this training into their own practice. This is especially the case in establishing a highly effective culture in the classroom. Trainees deftly apply their professional knowledge to establish consistent routines and expectations, demonstrating they know how to support pupils to develop positive behaviour for learning. The skills trainees demonstrate in supporting pupils and learners with barriers to learning is remarkable.

Trainees' ongoing discussions and reflections with mentors allow them to secure an astute understanding of their progress from novice teacher towards ample readiness for teaching. As they progress, trainees develop a deep awareness of their personal and professional

development. Their capacity for ongoing reflection is continually developed, nurturing a finely tuned skillset for critiquing the impact of their practice in the next stage of employment.

Trainees are empowered to face the realities of teaching assuredly. For example, they are taught how to set personal boundaries to protect their wellbeing. Trainees also master the communication skills they will need to have discussions about their individual needs with employers.

Curriculum, teaching and training

Exceptional 

Leaders inspire trainees through their vision to bring about excellent teaching, which changes pupils' lives for the better. The initial teacher education curriculum for all primary routes is meticulously designed and exceeds the expectations of the Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework. High-quality training sessions focus purposefully on evidence-based pedagogy and how pupils learn. Specific programme sessions are based on pertinent educational research and skilfully delivered by leaders who are experts in their phases and curriculum areas. Intensive training and practice themes mirror the provider's 'principles of teaching effective lessons', which are seamlessly integrated throughout the curriculum.

The curriculum is masterfully designed to ensure that trainees revisit core principles frequently, deepening and enriching their understanding of excellent teaching. The curriculum content is precisely relevant to each stage in trainees' development. Each component of the programme is planned with precision so that trainees apply what they have learned through purposefully set school-based targets. The use of meaningful and ongoing reflections and logs of learning helps trainees to understand how tightly matched their classroom practice is to what they have learned through their training.

Trainees benefit from training which is precise and purposeful. They are supported particularly well to recognise the most important elements of learning which enable pupils to develop strong foundations in reading, writing and mathematics. The programmes give trainees a rich and exacting grounding in the teaching of reading. The way in which trainees instil a love of reading in the pupils they teach is a strength of the provision. Leaders have a clear focus on pupils' oracy. They have created a coherent curriculum that ensures trainees quickly become very skilful in teaching systematic synthetic phonics and promoting oracy in the classroom.

Trainees benefit from school placements that are precisely matched to their individual needs and in complete alignment with their centre-based training. Leaders ensure that mentoring is consistently first rate. Mentors have an excellent understanding of the curriculum. They understand and carry out their roles in a way that is fully aligned to the provider's values and systems.

Trainees receive precise, accurate and very well timed feedback throughout the programme. This helps them to build solid teaching skills and their identities as teachers. Leaders monitor trainees' progress in meticulous detail. Staff pre-empt anything that may act as a barrier to trainees' learning or wellbeing, adapting the programme so that trainees can continue to access their learning successfully. Mentors tailor trainees' experiences and ensure that impactful reasonable adjustments are made where needed.

Through their behaviours, curriculum design and the systems they create, leaders explicitly model how to establish an inclusive climate in which everybody feels welcome and thrives. Trainees experience this central thread of inclusive culture and are trained in how to establish it in their own classrooms through subject-specific adaptive teaching. Trainees learn that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They regularly discuss pertinent safeguarding scenarios, building a highly contextual understanding of the risks pupils face.

Inclusion

Exceptional ●

Leaders ensure that inclusion is central to everything that they, and those across the partnership, do. The precision of their oversight ensures that the individualised support for trainees is unwavering. Leaders have designed the programme so that any trainees with barriers to learning can blossom, both during the programme and on entry to the teaching profession.

Right from their first communication with the provider, trainees are made to feel immensely valued. Through thoughtfully planned recruitment and induction processes, leaders deliberately create a caring and mutually supportive culture. Trainees feel safe to be themselves, share any barriers, and confidently seek help. Leaders are knowledgeable about a range of external sources of support and guide trainees sensitively to find specialist advice if it is needed.

Leaders put trainees at the centre of their work. Programme processes and structures are designed around trainees' needs. All programme staff, including mentors, contribute to the meticulous tracking of every aspect of trainees' progress from their individual starting points. The provider tailors every element of the programme to deliberately enable trainees to succeed. Leaders identify any support that trainees might need and make highly effective adaptations, such as individually matched school placements and advanced provision of curriculum materials and training. Trainees with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those facing any other barriers to their learning or wellbeing, thrive and achieve remarkably highly as a direct result.

