



Estyn

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

Local authority support for the education of children of migrant workers



BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



OCTOBER 2009

The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:

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- ▲ secondary schools;
- ▲ special schools;
- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community-based learning;
- ▲ youth support services;
- ▲ youth and community work training;
- ▲ local authority education services (LAES);
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies;
- ▲ offender learning; and
- ▲ the education, guidance and training elements of the Department for Work and Pensions funded training programmes.

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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Contents	Page
Introduction	1
Background	2
Main findings	4
Recommendations	7
How well learners achieve	8
The effectiveness of teaching and assessment	10
How well learning experiences meet the needs and interests of the learners	15
How well the learners are cared for, guided and supported	16
The effectiveness of leadership and strategic management	18
Appendix 1: An analysis of numbers of children of parents from the 12 Accession states	
Glossary/references	
The remit author and survey team	

Introduction

- 1 This report is published in response to the annual Ministerial remit to Estyn for 2008-2009.
- 2 It builds upon another recent report by Estyn on related themes:
 - The impact of schools' race equality policies – May 2009
- 3 This report presents Estyn's findings on the quality of provision for the children of migrant workers, particularly from the European Union (EU) Accession states, who attend maintained schools in Wales. The report also comments on the standards achieved by these children.
- 4 The detail of this report includes an analysis of:
 - how well these learners achieve;
 - the effectiveness of teaching and assessment;
 - how well learning experiences meet the needs and interests of the learners;
 - how well the learners are cared for, guided and supported; and
 - the effectiveness of leadership and strategic management.
- 5 The report draws on:
 - information from reports on the primary and secondary schools inspected during the period September 2007 to July 2008;
 - discussions with headteachers, teaching, and non-teaching staff during visits made by Her Majesty's Inspectors to 20 schools;
 - discussions with groups of English as an additional language (EAL) learners during visits made by Her Majesty's Inspectors to schools; and
 - discussions with staff in eight local authority areas in Wales who have responsibility for the organisation of EAL support services.

Background

- 6 On 1 May 2004, 10 countries – Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia – joined the European Union (EU). Citizens of these countries are entitled to enter the UK to seek work. These countries were joined by Bulgaria and Romania from January 2007. However, citizens of Bulgaria and Romania must secure prior permission to enter and work in the UK. Collectively these countries are known as EU Accession states, or the A12 states. Their membership of the EU has resulted in an increase in numbers of children from these countries attending schools in Wales.
- 7 Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) financial support to local authorities specifically for the children of migrant workers is provided by the Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant (MEAG). The amount allocated for this grant in 2008-2009 was £9.1m and increased to £9.6m in 2009-2010.
- 8 The objective of the MEAG is to:
 - support pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds who are learning English as an additional language and who may be underachieving; and
 - improve standards of achievement for pupils from certain minority ethnic groups identified as being at risk of underachieving.
- 9 Local authorities may use MEAG funding for activities which improve the quality of service provision for minority ethnic learners. Most of this funding is used to cover the cost of specialist EAL teachers and bilingual or multilingual support assistants as well as for teaching resources and training for these specialist staff.
- 10 In January 2008, the Welsh Assembly Government provided £0.5m to local authorities, via the MEAG, in addition to the initial allocations for 2007-2008. This additional grant funding was provided in recognition of the added pressure on education services from growing numbers of children of migrant workers. It was shared between all 22 local authorities on the basis of the numbers of children of migrant workers from the A12 states present in each.
- 11 Appendix 1 shows the numbers of children of parents from the A12 states who were newly registered at schools in Wales at the beginning of September 2008, along with the numbers of such learners already on roll. The total number of children newly arriving is 410, in addition to 1,505 already registered. These figures are based on an assumption that all the parents of these children are migrant workers. This is unlikely to be true for all parents, and therefore there may be a small margin of error in the data collected. Also, data collection at any one point in time can never accurately reflect a true picture as numbers of learners fluctuate considerably during the school year. These issues aside, the figures provide an insight into the significant trend of rising learner numbers.

- 12 The following table provides a comparison with previous counts. It clearly illustrates that the number of learners arriving in schools in Wales is slowing, although total numbers present in Wales have increased year-on-year.

