



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: re-inspection**

**South East Wales Centre for Teacher Education and
Training**

Date of visit: June 2015

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

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The monitoring team

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Outcome of monitoring

The initial inspection of South East Wales Centre for Teacher Education and Training concluded in May 2013. As a result of the number of poor outcomes in the inspection report, Estyn, in accordance with the inspection protocols, re-visited the provision in September 2014.

The outcomes of the September 2014 visit showed that the centre had put new systems in place in many cases to address the recommendations. However, at this stage, the centre was not able to show the impact of the systems on trainees' outcomes.

As a result, Estyn re-visited the provision in June 2015. The inspection team judges that the centre has now made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in June 2015. Therefore, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the South East Wales Centre for Teacher Education and Training from any other inspection follow-up monitoring activity.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Review and communicate a clear strategic direction for the centre

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation.

The centre has a clear vision for its future direction. This vision is underpinned by appropriate core values. Centre leaders have consulted well with an appropriate range of stakeholders in the development of the revised vision and values. The centre's strategic plan links well with the priorities for the next five-year period.

The strategic plan places a strong emphasis the characteristics of the teachers who will enter the education system as a result of training at the centre. It also focuses well on how the centre will ensure that trainees develop their knowledge and skills appropriately in relation to the Welsh Government's priorities for the development of the Welsh dimension, bilingualism and the need to mitigate the effects of poverty and deprivation. The strategic plan sets out clearly how it will achieve its mission through six strands of work. There are clear milestones and success criteria in place against which the centre can measure its success.

The centre has updated carefully the structure and terms of reference for the executive board and each of the three operational management groups, which take responsibility for learning and teaching, staff development and communication, and quality. This structure meets the current development needs of the centre well. The management groups have also set up task groups with specific remits; for example, the establishment of a new centre website to provide and support timely communication with all stakeholders. These groups and all participants' access to the website with up-to-date information help to drive forward the work of the centre effectively.

As a result of this re-organisation, all staff across the centre have very good opportunities to take on leadership roles in the development of the centre. Staff welcome the opportunities to contribute to change and have a clear understanding of the areas for which they are responsible. Many staff express greater job satisfaction as their skills are recognised and valued.

The executive board directs and challenges the work of leaders in developing the centre very effectively. The executive board communicates high expectations to all staff and holds them to account.

The executive board has implemented appropriate plans for the leadership, management and administration of the centre. The three senior centre leaders meet weekly to co-ordinate and to implement activities across the centre so as to bring about improvements effectively and quickly. For example, the senior centre leaders are able to agree funding for activities without reference to other committees and this means activities, such as an additional mentor training session, can proceed in timely way to meet mentors' and trainees' needs.

Senior mentors from partnership schools bring a useful external perspective and have an effective role in the management groups to improve trainees' practice and outcomes. Trainee representatives also make a valuable contribution to the management groups in developing and improving the centre's provision.

Communication across the centre has much improved. The new centre website provides useful and succinct information for a wide range of users. Cross-programme events have helped to improve tutors' and mentors' shared understanding of and commitment to the centre's priorities.

As a result of the actions to address this recommendation, the centre has made very good progress in having clear plans and robust systems for its future development.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that the strategic aims of the centre are supported by coherent plans and clear targets for improvement to evaluate progress rigorously

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation.

The centre has successfully developed coherent plans and evaluation tools through which to plan, monitor and evaluate improvements to the work of the centre.

The strategic plan articulates clearly the centre's vision and mission, the strategic priorities, success criteria and timescales in which the longer terms priorities will be achieved. Additional documents, such as the strategies for professional development and learning, partnership development and research outline clearly the expected activity that supports effective delivery of the centre's development plans.

The centre's plans for improvement link well with the strategic plan. They underpin the strategic aims and long-term priorities with appropriate actions, success criteria, timescales and allocated responsibilities. The programme action plans support the centre's priorities well.

The introduction of a cross-centre Annual Quality Cycle helps senior centre leaders, middle leaders and tutors to analyse effectively the strengths and areas for development of programmes across the centre and to set focused short and longterm targets for the centre as a whole. However, as yet, the centre has not set outcome targets against which to measure its progress against its vision of providing the teaching profession with world class teachers. The Annual Quality Cycle has been sensibly aligned with the individual university annual monitoring cycles to make more effective use of time and resources.

The use of a centre-wide reporting template and report writing guide helps programme leaders to provide more consistent evidence and judgements from across the centre. This greater consistency helps senior centre and middle leaders to evaluate the centre's provision and outcomes more accurately.