Leadership

Exceptional ●

Leaders are highly successful in providing schools in the partnership and beyond, regardless of their barriers to recruitment, with the next generation of excellent teachers. Leaders' strong moral purpose and commitment to inclusion runs throughout all elements of their highly ambitious programmes. Leaders have a precise and assured understanding of their provision's strengths. They have a steadfast ambition to continually enhance it in trainees' best interests. The ongoing cycle of meticulous quality assurance ensures that staff's, partners', trainees' and mentors' views are regularly heard, and woven judiciously into any improvements.

Leaders and those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their statutory duties extremely effectively and ensure that the partnership is compliant with DfE guidance. They are knowledgeable about their safeguarding duties, and work diligently to enact them, including those for safer recruitment.

Staff and mentors receive very high-quality professional learning. Leaders actively promote staff wellbeing and support them particularly well. Leaders are highly considerate of staff workload. They implement purposeful systems to streamline tasks for staff and to reduce unnecessary burden. The culture of equity, compassion and trust created by leaders enables an agile and responsive approach to any changes that are needed. Positive relationships between the provider and partner schools result in excellent collaboration, where both partner schools and trainees benefit to remarkably high levels.

Leaders do not hesitate to contribute their expertise for the benefit of the wider sector. Through their strong moral purpose, leaders support other providers and make significant contributions to the wider system. Their work on development of national policy and undertaking pertinent research extends their positive influence on the sector even more widely.

Professional behaviours, personal development and wellbeing

Exceptional 

Leaders exemplify and model their high standards for professional behaviour through their collaborative working and mutually respectful relationships. Trainees are awarded the title of 'associate teachers', reflecting the high esteem in which they are held by leaders. Leaders do not tolerate any form of bullying or prejudiced behaviour. They address any incidents immediately, to uphold their high expectations of professional standards.

The professional behaviours for teaching feature systematically throughout the curriculum. Trainees learn how to apply these standards throughout their practice to exemplary levels. They develop agency and self-confidence, with mentors expertly supporting trainees to conduct themselves well in the professional teaching environment. Trainees learn how to look after themselves by recognising their professional boundaries and the things that can impact negatively on their workload. Trainees learn how to manage their time methodically and how to be kind to themselves.

Leaders have implemented well-designed and comprehensive pastoral systems. As a result, trainees access a wide range of highly impactful wellbeing services to fully support them on their programme. Trainees know the importance of attendance and active participation in training and school placement work. Leaders track trainees' attendance closely. Any trainees with barriers to attendance are supported especially well. All trainees develop high levels of professional resilience, helping them flourish on their programmes and enter the teaching profession at an impressive level.

2. Secondary

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

✔ Compliance, including safeguarding: standards met

Exceptional ●

Achievement

Exceptional ●

Trainees develop an impressive range of strategies to adapt their practice for the different situations they face in school, both in and out of the classroom. They become highly skilled in behaviour management, teaching pupils and learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their role in safeguarding. Trainees gain the professional knowledge that they need to be fully prepared for their life in school, their next stage of training and to manage the challenges of the profession.

Trainees quickly become confident in both evidence-based pedagogical approaches and subject-specific knowledge. They apply their insights with high levels of mastery to establish a productive culture of learning and high expectations in their classrooms. As a result, trainees' increasing proficiency in practice is particularly impressive and they achieve highly.

Trainees are highly motivated to be the best teachers they can be and recognise very well the importance of continual development. They frequently and meticulously reflect on their practice and link this coherently to their progress over time. As a result, trainees know exactly what they do well and what they need to do to get even better. This is borne out in the way that they take rapid and highly effective steps to address any priorities in their next stage of training.

Curriculum, teaching and training

Exceptional ●

The whole initial teacher education curriculum is highly ambitious and meticulously designed. Exacting identification of curriculum content maps the stages of a trainees' progression through early, middle and late phases, exemplifying leaders' astute understanding of a trainee teacher's development journey. There is precise integration between the school, intensive training and practice, and centre-based components of their

curriculum. Leaders ensure that these link seamlessly into one another, which results in trainees quickly developing highly effective knowledge and skills.

