



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

Report of Estyn monitoring
Carmarthenshire Adult Community Learning Partnership
Carmarthenshire County Council
County Hall
Carmarthen
SA31 1JP

Date of visit: December 2012

By

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



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The monitoring team

Liam Kealy	Reporting Inspector
Mark Evans	Team Inspector

Outcome of monitoring visit

Carmarthenshire Adult Community Learning Partnership is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in March 2011.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales will remove the partnership from the list of providers requiring Estyn monitoring. However, Estyn will maintain monitoring of the partnerships improvement programme through termly monitoring visits by the sector lead inspector for adult community learning

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Improve standards of learning and teaching, especially in ABE and ESOL

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

Overall learner outcomes are showing an improving trend. The local authority has improved the standards achieved by its learners by 8 percentage points between 2009 and 2011. Coleg Sir Gar has improved the success rate for Adult Basic Education (ABE) learners by 5 percentage points in the same period. However, the success rate is below the national comparator. The college has improved its success rate for learners of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) by twelve percentage points and is at the national comparator.

The partnership is working appropriately to improve the standards achieved by learners in the classroom and to improve the quality of teaching.

The partnership has strengthened its process for evaluating the performance of tutors. It has trained staff to observe tutors and identify their strengths and areas for improvement. The partnership undertook an internal inspection in December 2011 which carried out 47 classroom observations. The partnership has useful process for moderating the judgements from observations. It has used this process appropriately to target tutors requiring support to improve their teaching. This has resulted in those tutors either improving their teaching or leaving.

The partnership has evaluated the internal inspection process and identified the need to improve consistency in the judgements made by observers. The Estyn monitoring team found there was not enough consistency between observers in the importance they attach to the strengths attributed to good teaching and assessment. The partnership has begun to use the outcomes of observations to share good practice between tutors.

The internal inspection demonstrated that learners achieve good standards in the classroom and this was borne out by the monitoring team. In three of the four sessions observed learners apply themselves well to their work, they complete their work well and have good skills that help them work independently. ABE Learners improve their competence and understanding significantly. ESOL learners have a good understanding of English and communicate well. They can hold extended conversations about daily life. Learners progress well to further learning. The local

authority has revised the type of qualifications offered to ESOL learners to help them make graduated steps to improving their level of attainment.

However, the partnership recognises in its self-assessment report that it has yet to raise the standards achieved by learners to a good level. Whilst the partnership has improved the quality of teaching it recognises that it needs to improve consistency in its approach to evaluating the quality of teaching across the partnership. The partnership intends to carry out a regular cycle of observations of tutor performance and is making better use of target setting with tutors to raise the standards achieved by learners. The local authority has recently deployed a new pool of part-time tutors and plans to ensure that they achieve teaching qualifications. It has revised the type of qualifications offered to ESOL learners to help them make graduated steps to improving their level of attainment.

Recommendation 2: Make better use of data to set targets for improvement

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The partnership's managers have strengthened their focus on target setting for improvement. They have set clear learner attainment targets on most programmes across the partnership. These targets are generally aligned to national comparators (NC) relating to the performance of the sector. The partnership carries out the target setting exercise for each programme area annually. However, managers and staff do not consistently pay enough attention to the reasons why learners leave programmes early. This results in learner numbers being very low on a few programmes.

The majority of tutors demonstrate an appropriate knowledge of targets for the programmes they deliver. However, across the partnership not all tutors demonstrate a consistent understanding of how targets are set and monitored.

The partnership has carried out a comprehensive review of its curriculum. The partnership now makes more accredited programmes available to learners. As a result, learners now have better opportunities for progression to further learning. The partnership monitors progression well. Progression data shows that just over a 40% of learners progressed from community based learning to mainstream FE provision in 2010/2011 compared to just over 28% of learners in 2009/2010.

Local authority managers make sure that they undertake performance reviews with all tutors twice a year. These reviews are useful in reviewing and monitoring the performance of tutors. However, the setting and recording of targets is not consistently applied. This means that managers and tutors are not always clear on what targets have been set and whether tutors have achieved them.