Year	Existing learners	New arrivals	Total learners from Accession States
2007	1077	516	1,593
2008	1505	410	1,915

- 13 The latest figures for 2008 indicate that the number of new arrivals has slowed by 20% compared to 2007 figures. However, the number of learners already on school rolls is significantly higher, an increase of 40% compared to 2007. This means that the overall number of children of migrant workers is at an all-time high and suggests that migrant workers' families are settling in Wales.
- 14 The numbers of children of migrant workers arriving in schools in Wales vary throughout the school year and cannot be predicted with any accuracy. In a few local authorities, these learners have been presented at schools in such large numbers that schools and support services have experienced considerable difficulties and, occasionally, find it difficult to cope. This is particularly true in Roman Catholic schools favoured by many migrant families because of their religious affiliation.

Main findings

- 15 There is a significant trend of rising learner numbers from EU Accession states and the overall number of learners is at an all-time high. However, numbers of children of migrant workers arriving in schools in Wales vary throughout the school year and cannot be predicted with any accuracy. In a few local authorities, in Roman Catholic schools in particular, large numbers of children of migrant workers with EAL needs have proved difficult to manage and these schools occasionally find it very difficult to provide learners with appropriate support.
- 16 In general, the best local authority support for the children of migrant workers is provided in the city areas of Wales. In these areas they have extensive experience of providing support to schools for learners whose first language is not English or Welsh. Overall, the support services in these city areas for EAL learners are good and, in one case, is outstanding. However, in one city area, the continuous increase in large numbers of children of migrant workers to schools, and the mobility of these learners between schools within the city, places a strain on specialist staff and class teachers.
- 17 In all the schools visited, teachers and support staff establish very good relationships with the children of migrant workers. Most of these learners state that school staff are very helpful, approachable and supportive, particularly when they first arrive in Wales.
- 18 In all schools sampled, children of migrant workers generally make good progress and achieve well overall. They are usually very well motivated and behave well, especially once they have had time to settle into school life. However, there are a few small groups of learners who are uninterested in school and therefore do not actively engage in lessons.
- 19 The children of migrant workers are usually punctual and generally attend school regularly. However, a significant number of these children in most schools take extended holidays to their home countries. Also, a few younger children often do not attend well as school attendance for these is not always perceived as being a high priority. These exceptions to the generally positive picture have an adverse effect on attendance levels in a few schools and local authority areas.
- 20 The addition of children of migrant workers to classes adds significantly to teachers' planning and preparation workloads. This is further added to by the fact that most of these learners arrive unannounced and therefore teachers have little time to prepare appropriately for the challenges presented.
- 21 Children of migrant workers in most schools learn through a mix of withdrawal in small groups and support in mainstream classes. However, most specialist support staff spend most time teaching learners in normal classroom settings. This approach benefits children of migrant workers as they engage fully in normal curriculum activities where they learn English in context and alongside their peers.
- 22 In many schools and local authorities, specialist support staff are viewed as external to the school and are only used to support children of migrant workers but not to train

teachers in EAL methodology. Only a few local authorities use specialist support staff to enhance the skills of mainstream teachers in meeting the needs of children of migrant workers.

- 23 Generally, there is not enough good quality training available for mainstream teachers, school EAL co-ordinators and support assistants on how to meet the needs of children of migrant workers. In addition, bilingual or multilingual language support assistants, who work in many local authorities and schools, have received little specific EAL training and many also have little previous experience in schools.
- 24 Schools and local authorities regularly assess and record learners' stages of English language acquisition. A few local authorities use this information very effectively to record the progress that learners make, set targets and predict where they should be attaining in relation to their anticipated level of language acquisition. This helps to ensure that each learner is making the required progress to enable him/her to become a fluent English speaker. However, few schools track the progress and achievement of these EAL learners according to their ethnic background.
- 25 In nearly all schools sampled, there are effective processes in place to enable parents to understand the progress that their children are making. Most schools offer parents opportunities to talk to school staff about their children's progress when specialist language support staff are present so that they can talk in their first language.
- 26 Nearly all schools sampled have good arrangements in place to provide learning experiences that meet the needs and interests of these children and they also manage effective care arrangements. These schools help learners to gain access to the full range of curriculum activities as soon as possible.
- 27 Many children of migrant workers often arrive at school without notice. In these cases, schools receive very little personal information on the learners or any information of their previous attainment. As a result, schools find it difficult to put in place effective, early support.
- 28 When schools have prior notice that children of migrant workers will be attending, many make good arrangements to meet children and parents along with specialist staff who can speak their first language. Most schools also operate 'buddy' systems whereby other pupils support new arrival learners. These types of support work very effectively.
- 29 Most schools celebrate and study the cultures represented in the school by children of migrant workers as this enables other learners to understand and appreciate diversity issues. Many of the schools visited display signs in many languages throughout the school. They also celebrate specific festivals in school assemblies. These reflect the home countries of the children of migrant workers. However, in a few schools, staff miss the many opportunities that are presented to teach diversity issues.
- 30 In most schools, a high priority is given by the headteacher and senior staff to provide effective support for the children of migrant workers. The clear direction given in these schools by senior staff, in many cases, ensures that learners are well supported and make good progress.