Trainees are expertly supported to teach their specialist subject, as well as developing broader pedagogy and professional practices to an exemplary level. Leaders give very careful thought to extending trainees' knowledge of different educational phases, providing an assured understanding of pupils' experiences prior to and on departing from the phase they teach. Throughout this comprehensive curriculum, high-quality research underpins all components, including subject-specific research. Trainees are taught to engage critically with this research, know exactly when to apply it to their own learning, and use it insightfully to inform their understanding and practice.

Leaders, staff and mentors support trainees to develop an especially nuanced understanding of how to teach pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The curriculum is designed to ensure that they become highly secure in understanding the nature of needs, and how their lessons need to be adapted to ensure that all pupils are supported to thrive in their classrooms. This includes, for example, helping trainees to develop a perceptive understanding of the balance between the identification of needs alongside the potential challenge of labels, when considering pupils' additional barriers to learning. This supports them to develop increasingly refined practice and understanding in this area.

Trainees benefit from consistently high-quality feedback from mentors and tutors throughout their programme. Mentors' and teacher educators' in-depth knowledge of the curriculum is pivotal to the way this high-quality support is sustained over time. Targets are precise in identifying the areas of practice they should continue to refine, and co-constructed to ensure that trainees' ability to reflect is maintained and honed. There is careful oversight of this progression from provider leaders, who identify where any additional support might be needed and put it in place rapidly and with impact.

Trainees learn about how to keep pupils safe through both central training and placement-specific training. They are acutely aware of the signs to look out for that might indicate a pupil is at risk.

Inclusion

Exceptional ●

From the moment they apply, trainees feel welcomed by the provider and are extremely well supported. Trainees become well known very quickly, by both central provider staff and those within their hubs and schools, ensuring that they feel safe to raise any worries or concerns.

Systems to identify any barriers that trainees may face are highly effective and consistently impactful. Where trainees may have greater barriers to their learning, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the provider is unfailing in its attention to providing reasonable adjustments and reducing barriers. As a result, trainees who need extra support receive precisely what they need to enable them to thrive and develop the intended skills and knowledge. This is a significant strength of the provision.

Trainees have absolute clarity about where they can access support when the need arises, both internally and externally. Any worries or concerns are addressed very quickly. Leaders

are adept at anticipating where support might be needed, and proactively put this in place for all trainees. For example, staff work diligently to enable trainees to be able to advocate for themselves in terms of their entitlements in employment. This meticulous support empowers trainees, builds their confidence and builds a culture in which trainees recognise how deeply valued they are by the provider.

Leadership

Exceptional ●

Leaders have a precise shared vision for their provision. Ensuring that as many pupils as possible benefit from highly effective teaching exudes from every part of the programme. Leaders and staff also share a clear moral purpose to train as diverse a group of teachers as they can, to provide pupils of all backgrounds with a relatable and inspirational education. Leaders strive to continually improve their already excellent teacher education practice. Meticulous systems of oversight mean that leaders are forensic in checking that all the actions they take have the high levels of impact they demand. They seek regular feedback from staff and trainees and quickly act where even the most modest enhancements can be made.

Careful mapping and precise training equip the provider with granular clarity about the quality and impact of all its systems and processes. This ensures that everyone across their partnership shares the same high aims, resulting in extremely high standards across all of the provider's hub locations. Leaders, including those with oversight of the provision, are diligent in checking that all compliance and mandatory criteria are in place for secondary trainees, as well as robust safeguarding and safer recruitment practices.

Professional learning for staff is continually prioritised as part of this pursuit of excellence. Leaders create a supportive environment where staff stay and feel valued because of this culture. Staff trust their 'deeply thoughtful and empathetic leaders', and they know that bullying and harassment is never tolerated.

Leaders unflinchingly put the needs of trainees first and ensure that staff across the partnership do the same. The provider is generous in the way that it shares resources and expertise, making significant and impactful contributions to wider system improvement.

Professional behaviours, personal development and wellbeing

Exceptional ●

Leaders have very high expectations for trainees' professional behaviours. They recognise that trainees' wide range of prior experience and confidence mean that different trainees will need different help to meet these high expectations and thrive within the profession. Leaders provide impactful training to quickly ensure all trainees understand and recognise their wider responsibilities as teachers. The way that this ambition is articulated consistently across the partnership acts both as inspiration and a check to ensure that trainees develop the professional knowledge that they need.

