



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 visit
Level of follow-up: Estyn monitoring**

**South West Wales Centre of Teacher Education and
Training
College Road
Carmarthen
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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 visit

The South West Wales Centre of Teacher Education and Training is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in May 2012.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the centre from any further follow-up activity.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Improve trainees' personal literacy skills and their ability to apply these skills in a teaching context

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The centre has put a number of systems and structures in place that have had a positive effect in raising trainees' standards of personal literacy. Trainees on all programmes are aware of the need to develop pupils' literacy across the curriculum and they have a good understanding of the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework. The centre provides good practical support and guidance to help trainees to develop pupils' literacy skills and this has improved trainees' practice across all programmes.

The centre has appointed literacy and language lead tutors for both primary and secondary programmes. These leaders are developing coherent approaches to improving trainees' personal literacy skills and to developing trainees' knowledge and understanding of how to teach language and literacy. Recent initiatives include electronic resources to exemplify best practice and introduction of the 'UP' portfolio, which creates a structure for trainees to reflect upon and develop their personal literacy and teaching skills.

There are sound structures to track trainees' literacy skills and to identify weaknesses in their knowledge and understanding of language and literacy at an individual and at a whole cohort level.

Literacy leaders have introduced detailed procedures for tracking trainees' progress through the literacy audit. This gives programme leaders, tutors and mentors valuable information about trainees' literacy skills and provides a sound basis for support, both in the university and in schools. The good practice in tracking piloted on the PGCE primary programme has now been extended to all programmes and this is having a positive effect in raising trainees' standards. More focused analysis introduced since February 2014 means that tutors are more able to identify individual trainees in need of greater support. The centre's data shows that targeted compulsory literacy interventions have substantially improved the literacy skills of this group of trainees.

The Gloywi laith programme helps to improve trainees' spoken and written Welsh. The new audit of trainees' Welsh language skills, devised for those trainees training

to teach through the medium of Welsh, provides these trainees and their tutors and mentors with a better understanding of trainees' specific strengths and weaknesses.

Generally, trainees' assignments demonstrate sound academic writing skills in an appropriate variety of contexts. However, in their lesson planning and evaluations, trainees make occasional literacy errors.

Tutors have introduced a system to monitor trainees' planning files to identify which trainees require more support in developing pupils' literacy, and to improve the quality of provision. This scrutiny is beginning to inform programme improvements effectively.

Recommendation 2: Improve trainees' skills of planning and reflection

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Across all programmes, trainees' approach to planning is more consistent, and the quality of lesson planning has improved. Many trainees have a better understanding of what makes a good lesson plan. They are more confident to discuss approaches to teaching and learning with their tutors and mentors.

There has been a strong focus on improving trainees' skills of planning and reflection over the past year. The centre has introduced new lesson planning forms that encourage trainees to concentrate well on the development of pupils' skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Trainees across all programmes now use these forms to plan their lessons. Tutors have high expectations of trainees' planning and they have communicated these expectations clearly to mentors in schools. This helps to ensure that trainees receive consistent messages and good support in relation to lesson planning.

Many trainees are developing well as reflective practitioners. There are suitable opportunities for trainees on all programmes to undertake assignments that require them to apply these skills in a context that relates well to their classroom experience. As a result of these improved experiences, by the end of their training, many trainees' lesson evaluations and weekly self-evaluations focus well on the quality of pupils' learning and achievement, as well as on their own progress and teaching ability. The centre is now piloting an innovative approach to the development of reflective thinking with a few trainees. This aims to enhance trainees' critical thinking skills further and to enable them to pay greater attention to specific elements of pupils' learning. Tutors and mentors do not always provide accurate enough written feedback in trainees' files to support this aspect of their work. However, the centre is working well with its mentors to improve their understanding of how to develop trainees' reflective skills.

Recommendation 3: Improve trainees knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language and Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The centre has made good progress in improving trainees' knowledge and understanding of 'Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig' and the Welsh language.

The centre has provided staff with a useful training day to improve their understanding of 'Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig'. All programmes now include clear requirements for trainees to take account of this aspect in their lesson planning. Tutors and mentors now place appropriate emphasis on this aspect during lesson observations. The introduction of a prize to recognise outstanding work in this area has also contributed to increasing the profile of 'Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig'. The impact of these changes is that most trainees now plan effectively to include aspects of 'Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig' in their school experiences.

Recently, the centre has produced clear and useful guidance for university tutors and partnership schools for the effective use of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig. The identification of examples of best practice in Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is a strong feature of this work and demonstrates the centre's pro-active work to develop its partnership with schools.