- 31 The majority of schools have purchased good quality resources to support the language development of EAL learners. However, in a few schools, materials are not always appropriate for learners as they are often not age related. This means that there is a general lack of suitably matched and subject specific materials. This hinders the progress of groups of EAL learners.
- 32 The performance management of centrally employed specialist teachers and support staff varies between local authorities. A few local authorities have very effective systems in place while, in others, very little monitoring of specialist staff is carried out. This current variation means that managers generally do not know enough about the strengths and weaknesses of their specialist staff.
- 33 Financial support to local authorities for the children of migrant workers is provided by the MEAG and is based on the numbers of EAL learners and their stages of English language acquisition. However, in many local authorities, the systems in place to moderate language acquisition levels are limited. This means that these local authorities are not certain of the accuracy of the language acquisition levels of all EAL learners.
- 34 In addition, in many local authorities, the criteria for deciding the amount of support that schools receive is not clearly conveyed to headteachers. In these cases, headteachers are not sure of the levels of support that they are entitled to in order to provide support for EAL learners.

Recommendations

The Welsh Assembly Government should:

- R1 disseminate best practice for supporting the children of migrant workers evident in city local authorities to other authorities across Wales;
- R2 explore, with the help of local authorities and others, means of gathering and sharing information on when and where migrant workers are settling in order to help and assist schools put in place early and effective support for new arrivals; and
- R3 continue to monitor, by commissioning further research, the impact on particular schools of greater numbers of EAL learners.

Local authorities should:

- R4 ensure that centrally employed specialist EAL staff are subject to suitable performance management processes;
- R5 moderate and check language acquisition assessments for all EAL learners;
- R6 ensure that the allocations of MEAG resources to schools are based on clear criteria in order that schools are confident about the basis of their funding; and
- R7 train bilingual or multilingual support assistants who support EAL learners.

Schools should:

- R8 consider how class teachers can be further trained and supported to ensure that EAL learners make appropriate progress;
- R9 track the achievements of individual EAL learners more effectively and use this information to analyse the overall performance of EAL learners;
- R10 evaluate the impact of increasing numbers of children of migrant workers on the overall life and work of the school;
- R11 exploit the opportunities presented by children of migrant workers to help other learners to understand and appreciate cultural diversity; and
- R12 ensure that resources used are appropriate for individual EAL learners.

How well learners achieve

- 35 In all schools sampled, children of migrant workers generally make good progress and achieve well overall, particularly in mathematics. Younger learners best achieve the levels of English language acquisition needed to make the most effective progress in specific curriculum subjects.
- 36 Children of migrant workers often experience language difficulties in the early stages of being placed in school and this has a negative impact on their learning and progress in the short term. However, local authorities and schools generally support these learners well so that they often make rapid progress in acquiring social language. Nevertheless, technical language that learners need to fully access the wide range of curriculum subjects takes far longer to develop.
- 37 Many learners from the EU Accession states have been in schools in Wales for three years or less. This means that there is little meaningful end of key stage information available. Although many learners who have been in the country for a short time do not attain the expected levels of performance at the end of the key stage, the progress made by the majority of these learners is very good.
- 38 Learners' achievements in GCSE Community languages are good. GCSEs are available in a number of languages and learners in one local authority have achieved a high number of A* grades in these. Work for these language GCSEs is usually undertaken by children of migrant workers as self-study or supported study at lunchtimes only.
- 39 In the sample of schools visited, children of migrant workers are generally very well motivated, particularly in primary schools. Older learners are initially less motivated but once they have had time to settle in, they display a very strong determination to do well, a strong work ethic and good attitudes to learning. Teachers in many schools state that these learners set a good example to others. There are, however, a few small groups of particular learners who are uninterested in school and therefore do not actively engage in lessons.
- 40 Most children of migrant workers make good verbal contributions to lessons and speak confidently in question and answer sessions. They listen closely to teachers, support staff and other learners and consider carefully what others are saying. When they have difficulty understanding what is being said, specialist support staff or their peers often provide effective support and translation.
- 41 Most schools provide learners with homework designed to help with language skill development and most learners are keen to complete the tasks set. Older learners in Years 10 and 11 often find it difficult to complete homework as many are involved in part-time jobs and looking after siblings while parents are at work.
- 42 In most schools, children of migrant workers generally attend well and are punctual. However, a significant number of learners take extended holidays to their home country. Also, younger children often do not attend well. This may be due to the fact that early years provision is not generally available in their home country and is thus often perceived as being unnecessary. These exceptions have an adverse effect on attendance levels in a few schools and local authority areas.

