

News Release

Training helps schools teach Welsh and to teach through the medium of Welsh

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Local authority staff and teachers say that training they have received is helping them to support pupils who are studying the Welsh language or through the medium of Welsh, says a report published by Estyn today.

Estyn reports that WJEC national training programmes for Welsh-medium and Welsh language provision, which have a dedicated professional development officer and a steering group, help to share good practice and knowledge and set strategy throughout Wales.

But the in-service training programme for Welsh-medium teaching is not as fully developed and is not always as influential at a national level as the Welsh language in-service training programme. Estyn recommends that WJEC work with appropriate partners to make sure that the Welsh-medium in-service training programme responds as effectively to training needs as the Welsh-language programme.

“The Welsh Assembly Government should continue to provide the Better Schools Fund for WJEC Welsh language and Welsh-medium training programmes. Close partnership between WJEC, local authorities and schools will be vital in ensuring continued improvement in the effectiveness of these programmes,” says Susan Lewis, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales.

The way that local authorities use their funding results in good value for money. For example, wherever possible, authorities collaborate to share training events to make sure that the grant stretches as far as possible. Creative use of booking sessions means that more than one group of teachers benefit in any one-day training event.

The grant also funds the planning of four annual conferences. The vast majority of delegates indicated that the conferences were good or very good, but there is not enough formal analysis of the impact of this training on raising standards.

Inspectors have found that there is work to be done in measuring the overall success of the training programmes. Currently there is no common format across authorities to gather the views of staff and there are limited formal procedures to evaluate the work of individual trainers. Estyn recommends that WJEC should itself evaluate the training programmes as well as work with local authorities to see how successful the programmes are in improving standards.

High-quality training resources have been developed by WJEC to support these programmes. Teachers and advisers value the materials, which help to spread good practice nationally. Estyn recommends that WJEC continues to work closely with local authorities to ensure that the materials remain fit for purpose.

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Notes to Editors:

Estyn's report "An evaluation of the effectiveness of WJEC national INSET programmes" was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government and is published at www.estyn.gov.uk .

- This work was undertaken as part of the remit Estyn received from the Welsh Assembly Government in March 2006. The report is intended mainly for practitioners and may also be of use to parents.
- The evidence base includes:
 - Interviews with representatives of 9 LEAs, steering and working group members
 - Analysis of LEA and WJEC documents
 - Interviews with WJEC officers
 - Analysis of resources created by WJEC
- The national Welsh in-service training programme was established in 1989 by WJEC. The national Welsh-medium in-service training was established in April 2000.

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