

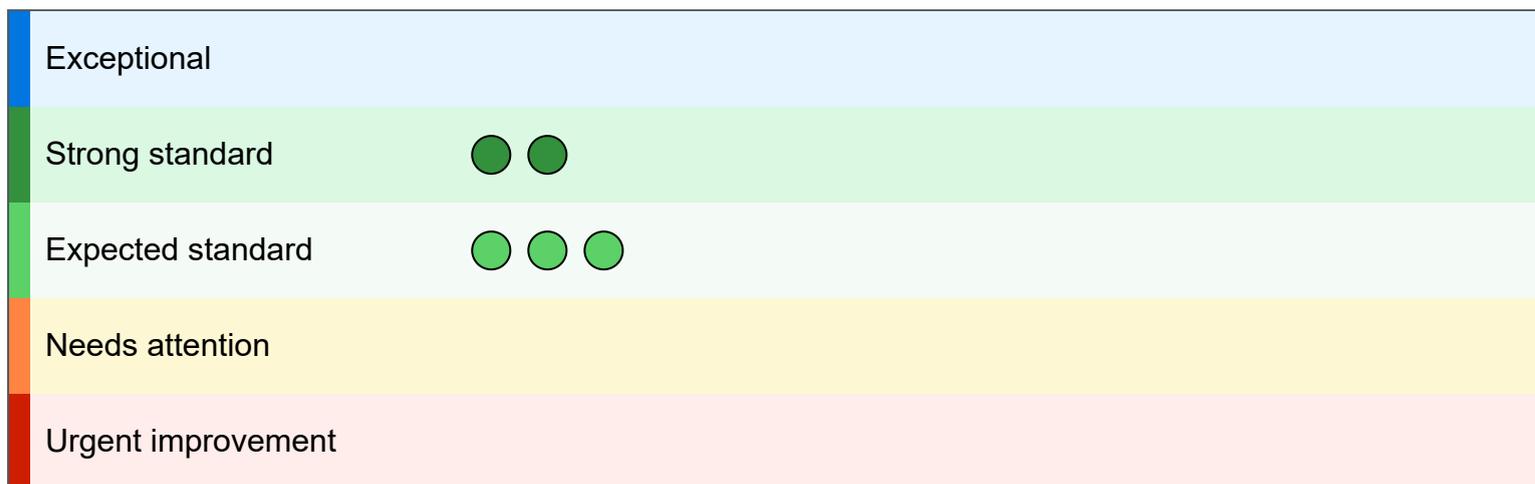
Barr Beacon SCITT

Address: Old Hall Lane, -, Walsall, West Midlands, WS9 0RF

Unique reference number (URN): 70361

Inspection report: 26 January 2026

1. Primary



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

Strong standard ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Inclusion is deeply embedded in leaders' work at Barr Beacon, with an intentional focus on personalised support for trainees. As a result, trainees who face potential barriers are extremely well supported and make very effective progress towards successfully completing the course. Everyone feels welcome.

Trainees feel at ease to disclose personal, medical and wellbeing concerns. This enables leaders to share this information appropriately and sensitively with placement schools and mentors so that necessary adaptations can swiftly be put in place. Leaders provide highly tailored and responsive support, using a range of personalised adjustments to meet trainees' individual needs. Leaders review and adapt this individualised support systematically. This enables trainees with special educational needs and/or disabilities or

personal challenges to make progress while meeting the expectations of the teaching profession.

Trainees receive clear and helpful information about a range of internal and external support to promote their learning. This includes a wellbeing service and menu, accessible leaders and mentor meetings which have wellbeing threaded throughout. Former and current trainees describe the programme as caring, inclusive and supportive. They highlight leaders' dedication, effective communication and their accurate knowledge of trainees' needs.

Professional behaviours, personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders establish a consistently positive and caring environment for all trainees. Trainees feel welcome and engage enthusiastically with all aspects of the programme. Consequently, they quickly build resilience and confidence. Bullying and harassment are never tolerated. Trainees and staff know how to report any concerns.

Across the partnership, pastoral care is a very high priority. Leaders, staff and partner schools provide swift, well-informed guidance. Their highly thoughtful actions promote trainees' mental health and wellbeing and ensure trainees know how to access wider support. Leaders systematically evaluate the pastoral support for individual trainees to check it is making a positive difference.

Leaders and staff have established high expectations for trainees' professional conduct. Mentors reinforce professionalism when needed to ensure that all trainees meet leaders' expectations. Leaders address any concerns about attendance or punctuality promptly.

Trainees learn and demonstrate very well the professional behaviours and safeguarding knowledge that teaching requires. Activities such as role play and scripted responses help trainees to confidently manage relationships including, for example, with parents and colleagues.