- 43 Schools generally monitor the attendance of children of migrant workers well in the same way as other learners. In one local authority there are effective systems in place to record the attendance of children of migrant workers on individual pupil profiles.
- 44 In a few cases, designated education welfare officers along with bilingual assistants follow up individual cases of non-attendance. In addition, all schools translate attendance letters that are sent to parents about their child's poor attendance or lateness. Any telephone calls made to parents regarding attendance issues are usually made by bilingual assistants in the first language.
- 45 The behaviour of children of migrant workers is generally very good. Nearly all are polite and well mannered, and show respect to fellow learners and staff. They generally have a high regard and respect for everyone in the school community.
- 46 Only a very few schools state that they have experienced any behaviour problems relating to these learners. In these few instances, poor behaviour has largely been the result of the frustration of older learners when they first arrive in Wales with very limited English language skills. Schools state, however, that these few problems are quickly resolved when good staff support and pupil peer support is put into effect.
- 47 Schools and local authorities assess and record learners' stages of English language acquisition regularly. A few local authorities use this information very effectively to predict the general academic progress that learners are likely to make and to intervene appropriately if learners are not achieving this.
- 48 Local authorities and schools sensibly take into account a number of relevant factors when considering the achievements that children of migrant workers make. These factors include:
- the length and quality of previous educational experience;
 - the pupil's first language and whether they have previously had experience of English language in their home country;
 - parents' level of spoken (and written) English; and
 - the age at which learners enter school upon arrival in Wales.

The effectiveness of teaching and assessment

- 49 In all schools visited, teachers and support staff establish very good relationships with children of migrant workers. Most of these learners state that school staff are very helpful, approachable and supportive, particularly when the learners first arrive in Wales. The constructive relationships established between staff and learners enhance the generally very positive attitudes of the children of migrant workers to their new schools.
- 50 The addition of children of migrant workers in classes adds significantly to teachers' planning and preparation workloads. This is further compounded by the fact that most of these learners arrive unannounced and therefore teachers have little time to prepare appropriately for these challenges. In a few classes, this has a disruptive effect on the learning environment. In addition, the support that teachers initially receive to help them with children of migrant workers varies considerably between schools and local authorities and is often very limited. In one local authority, the continuous increase in large numbers of children of migrant workers to schools and the mobility of these learners between schools within the local authority places considerable strain on teachers.
- 51 Planning work for children of migrant workers is most effective where teachers are supported in this task by specialist language teachers or bilingual or multilingual support assistants. Joint planning between class teachers and specialist language teachers provides well-focused lessons that meet the needs of children very well.
- 52 Local authorities and schools have a range of policies for providing support for children of migrant workers. This support ranges from the long term withdrawal of learners from curriculum lessons through to total in-class support. In a few schools, learners are provided with external language support from specialist teachers at the same time each week. This results in learners being consistently withdrawn from the same subject or subjects on a regular basis. However, schools try to ensure that learners do not consistently miss classes in one particular subject.
- 53 In a few examples, learners are fully integrated in normal lessons and any one-to-one language support is provided within the context of these. The rationale for more inclusive forms of support is widely accepted by most schools and specialist support staff spend most time supporting learners in classroom settings. This approach benefits children of migrant workers as they engage fully in curriculum activities where they learn English in context and alongside their peers.
- 54 In a few examples, the process of supporting schools with children of migrant workers is enhanced by the production of a school support agreement. This agreement is drawn up between the school and the local authority and indicates how the schools will best use its allocation of external language support.
- 55 Most schools monitor the progress of children of migrant workers well. However, during the early stages of English language acquisition, schools find it very difficult to identify particular learning needs. Most teachers appropriately wait until learners have achieved satisfactory levels of social language acquisition before identifying other learning needs.