The new arrangements for the regular uploading of assessment data help staff to undertake on-going data analysis of identified issues. This means that staff have a more accurate and timely understanding of trainees' strengths and weaknesses. In turn, it has the effect of allowing senior centre leaders, middle leaders and tutors to intervene and support trainees' development promptly and more effectively.

As a result of the measures taken, the centre has developed a far more reliable and valid evidence base to inform its self-evaluation. This has led to staff across the centre engaging in open and robust discussions about strengths and areas for development of programmes. As a consequence, the quality of the centre's self-evaluation has improved substantially.

Recommendation 3: Improve the collection and analysis of first-hand evidence to better inform self-evaluation

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation.

The centre has made significant and effective progress in many areas of collecting, monitoring and analysing first-hand evidence. This progress has been particularly strong since the inspection team's interim inspection visit in September 2014.

There are several examples of improved practice, particularly in collecting and analysing data on trainees' teaching skills. The centre provides trainees, school-based mentors and centre staff with very useful and precise guidance on the centre's requirements for reporting data on trainees' achievements at agreed key assessment points during their school experience. Centre staff analyse this first-hand information carefully and systematically to identify where trainees are not performing to the centre's expectations and where significant variations in the judgements grading practice of different tutors and mentors occur. Centre leaders at all levels use this data well to review practice and procedures and to bring about changes that have improved provision in many aspects of the centre's work.

The centre now has much better first-hand evidence on the quality of university-based teaching. Centre leaders have implemented agreed protocols and themes for the observation of teaching and learning by line managers. The programme has been implemented thoroughly in both universities. However, the

centre has noted that there is too much variation in the judgements about teaching and learning awarded on different programmes at the two centres. This means that the quality of teaching and learning remains variable.

Centre leaders have also made good progress in reviewing trainee teachers' files systematically to follow lines of enquiry. These reviews provide staff with useful first hand evidence of the areas where trainees have greatest difficulties, for example in planning sufficient challenge for more able and talented pupils. Centre staff have begun to use this information well to identify the areas of practice that require most improvement. However, the plans for making changes in the training programmes have not been implemented fully as yet.

Recommendation 4: Improve trainees' planning to take good account of pupils' outcomes and to identify clear learning objectives

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation.

Since the interim inspection visit in September 2014, there has been a marked improvement in the partnership's provision for developing trainees' skills in planning learning and teaching. However, this has yet to have a strong impact on trainees' standards.

The partnership has produced detailed documentation for trainees, tutors and mentors. This includes helpful and succinct guides on assessment for learning and on planning to meet the differing needs of pupils. The 'School Experience Assessment Framework' provides trainees, mentors and tutors with very clear criteria against which to assess these elements of trainees' teaching. Tutors and mentors use these resources well to support trainees' development of their understanding of how to link assessment and planning effectively.

Since the inspection team's interim inspection visit in September 2014, there has been substantial and consistent emphasis in training sessions for all stakeholders on improving trainees' planning, as well as in the assessment of trainees. In addition, the quality of trainees' learning objectives, strategies for assessing pupil progress and planning to take account of pupil outcomes have been a key focus of the partnership's quality assurance during this academic year. This work has included appropriate scrutiny of tutor and mentor assessments of trainees' lessons, and observation of university training sessions for trainees.

As a result of this clear focus on developing trainees' skills in these aspects of their planning and teaching, trainees' school experience files and the outcomes of quality assurance show that there has been significant improvement overall in the quality of guidance and challenge provided by tutors and mentors. This has been the case particularly during trainees' final school placements. Scrutiny of trainees' school experience files shows also that trainees' ability to take account of pupil outcomes when planning learning objectives has also improved significantly.

Although many trainees have improved their skills in using pupils' outcomes to inform lesson planning, trainees' skills still vary too much within and between programmes. Nonetheless, leaders have a good understanding of these issues and they are

working effectively with tutors and mentors to reduce the variability between programmes across the centre.

Recommendation 5: Improve trainees' skills to plan and teach lessons that develop pupils' literacy and numeracy

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation.

The centre has made suitable progress towards ensuring that staff have the appropriate knowledge and expertise to improve trainees' skills to plan and teach lessons that develop pupils' literacy and numeracy well. The Learning and Teaching Management Group has led this work effectively through developing a clear and useful Professional Development and Learning Strategy.

Centre staff audit regularly trainees' literacy and numeracy skills and then establish clear priorities with actions to be taken. Tutors have supported trainees well with personal training programmes to meet trainees' specific professional development requirements. As a result, most trainees have good personal standards of literacy and numeracy.