Trainees reflect wisely and openly by completing their teaching practice development audit because they trust their mentors and leaders. Trainees learn how to manage a demanding workload and understand how to put this into practice. This means that trainees are very well prepared to enter the profession by the end of the programme.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Leaders demonstrate a clear commitment to securing positive outcomes for primary trainees. They ensure that all trainees get the individual support they need to develop and apply their knowledge. As a result, the large majority of primary trainees complete the programme and are well prepared for their teaching career.

Trainees demonstrate a secure understanding of many aspects of teaching in the primary classroom, including behaviour management. However, what trainees understand about

how to adapt their teaching for pupils with barriers to learning is more variable.

Trainees successfully complete placements in contrasting schools, gaining experience in a range of settings. As they learn, trainees reflect on their progress with their mentors and course leaders, who set appropriate targets. This means trainees understand where they are achieving well and what they need to learn next. Trainees have realistic expectations of the demands of teaching, including understanding the importance of upholding the highest standards of professionalism.

Curriculum, teaching and training

Expected standard 

Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum that prepares primary trainees effectively for classroom practice. Staff introduce important aspects of the curriculum, such as safeguarding and behaviour, early so that trainees are prepared well for their school placements.

The curriculum breaks down essential knowledge and teaching skills into logical, coherent steps, giving trainees sufficient opportunities to practise teaching in their chosen primary year groups. Teaching practice is purposefully integrated with taught elements of the programme. For example, expert facilitators teach trainees about how children learn to read. Trainees follow this up in their school placements by observing experts teach phonics before delivering their own sessions. This means trainees learn to teach the national curriculum successfully.

Leaders use relevant, high-quality research to inform the curriculum. However, at times, they do not ensure that trainees and mentors engage fully with the research. As a result, some trainees do not consistently draw on research to inform their practice.

Trainees learn about the importance of safeguarding pupils and their statutory duties as a teacher. The curriculum is organised logically so that trainees quickly identify and understand the barriers to learning that pupils may face. Careful placement decisions, including exposure to a diversity of settings during carousel weeks, strengthen this understanding further.

Leaders ensure that facilitators have suitable knowledge of the primary phase. Facilitators are teachers from partnership schools or external experts, such as leaders from local special schools. Leaders ensure facilitators and mentors understand the needs of individual trainees so they can make adjustments where necessary. Leaders always check the delivery of new facilitators. This means they are confident the content is appropriate and of high quality. However, mentors' work is not checked as thoroughly.

Leaders typically use assessment accurately through observations, feedback and target setting, to identify any gaps in trainees' knowledge. Trainees complete a reflective teacher practice development audit that highlights where they are on track to meet course objectives. This means mentors and facilitators understand what trainees know and can do. This information enables them to support trainees and adapt the ITE curriculum if needed for individuals.

Trainees benefit from effective mentoring that is in line with the trainee entitlement. Effective communication with facilitators allows mentors to understand the needs of individual

trainees. This means mentors make suitable individualised adaptations to support trainees' needs, particularly where wellbeing or mental health vulnerabilities require adjustments.

Leadership

Expected standard 

Leaders, including those responsible for oversight, are united in their vision to provide high-quality teachers for the local area. To achieve this, leaders have developed highly effective relationships with primary partners. They are rightly proud of these.

Leaders are reflective and communicate effectively with stakeholders, regularly collecting their views as part of their drive for continual improvement. As a result, appropriate priorities for the provision are identified. These 'golden threads' are woven throughout the ITE curriculum. They enable leaders to make considered decisions in the best interests of trainees.

Leaders carry out consistency checks across the lead partners and their linked schools. They consider the quality of the curriculum and the training that trainees receive. However, not all of these quality assurance checks are systematic or recorded effectively. This means that leaders' strategic oversight of the partnership is not as comprehensive as it could be.

Those responsible for overseeing the ITE provision hold leaders to account effectively, ensuring that statutory duties are met. They generally challenge leaders and support them to implement the strategic vision, giving due regard to the workload and wellbeing of leaders, trainees and mentors. However, their ability to challenge the quality of the provision is sometimes hindered by the limited formal feedback they receive from quality assurance processes.

Leaders collaborate well with partner schools to develop effective selection strategies and processes. These are rigorous and ensure that recruited trainees have the necessary knowledge and experience to be successful primary school teachers.

The provider's mentor programme provides comprehensive training and ongoing support for both new and established mentors. As a result, mentors are suitably equipped to carry out their roles confidently and competently through purposeful professional learning and support.

Next steps

Leaders should ensure that trainees thoroughly engage with relevant research so they can then apply this understanding in depth to their teaching practice.

Leaders should ensure that trainees are fully equipped with knowledge and understanding to apply adaptive teaching securely in their teaching practice to support the needs of all pupils effectively.

