



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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**Response to Estyn thematic review on
the impact of the additional training graduate programme
(Teach First) in Wales**

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

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Report title: The impact of the additional training graduate programme (Teach First) in Wales

Report details

The report and advice was commissioned by the Practitioner Standards and Professional Development Division to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Additional Training Graduate Programme as a school improvement measure, including evidence of impact on learner outcomes.

Summary of main findings.

In summary, the report findings suggest that whilst there have been some excellent graduates with high levels of knowledge and the personal qualities to become excellent teachers involved in the programme the retention of these teachers in Wales is low. The report acknowledges that most participants display effective partnerships with teachers and pupils and are highly motivated to improve their teaching and use research to identify approaches to support disadvantaged pupils. The report highlights the need for Teach First, its university partner and participating schools to provide adequate support to secure the health and well-being of participants; particularly in the early stages of the school-based training.

The variability of the quality of the mentor support provided to participants and the need for appropriate training for mentors themselves in terms of self evaluation, assessment and data collection has been noted although it is recognised that Teach First has taken steps to provide additional training and guidance to support school mentors to tackle weaknesses. Some schools and participants are unsure as to how to evaluate the impact of the programme and this limits their ability to plan sustainable strategies to improve and build on learner outcomes and achievements. There is evidence that where a participant was teaching in a school for the full two years of the programme performance at GCSE has improved although Estyn has indicated that it is difficult to attribute this directly to the programme over other school improvement interventions.

Recommendation 1

R1 Ensure that teacher training providers in Wales help trainees to develop the most effective pedagogies for their subject and phase.

All four recommendations in the report are directed at the Welsh Government and are aimed at strengthening the Additional Training Graduate Programme and other routes into teaching. Recommendation one applies to developing effective pedagogical support for all student teachers regardless of their route into teaching or phase or subject studied.

The Welsh Government will, as part of the reform agenda for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Wales and the support being developed for qualified teachers under the New Deal, ensure that effective teaching and learning strategies are reflected in the work to develop revised professional standards

for teachers at all stages of their career, including on entry and during ITE. Additional requirements to support effective pedagogies and teaching and learning strategies are also being considered as part of the work to revise the ITE programme accreditation arrangements.

In terms of the ATGP we will discuss with Teach First Cymru how this recommendation might be further developed to support those currently on the programme and the 2016/17 cohort currently being recruited.

Recommendation 2

R2 Consider strategies to improve the quality of mentoring in schools, to enable trainee teachers to make good progress and to achieve their potential effectively in the first few weeks of teaching.

The quality and support for mentoring in schools across Wales is variable. Good quality mentoring and setting aside the time and resources to undertake this role effectively is a key requirement which not only runs across ITE and the early professional development of teachers, but throughout the different stages of a teacher's career pathway.

The Welsh Government will as part of the review of the ITE accreditation criteria ensure that student teacher mentoring in schools forms an integral part of the provider/school partnership arrangement, is well structured, well supported (including support and training for the mentor) and is recognised as a critical element of school-based training.

For participants on the ATGP the role of the mentor in the initial few weeks of training is central to ensuring that participants are supported to continue on the programme. We have noted the training arrangements in place for mentors and will discuss with Teach First how mentor support for participants, and mentors themselves, can be further strengthened and structured in the crucial first weeks of teaching in a Teach First placement school.

Recommendation 3

R3 Ensure that all programmes for initial teacher training support trainee teachers.

The Welsh Government recognises that the support available to student teachers to secure their health and well being is paramount to them continuing on an ITE programme, successfully gaining Qualified Teacher Status, becoming excellent new teachers and remaining in the teaching profession.

As part of the wider reform of ITE we will look at ways to enable schools to adopt a whole school approach to supporting student teachers under the guidance of the senior leadership team and mentors. University training providers will also play an active role in ensuring that a student teachers experience a high quality ITE programme which enables them to become

confident, competent, resilient and committed newly qualified teachers, providing enhanced support for student teachers who need it.

For the ATGP we will ask Teach First to consider carefully Estyn's findings and identify any shortcomings in the current support available to participants on the programme and to put in place measures and strategies to rectify them.

Recommendation 4

R4 Improve the collection of data in initial teacher training to evaluate the effectiveness of training programmes.

The Welsh Government will look closely at the current arrangements and requirements in place to collect data in order to measure the effectiveness of initial teacher education and training provided across all routes. In terms of the ATGP we will request that Teach First consider how participants share the outcomes of the pupil tracker analysis, data collection and verification with their mentors and schools to ensure the impact on improvement and the outcomes at pupil and school level are evidenced and evaluated to build on success and support sustainable improvement.

Publication details

The full report will be published on Estyn's website on 26th February 2016.
<http://www.estyn.gov.wales>