The importance of commitment to learning and maintaining high attendance are consistently emphasised, as are safeguarding and trainees' management of their own safety and wellbeing. Additionally, trainees become experienced in managing their own workload sustainably. They are remarkably readied to join the teaching profession. Highly effective pastoral support is readily available, clearly signposted and bespoke in nature. Mentors and

other staff build close working relationships with trainees and quickly offer help and support if necessary. Trainees speak particularly highly of this support.

Leaders know that trainees need to develop their own agency and confidence. As a result, they make sure that help and support is provided in a way that empowers trainees to develop their own skills in resolving issues. Because of this, trainees are adeptly prepared to enter the teaching profession, including being able to communicate with parents, school leaders and other staff.

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

Trainees joining OTT school-centred initial teacher training can be confident that they are going to be trained by a truly excellent provider, whose training has gone from strength to strength over the provider's established history. A remarkably well-designed curriculum helps trainees forge a confident path from novice towards increasingly refined and deep expertise. Trainees are highly curious and determined to be the best teachers they can be. They grapple with research and theory in meaningful and increasingly nuanced ways, applying it to their learning and understanding to make them ever more impactful teachers in their respective classrooms. This means they are particularly well prepared to be highly effective teachers, especially to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Across both primary and secondary phases, trainees are consistently high in their praise of not just the programme itself, but the first-rate levels of pastoral care and understanding they receive. Whether this is from the central provider staff, or across the different geographic hubs in which they train, trainees benefit from high levels of support which is consistent and unwavering. From their very first point of contact, trainees develop personalised relationships with provider staff, who get to know individual trainees especially well. This includes any needs they may have, so that highly effective adaptations are made to ensure that they thrive on their courses. This supports them in feeling known and fosters a strong sense of belonging from the outset, which only builds as they encounter the consistently high level of training, support and care they receive. From central providers, across hubs, to individual mentors, all and each are united in their passion to ensure that trainees receive the very best, so that they can be the very best, for the pupils they will teach in their careers.

Trainees benefit from the way that leaders are meticulous and deliberate in everything that they do. Nothing happens here by chance, but by careful design that is continually evaluated and refined to make the programme stronger still for every trainee. Across both phases, trainees are inspired by and share leaders' ongoing pursuit of excellence and tenacious determination that things can always be better. This is what distinguishes this provider as one that is truly exceptional in nature.

About this inspection

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.

There are numerous pathways offered by this provider. Primary trainees follow either a 3 to 7 programme, a 5 to 11 programme or a primary with enhanced special educational needs and/or disabilities programme. Most secondary trainees follow an 11 to 16 programme, but a small number of trainees follow a 14 to 19 programme. The provider offers both full- and part-time programmes.

Trainees in both the primary and secondary phases study one of two routes. They are either undertaking a graduate entry or graduate employment-based route leading to qualified teacher status, either with or without a postgraduate certificate in education qualification.

There are currently 19 apprentices studying the primary level 6 teacher apprenticeship route, and 12 apprentices studying the secondary level 6 teacher apprenticeship route.

Inspectors spoke with the director of OTT school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) and both deputy directors of OTT SCITT. They also held a meeting with those responsible for governance and oversight of the provision. Inspectors also spoke with hub leads, subject leads, professional tutors and mentors to gather evidence about the arrangements for mentoring. They also met with a group of headteachers in placement schools. Inspectors visited trainees in both their main teaching practice school and second school placements. Inspectors also visited apprentices in their workplace and second school placements. Inspectors spoke to a selection of early career teachers to gather evidence about the impact of the training provided.

Overall lead inspector:

Marian Feeley, His Majesty's Inspector

Primary phase lead inspector:

Jo Brinkley, His Majesty's Inspector

Secondary phase lead inspector:

Ed Mather, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Louise Walker, His Majesty's Inspector

Sue Keeling, His Majesty's Inspector


Linda Culling, His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Parker, His Majesty's Inspector

Toby Martlew, 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 March 2026

Number of partners and trainees

Education phase	Number of training partners / partner colleges	Number of trainees
Primary	0	69
Secondary	0	142

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