The centre has refined its programme for those trainees who are not fluent in Welsh to provide well-targeted and differentiated support. This allows trainees to develop their individual skills more appropriately and ensures that they take more responsibility for their own learning.

The centre has strengthened and clarified its expectations of trainees' use of Welsh in their teaching. Tutors and mentors now focus appropriately on trainees' use of Welsh during lesson observations. As a result, many trainees make suitable gains in their knowledge of the Welsh language and use the language more appropriately in their lessons.

Trainees who are fluent in Welsh are given useful training and guidance to improve their command of the language and expand their subject-specific vocabulary. The centre now identifies specific weaknesses in individual trainees' Welsh and works effectively with mentors to bring about improvements. As a consequence, most of these trainees provide increasingly accurate language models for pupils.

Recommendation 4: Implement assessment procedures to ensure that tutors and mentors judge trainees standards accurately

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Since the time of the inspection, the centre has made sound progress in improving its assessment procedures to ensure that tutors and mentors judge trainees' standards accurately.

The centre has made appropriate amendments to its criteria for assessing trainees' written assignments. The revised criteria now include a clear distinction between level 6 and level 7 requirements. The centre has provided tutors with rigorous training on how to assess assignments, and strengthened moderation procedures. All tutors have been involved in paired-marking activities. These initiatives have led to greater consistency and accuracy of assessment of written assignments between

tutors. The centre also provides trainees with clear explanations of assessment criteria and a useful range of exemplar assignments of different quality. Most tutors offer trainees valuable feedback on how to improve their assignments, although this feedback is not always given in time for trainees to take account of this advice in subsequent assignments. However, recently, the centre has reorganised the assignment timetable to address this issue.

Tutors and mentors carry out appropriate checks of trainees' files during school experiences. In a few files, tutors provide trainees with useful considerations of their performance in important aspects such as lesson planning, literacy or the quality of reflection. However, most of the comments offered by tutors are superficial and concerned mainly with ensuring that the file is complete. In a few cases, comments in trainees' files are too generous. To improve this aspect of assessment, the centre has recently put in place procedures to analyse systematically tutor and mentor feedback to trainees. As a result of this analysis, centre leaders have identified a need to improve the focus and clarity of mentors' and tutors' target setting to raise trainees' standards. The centre has produced useful action plans and related tutor and mentor development activities that support this area for improvement well.

Since the last inspection, the centre has refined its criteria for the evaluation of trainees' teaching to provide clear exemplification of standards. Tutors have engaged in helpful discussions about how to apply these criteria when observing trainees' teaching. A majority of tutors have taken part in useful activities such as carrying out joint observations with other tutors or evaluating teaching in videos to ensure consistency of judgements. However, a minority of tutors have not been involved in these activities. The centre has offered mentors suitable training to ensure that they have a consistent understanding of how to judge teaching in line with the Qualified Teacher Standards. Tutors carry out useful joint-observations of lessons with mentors to improve consistency further. In addition, the centre now offers mentors beneficial feedback on the quality of the training they provide. Together, changes to the centre's assessment procedures have secured improvements to the accuracy and reliability of mentors' and tutors' judgements on the quality of trainees' teaching.

Recommendation 5: Improve the consistency of training across all programmes

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Overall, the centre has made good progress in improving the quality and consistency of training across the programmes that the centre offers.

Centre leaders have developed strategies and procedures that give the centre a much more accurate picture of the consistency of the provision. These include a methodical scrutiny of trainees' files and assignments, improved data-gathering and data analysis, and the collection of first-hand evidence of the quality of university training. These processes have enabled the centre to improve the practice of tutors and mentors, and allow centre leaders to develop provision in line with the centre's strategic objectives.

The strategies and procedures also include a clearly communicated vision of high expectations of all staff and an aspiration to deliver high quality teachers to the teaching force in Wales and beyond. Tutors, mentors and trainees understand the vision well and subscribe to the aspiration.

The university and centre have put in place good quality induction and an effective system of mentoring for new staff. New staff feel confident that they have good support in understanding university systems and in developing key aspects of their roles in line with expectations.

Senior centre leaders have established a clear meeting cycle, which enables staff within and across programmes to work as a team to understand the common strengths and areas for development and to share effective practice. The centre has increased its use of video conferencing, allowing all staff to make efficient use of time and to take part in meetings without having to travel to another site. The centre has developed the use of information and communication technology effectively for tutors and trainees to share information and practice efficiently.

Senior leaders also meet regularly with trainee representatives. Minutes of meetings record trainees' concerns and there are clear action points. These are followed through and trainees' views sought at the next meeting as to whether there has been improvement.