- 56 When these needs are identified, most schools have good systems in place to provide extra support. For example,
- specific extra work is provided by class teachers that is well matched to the needs of the learners;
 - learners are supported individually or in small group work by bilingual or multilingual support assistants;
 - targeted in-class additional language support is provided by specialist teachers;
 - bilingual or multilingual support assistants and specialist teachers liaise with other agencies and assess learners to find out about any particular learning needs; and
 - teachers liaise with the parents of underachieving learners in their first language to ensure that concerns are shared.

Case study 1: Guidance for teachers on how best to make use of external specialist language support staff

Context

In South Wales, one local authority has produced very good guidance for teachers on how best to make use of external specialist language support staff in lessons. The guidance clearly outlines good practice in the respective roles and responsibilities of class teachers and specialist support teachers.

Strategy/action

This guidance is largely based on partnership teaching and involves:

- the specialist support teacher and the class teacher considering the specific needs of new arrival learners and the demands of the lessons;
- both teachers deciding on the most appropriate teaching approaches and how they will share delivery of the lesson and the production of resources;
- each teacher taking the lead and exchanging roles at different times in the lesson; and
- both teachers evaluating how the lesson went, what was successful and effective, and using this information to inform the planning of future lessons.

Outcomes

This teaching approach effectively uses the expertise of the language support staff. Learners find that their language needs are well met and they are fully involved in these lessons.

- 57 A few local authorities do not have any specialist language teachers but rely on bilingual or multilingual support assistants to provide language support for children of migrant workers in school settings. These support assistants do not usually directly plan work but support individual teachers in helping learners to access curriculum activities. In only a few local authorities are specialist support staff used to enhance the skills of mainstream teachers in meeting the needs of children of migrant workers. This 'upskilling' of mainstream teachers greatly enhances the quality of support available to learners in individual school settings. However, in too many schools, specialist support staff are viewed as external to the school and are only used to support learners but not to train teachers in meeting the needs of these learners.
- 58 The effectiveness of schools in meeting the needs of children of migrant workers is often related to the quantity and quality of the training that school leaders and teaching staff have had in dealing with issues relating to these learners. Generally, there is not enough good quality training available for mainstream teachers, school EAL co-ordinators and support assistants on how to meet the needs of children of migrant workers. All schools work hard to accommodate these learners but a lack of effective training in most local authorities makes this task difficult. In addition, language support assistants in many local authorities have received little specific EAL training and many have little previous experience in schools.
- 59 In schools where there are significant numbers of children of migrant workers, high priority is usually given to developing staff awareness of the issues associated with effectively integrating and supporting these learners. In one local authority, specialist support staff provide very well-received EAL training to all school staff. This local authority also provides on-going support and development opportunities for its central EAL staff to enable them to keep up-to-date with relevant methodology and approaches to the teaching of EAL learners.
- 60 Local authorities and schools generally have good arrangements to assess and record the attainments, achievements and progress of children of migrant workers.
- 61 In all local authorities visited, schools appropriately assess the English language acquisition levels of individual children of migrant workers at the beginning and end of each year using the five-stage model toolkit provided by the Welsh Assembly Government. Nearly all schools use this to record the progress that learners make but a few schools do not develop specific targets for learners from this information. In a few examples, local authority staff have subdivided each stage of the five-stage model into additional divisions, for example, A+/A/A-. This enables schools to use agreed criteria for these subdivisions to measure more finely the English language acquisition progress that learners make.
- 62 The Welsh Assembly Government uses English language acquisition levels of EAL learners in schools to determine the level of MEAG funding. In most local authorities systems are in place to ensure that the assessments of learners' levels of English language acquisition are accurate and that the assessment criteria are consistently applied. However, in a few local authorities, the assessments made by schools are not moderated or checked to ensure accuracy.

- 63 Most schools and local authorities keep detailed records of the achievement of EAL learners and use this information to identify where they may be underachieving. In the best cases, the progress of learners is regularly monitored with targets set and predictions made as to how learners should be attaining. This ensures that each individual pupil is making the required progress to become a fluent English speaker and to reach expected levels of attainment.