Leaders, including those with responsibility for oversight, should embed a systematic approach to assuring themselves about the quality of the provider's work to ensure strategic oversight is more comprehensive.

2. Secondary

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

✔ Compliance, including safeguarding: standards met

Strong standard ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have established a highly inclusive culture in which trainees feel welcomed, valued and very well supported. Trainees are confident to share any concerns and seek help, knowing staff will respond promptly and without judgement. Systems for identifying and meeting trainees' learning and wellbeing needs are well embedded. They are applied consistently well across the partnership.

Recruitment processes are deliberately inclusive and aligned to the provider's strategic priorities. Leaders draw very effectively on targeted initiatives, links with wider organisations, community recruitment events and revised publicity materials that reflect local diversity well. Leaders' actions support the recruitment of trainees from more diverse groups, reflecting well the communities the provider serves.

Support for trainees is prompt and has a clear, highly positive impact on their ability to remain on the programme and succeed. Leaders take swift action to remove barriers to learning, including relocating trainees from unsuitable placements, providing flexible timetabling, offering remote access to essential sessions and adjusting deadlines in response to personal circumstances. Where required, trainees benefit from reasonable adjustments that enable them to complete the programme successfully and prepare well for future teaching roles.

Trainees value highly the range of opportunities they have to contribute ideas or raise concerns. Leaders respond quickly and effectively. Those with strategic oversight have a precise understanding of how inclusion and diversity underpin the provider's work and align closely with its values.

Professional behaviours, personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders set out crystal clear expectations for professional behaviour from the outset, and these are revisited regularly. Appropriate professional conduct is evident across trainees, mentors and early career teachers. High levels of attendance and engagement are both expected and achieved. When concerns arise, including absence linked to personal circumstances, leaders respond promptly and sensitively through very well-structured support processes.

Trainees feel at ease within the highly positive culture leaders have established. They are confident to seek help when needed. A wide range of high-quality pastoral and academic support is available. This includes access to mental health support, informal mentoring in schools and responsive communication from provider staff. Trainees report that they know how to escalate concerns and never feel isolated. Trainees develop a deep understanding of safeguarding, including how to keep themselves safe as an individual and as a teacher.

Leaders are highly considerate of trainees' individual needs. Across the partnership, there is a clear ethos of care, with staff adapting guidance as trainees' needs evolve. Trainees show admirable commitment to their learning and understand the demands of a teaching career, drawing on strategies to manage workload effectively and undertaking early pastoral responsibilities for pupils and learners with growing confidence.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Most trainees complete their programme and gain qualified teacher status, with many securing teaching posts within partnership schools. This reflects school leaders' confidence in trainees' readiness to enter the profession. The school-centred initial teacher training prepares trainees well for the realities of classroom practice. Trainees are supported by clear professional expectations and an emphasis on long-term career development. They understand the range of progression routes available as they establish themselves as early career teachers.

Trainees regularly reflect on their practice and are supported through structured guidance from facilitators and mentors. They generally know how well they are progressing through the programme. However, some targets lack the precision needed to accelerate the development of specific teaching skills. Trainees develop a secure understanding of behaviour management and adaptive teaching, though in some cases further depth is required to ensure this knowledge is applied consistently across their teaching.

Curriculum, teaching and training

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a well organised curriculum that gives trainees a broad range of learning across the programme. It is built on suitable and up-to-date research so that trainees have a secure base for their teaching. However, at times, trainees do not engage with this as fully as they could. This results in a more superficial application of some aspects of the curriculum in their teaching and reduced reflection on the impact of research in their work.

Intensive teaching and practice sessions are carefully planned. They focus on the key areas of knowledge leaders identify as most important. These sessions link well with the rest of the curriculum, helping trainees to take what they have learned and use it effectively in their school placements.

Mentors have a secure understanding of the centre-based curriculum and typically use this knowledge well to reinforce trainees' learning in school. This alignment ensures that school-based training builds appropriately on subject and professional studies content, resulting in a coherent and well-connected experience for trainees.

Leaders have identified the 'golden threads' that they need to work on to further enhance their curriculum. Some areas, such as adaptive teaching and how pupils learn, are still at an earlier stage of development. While the links between subject content and professional studies are clear, some subject-specific elements do not fully reflect all aspects of the 'golden threads'.

Leaders place a high priority on safeguarding in the ITE curriculum. Trainees demonstrate a secure understanding of their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. They know the procedures to follow should concerns arise about a pupil's welfare.

Leaders set out clear expectations for the progress trainees should make at different points in the programme. Typically, this helps trainees to understand how well they are doing and what they need to improve. Regular assessment points allow mentors to give feedback through formal reports. This enables leaders to act quickly if there are gaps in trainees' progress. However, some targets set for trainees are not specific, meaning trainees are less clear about the precise steps they need to take to improve.