Most primary tutors now teach and support trainees on both the undergraduate and postgraduate primary programmes. Primary tutors work effectively to assure equal provision and high expectations across both programmes.

Mentors of both primary and secondary trainees report improved consistency across the programmes and cite improvement in trainees' literacy as an example of more consistent quality of university-based training.

The consolidation of the website enables mentors to send reports to the centre efficiently. In turn, it gives tutors the opportunity to analyse trainees' progress on-line and it helps tutors to prioritise and target their support to trainees and mentors more effectively.

The expectation that all tutors across all programmes will attend lead lectures ensures greater consistency in follow-up work-shops and work based on the key issues and themes discussed at the lecture.

There is now a programme of data analysis relating to key themes and issues at key points in the academic year. As a result, centre staff have a good understanding of generic and individual programme issues. Centre leaders are also beginning to analyse key features of trainees' attributes, qualifications and progress to support trainees to attain the highest possible standards of which they are capable.

The processes recently put in place across the centre represent a solid foundation to develop better consistency of training across all programmes. They are having a good impact on developing effective team-work across the teacher training programmes and have identified specific areas for improvement. The centre now

needs to build on this good work to continue to develop programme design and training to meet the needs of schools in Wales.

Recommendation 6: Ensure that tutors update their knowledge of current school practice

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Since September 2013, the centre has provided regular opportunities for tutors to engage in training activities that enhance tutors' knowledge and understanding of national priorities and current school practice. This has had a positive impact on tutors' planning and practice.

In addition, all tutors attend lead lectures and centre development days where they receive common information about key areas. This enables tutors to provide trainees with consistent messages about schools' priorities and national initiatives. Centre training days focus well on current developments in education, including good practice in literacy and numeracy teaching, innovations in information and communication technology and improving breadth in Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig.

Sessions on the Welsh Government's Literacy and Numeracy Framework and annual testing have raised tutors' awareness and understanding of the work of schools in this area. This has enabled tutors to prepare trainees well for school placements. As a result, most trainees relate their planning accurately to relevant strands in the Literacy and Numeracy Framework. Recent staff training on Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig has strengthened tutors' ability to guide and support trainees' planning and delivery for this element of the curriculum. This is evident in trainees' planning files.

The centre's strategic approach to recruitment since the inspection has been successful in attracting many staff with recent and relevant experience of schools and local authorities. The centre has further developed its partnership with schools to exemplify current issues in education for tutors and trainees and to assist schools to develop their practice, for example in reflective skills.

Recommendation 7: Ensure that middle leaders monitor standards, training and programmes to secure improvement promptly and efficiently

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

All middle leaders have started to monitor and track closely the outcomes of trainees' assignments, school experiences, audits, mentors' comments and target-setting to identify strengths and weaknesses promptly. The tracking is in line with their responsibilities and well linked to agreed priorities. As a result, middle leaders have produced interim high-level analyses, which provide a good overview of the impact of strategies on improving the quality of trainees' learning and teaching.

To underpin these processes, senior university leaders have refined monitoring and tracking processes in initial teacher training, and are beginning to collect a broad range of data by which they are identifying key issues for improvement. They have provided a substantial investment to restructure the centre's staffing and they have

successfully recruited through external competition a tier of well-qualified middle leaders at senior lectureship level. The university has effectively revised the job descriptions of post holders to include a role in quality assurance in line with the level of the post, ensuring delegation of responsibility and accountability.

Appraisal systems for centre staff have yet to be put in place as the university is in the process of devising a new university-wide system following the merger of Swansea Metropolitan University and Trinity Saint David. However, senior centre leaders have revised peer observation procedures effectively to ensure that all staff have the opportunity to work with each other, to share effective practice and to identify professional development needs through a programme of observation of cross-centre themes. Centre leaders have identified a number of areas for improvement through analysis of the outcomes of this observation process. To improve this process, the centre needs to focus on the progress that trainees make in their university sessions.

To ensure that all centre leaders have a common understanding of skills appropriate to leading and managing a professional programme, senior centre leaders have put in place leadership training for all centre leaders.

The centre has a clear cycle in place for the development and review of action plans. Senior leaders review action plans and provide guidance at key points in the year for middle leaders on how to improve and focus the action plans.

Over the last academic year, middle leaders have made improvements to their programmes by tackling issues identified through monitoring activities. This has resulted in improvements in trainees' standards across programmes, and in mutually beneficial work with partnership schools, including better procedures to identify and share effective practice. However, centre leaders will need to ensure that the interrogation of data is robust and refined enough to identify specific areas for development.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the centre should continue to work towards meeting the inspection recommendations that have not yet been fully addressed.