Recommendation 3: Improve strategies for developing literacy and numeracy

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The partnership has made a useful start in helping tutors develop the appropriate skills to support learners with their literacy needs.

The partnership has developed a very comprehensive tutor hand-book that includes useful advice on how staff can help learners improve their literacy and numeracy

skills. However, the document does not contain enough information or guidance about how to contextualise and embed support into the learning programme.

A number of tutors have completed the level 2 training programme in adult learner support. The provider has plans for all tutors to complete the training over the next few years. This means that currently all tutors may not have the competence and confidence to give learners effective support.

The partnership carries regular staff development meetings with tutors. Several of these meetings have a clear focus on improving tutors understanding and capability to give effective support to learners. The partnership is currently working with its tutors to contextualise and embed literacy into the main learning programme.

The provider is currently developing a marking and correction guidance hand-book for its staff. This document will help all tutors give learners consistent formal feedback on their written work. However, it is too early to judge the impact of the guidance.

Most tutors show an appropriate knowledge of how to refer learners for additional or specialist learning support. However, not all tutors have a clear understanding of how to identify an additional support need.

All tutors are required to develop schemes of work for their programmes. However, these documents do not routinely contain information relating to literacy and numeracy. Currently schemes of work are not quality checked by managers to make sure they include aspects of literacy and numeracy.

Recommendation 4: Improve the monitoring and evaluation of training on safeguarding

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The partnership has improved how it monitors and evaluates its training for safeguarding. Prior to the recent changes in safeguarding guidance for vulnerable adults all tutors completed successful CRB checks and were required to successfully complete an accredited training programme. Managers actively checked that tutors successfully completed the training.

Following the implementation of the new guidance the partnership is reviewing how its risk assesses activities in order to determine the appropriate level of safeguarding requirements for each learning activity it delivers.

The two main deliverers – the local authority and Coleg Sir Gar, have effective processes in place for safeguarding learners. The local authority carries out a risk-assessment for each learning activity to determine the level of safeguarding arrangements it needs to make. The local authority also provides training in safeguarding for its tutors on a regular basis. This includes discussing aspects of vulnerability, triggers for concern and advice about signposting learners to other support agencies when appropriate.

Coleg Sir Gar ordinarily carries out CRB checks for all adult learning staff as they may also work with young people aged 18 and under. It has also sought to improve

systems for reporting safeguarding issues. As a result more learners report issues. The college makes appropriate use of this information to train staff.

Recommendation 5: Promote and improve the use of Welsh as a medium of communication in class and across the provision

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The partnership is working very well to promote and improve the use of Welsh as a medium for communication in the classroom.

The partnership has implemented a Welsh Medium and Bilingual learning strategy and action plan. The plan gives priority to helping learners, tutors and managers increase the use of Welsh for communication, teaching and assessment. The partnership has worked well with Sgiliaith, a DfES funded project to support bi-lingualism in the FE sector, to take forward its strategic planning for promoting the use of Welsh in the classroom. The partnership has worked across the south west Wales regional learning partnership to advise other adult community learning providers how to improve the use of Welsh for communication in the classroom.

As a result learners and tutors in Carmarthenshire are better able to work bilingually. Tutors use Welsh in the classroom more regularly and learners are more prepared to use their Welsh language skills for learning.

The partnership is building upon the success of this work. It is currently surveying the Welsh language skills of staff and tailoring training to help staff improve their skills. It is also improving how it collects information about learner's language skills to help tutors increase the use of Welsh in the classroom.

Overall the partnership has made sufficient progress since the last inspection.

Learner outcomes are showing an improving trend learners generally achieve good standards in the classroom.

The partnership is working appropriately to improve the quality of teaching. Managers have improved the focus on target setting for improvement. They have set clear learner attainment targets on most programmes across the partnership. However, across the partnership not all tutors demonstrate a consistent understanding of how targets are set and monitored.

The partnership has made a useful start in helping tutors develop the appropriate skills to support learners with their literacy needs. It has improved how it monitors and evaluates its training for safeguarding.

The partnership is working very well to promote and improve the use of Welsh as a medium for communication in the classroom.