Leadership

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear vision and set of values that are shared across the partnership and evident in all aspects of the provision. Productive relationships with partner schools enhance the quality of trainees' experiences on placement and contribute positively to their development.

Trainees and mentors receive clear guidance about leaders' expectations throughout the programme. Leaders ensure these are upheld through appropriate policies and systems. Workload is managed carefully, with consideration given to both staff and mentor capacity. Leaders listen to stakeholders when reviewing and refining the programme, including decisions about subject offer and partnership arrangements.

Those with responsibility for oversight of the provision understand their statutory responsibilities and carry them out effectively. They pay due regard to the Department for Education's mandatory criteria to ensure all programme requirements are met. Leaders demonstrate clear commitment to supporting the local area and the future workforce. Inclusion is a central element of the leadership vision.

Leaders implement suitable quality assurance systems, although the level of rigour is variable. Some information is not shared as widely as it could be, including with trustees. As a result, the opportunities for stringent challenge and oversight are limited.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the provision's strengths and priorities for improvement and provide appropriate professional learning opportunities for staff, mentors and partner organisations. Mentors benefit from a well-designed training offer aligned with the provider's ways of working. Recent visits to local specialist settings, for example, have strengthened leaders' and mentors' knowledge and enhanced the support offered to trainees.

Next steps

Leaders should ensure that trainees thoroughly engage with relevant research so they can then apply this understanding in depth to their teaching practice.

Leaders should ensure that trainees are fully equipped with the knowledge and understanding to apply adaptive teaching securely in their teaching practice to support the needs of all pupils effectively.

Leaders, including those with responsibility for oversight, should develop a systematic approach to assuring the quality of the provider's work to ensure strategic oversight is comprehensive.

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

Trainees value the highly inclusive, nurturing provider culture in which they feel welcomed, valued and well supported throughout their training. Leaders are committed to developing local teachers, providing personalised support that enables many trainees to progress into employment within partnership schools. Trainees are known as individuals and speak very highly of approachable staff who respond swiftly to personal or professional needs.

Trainees benefit from high-quality support that includes tailored wellbeing plans, sensitive arrangements for deferral and return, and regular check ins that help remove barriers to

their learning. This open door approach encourages trainees to disclose needs confidently, ensuring early intervention and sustained wellbeing.

Trainees achieve well because the programme prepares them effectively for the practical demands of teaching. The curriculum is coherently structured and sequenced across each phase of training, enabling trainees to build knowledge and skills cumulatively. Expectations are clear and consistently understood by trainees, mentors and facilitators. Intensive training and practice weeks align closely with curriculum content, offering targeted opportunities for trainees to rehearse and refine specific aspects of practice. Trainees benefit from appropriate exposure to both phase-specific and subject-specific curriculum content across primary and secondary settings.

Experiences across a diverse partnership, including specialist provisions, widen trainees' understanding of varied school contexts and pupil needs. This develops strong confidence in managing behaviour, supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and responding appropriately to safeguarding concerns. Clear communication, weekly bulletins and positive relationships across the partnership help trainees and mentors understand expectations, manage workload and feel part of a cohesive training community. This contributes to high satisfaction levels and a shared sense of purpose.

As a result of high-quality training, targeted support and rich placement experiences, trainees develop as reflective, resilient professionals. By programme completion, they report feeling confident and well prepared to keep pupils safe, promote their development and contribute positively to the communities they serve.

About this inspection

- In the primary phase, the school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) offers postgraduate and assessment-only pathways into teaching. In both routes, trainees specialise in primary 3 to 7 or primary 5 to 11 age ranges. All routes lead to qualified teacher status (QTS) and the postgraduate route leads to a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) through the University of Worcester.
 - In the secondary phase, trainees study a postgraduate qualification which leads to QTS and PCGE in their specialist subject. Trainees can study from a choice of 13 subject areas. Most trainees specialise in the 11 to 16 age range, while a small number of subjects cover the 14 to 19 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 the chief executive officer of the trust, director of SCITT, and the programme leads for primary and secondary. They also met with those responsible for compliance, partnerships and members of the trust board.
 - Throughout the inspection, inspectors also spoke with a range of staff, trainees, lead mentors and school mentors.
 - Inspectors spoke to early career teachers who had completed a course at this provider in the last two years.
-

Overall lead inspector:

Elaine Mawson, His Majesty's Inspector

Primary phase lead inspector:

Corinne Biddell, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Su Plant, His Majesty's Inspector

Stuart Clarkson, 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 26 January 2026

Number of partners and trainees

Education phase	Number of training partners / partner colleges	Number of trainees
Primary	2	21
Secondary	1	36

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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