Trainees, mentors and tutors make effective use of the new Learning and Teaching Plan Guidance. The guidance provides all parties with the same guidance and case studies so that all parties have a shared understanding and consensus. Trainees' planning, lesson evaluations, and mentor and tutor feedback forms indicate that the majority of trainees identify appropriate literacy and numeracy skills in their planning and they demonstrate a thorough understanding of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework. Primary trainees' files now show greater competency in planning for assessment of pupils' literacy and numeracy. However, secondary trainees' standards in planning for assessment remain too variable within and across programmes, and the development for planning for numeracy is underdeveloped in a few subjects.

There has been an improvement in the quality of tutor and mentor feedback about how well trainees develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills during the course of the academic year. However, while there has been a significant improvement in the consistency of judgements about this aspect, there remains still too much variability in the quality tutors' and mentors' target setting.

The centre has published useful case studies on the centre's website that show how the skills of literacy and numeracy are integrated into meaningful cross-curricular contexts. The case studies are very helpful to tutors and mentors in supporting the development of trainees' practice.

Recommendation 6: Ensure that mentors assess accurately trainees' performance against the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation.

Since the interim inspection visit in September 2014, the centre has implemented a number of comprehensive and thorough procedures to ensure that mentors and

tutors assess more accurately trainees' progress against the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status. These processes include shared criteria for judging trainees' progress across their school experiences, mentor and tutor training as well as more rigorous and robust quality assurance procedures.

Centre leaders have introduced a framework for assessment that provides a very useful structure to support mentors, tutors and trainees to assess trainees' progress against the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status. It contains extended descriptors for each of the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status. The descriptors take good account of how trainees on all programmes should make progress through their school experiences. The framework allows mentors, tutors and trainees to consider where trainees meet the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status, as well as providing criteria for those trainees who achieve good and excellent standards. It provides a common language for progress and target-setting and the clear means to measure development across all stages of a trainee's school experience. The framework allows the centre to have a more precise understanding of how well trainees make progress. It provides a mechanism to hold mentors and tutors to account more securely.

The centre has provided useful training for mentors and tutors on how to assess trainees more accurately using the framework. In addition, the provision of clear criteria for effective written feedback has had a positive impact on the quality of tutors' and mentors' feedback to trainees. Feedback is now more evaluative, focuses more specifically on the impact of trainees' teaching on pupils' learning, and provides clearer targets for trainees to improve. As a result of this work, the centre has identified that, although there has been an improvement in attendance at mentor training events, too many mentors are still yet to be trained. To address this, the centre has developed a 'mentor professional development strategy', including the use of online training materials and the publication of guidance materials and good practice case studies on the centre website. However, it is too early as yet to see the impact of these new strategies.

Regular final moderation events provide a very useful opportunity for mentors and tutors to standardise judgements and to identify emerging training needs, for example in relation to accurately assessing trainees' professional standards.

To support the effective implementation of the framework, centre leaders have introduced a number of quality assurance measures. At regular points in the academic year, mentors upload their written evaluations of trainees' progress to the centre's electronic information systems. This allows middle leaders to monitor mentors' feedback to trainees, and to support mentors to assess their trainees more effectively.

Senior centre leaders analyse this assessment information methodically to identify how well trainees are making progress and to look for patterns in trainees' outcomes. They use this data alongside a scrutiny of trainees' files to check for accuracy in assessment. Through this rigorous quality assurance system, senior leaders hold middle leaders more robustly to account for the accuracy of trainees' outcomes. These processes have ensured much greater consistency and accuracy of feedback

to trainees across the centre.

The centre has recently developed the 'school experience quality matrix', a system to strengthen further its quality assurance of trainees' school experience. This involves a series of integrated quality checks in schools, between schools and across programmes. The centre has piloted the matrix on the PGCE primary programme, and early indications suggest that, when used alongside the assessment framework, the quality matrix is very helpful in improving trainees' school experience and in identifying issues for improvement.

Recommendation 7: Strengthen the role of governors in developing the centre

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation.

Since the inspection in May 2013, a member of each of the participating universities' governing bodies has taken on the role of link governor to the centre. Both governors have extensive leadership experience in schools and education. They use their experience effectively to act as critical friends, to scrutinise policy and actions robustly, and to provide a good level of challenge to the centre's work. They have been effective in helping the centre to move forward in developing centre-wide plans, processes and roles.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the South East Wales Centre for Teacher Education and Training should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.