Case study 2: Learner achievement records kept by schools in one local authority

Context

In one local authority, all schools use a very effective, standardised learner record for all children of migrant workers.

Strategy/action

These records include:

- general information about the learners including health and medical conditions;
- previous schooling and length of time spent learning English;
- initial assessment of language competency carried out by specialist teachers including listening/speaking, reading and writing in the first language and in English;
- the EAL support that the learner will receive from the local authority;
- learner achievement data including information about any standardised tests and end of key stage outcomes;
- attendance information along with reasons for any extended absence;
- any learning difficulties;
- an ongoing progress record of language competency;
- a progress and achievement chart that effectively links language acquisition with predicted achievement in the National Curriculum core subjects at the end of the key stages; and
- attendance of parents at parents' evenings held by the school for the purposes of reporting on the progress of learners.

Outcomes

The learner achievement profiles are used consistently and effectively by schools in the local authority to record the progress and attainment of children of migrant workers. The profiles are particularly well used to provide relevant information when learners transfer from primary to secondary schools.

- 64 Most schools offer parents opportunities to talk to school staff about their children's progress when specialist language support staff are present so that they can talk in their first language.

How well learning experiences provided meet the needs and interests of the learners

- 65 Nearly all schools have good arrangements in place to provide learning experiences that meet the needs and interests of the children of migrant workers. These schools have effective inclusion policies that include all learners. In most cases, schools ensure their timetables meet the children's needs.
- 66 A significant issue in many schools is that the children of migrant workers often arrive at schools without notice. In these cases, the schools receive very little information about their previous attainment or personal details. As a result, these schools find it is difficult for them to put in place effective early support. In many of these schools, bilingual or multilingual learning support assistants are reallocated to support the language needs of these new arrivals and, in a few instances, this means that they cannot support other learners.
- 67 A few children of migrant workers in Years 10 and 11 do not see the value of making an effort academically in the short period of time that they are at the school. As a result, these learners sometimes become disaffected with school life.
- 68 A few schools run homework clubs and support sessions for children of migrant workers during lunchtimes. In a few secondary schools, the Year 11 tutors arrange study skill sessions targeted at GCSE learners on the C/D grade threshold. Many learners attend these sessions as they help to improve their English language skills and their ability to complete homework and course work tasks. Some homework is completed by learners in their first language and then translated by specialist staff so that class teachers can assess how well learners have understood the work.
- 69 In nearly all schools in the sample, the children of migrant workers are able to access the after-school clubs available. In addition, a small minority of schools arrange specific after-school and Saturday morning provision for the children of migrant workers.

How well the learners are cared for, guided and supported

- 70 Nearly all schools sampled plan and manage care arrangements for the children of migrant workers effectively. Headteachers and teachers state that most pupils in school are friendly and welcoming to the children of migrant workers.
- 71 The majority of schools keep parents and guardians well informed about the schools' activities. Many schools translate standard letters into the first language. This enables parents to fully access important school information. Many schools also use members of staff well to explain the main messages of newsletters and general school policies to parents. In a few cases, schools make appropriate use of older learners to translate school information, sometimes on behalf of younger siblings, when the need arises.
- 72 Most schools have effective induction procedures in place to enable children of migrant workers to settle into school quickly. When schools have prior notice that children of migrant workers will be attending, many arrange meetings to discuss school issues with the parents prior to children starting school. Local authority or school staff who speak the first language attend the meeting and these meetings are effectively used to gather information on the child's attainment, progress and other relevant issues.
- 73 However, in a minority of schools, communication with parents is sometimes difficult and this affects the school's ability to make suitable provision for these children. Many of the parents work long hours, often doing more than one job, and it is not always possible to arrange meetings.
- 74 To help the children of migrant workers settle into school effectively, most schools operate a 'buddy' system. Children are allocated 'buddies'. These are pupils who support them through the school day. In nearly all cases, these arrangements are effective and highly valued by the children of migrant workers.

Case study 3: How one secondary school supports children of migrant workers when they first arrive

Context

A rural secondary school has designated a learning support assistant to deliver an induction programme.

Strategy/action

During the first two to three days of arriving at the school, the children of migrant workers engage in an induction process. This includes providing language support to ensure that these children become familiar with such things as the school timetable, school uniform, lunch hour arrangements, school rules, how to use the school library and information regarding subject areas. This is an effective arrangement as it focuses on many practical issues, which are often overlooked by schools.

Outcomes

This approach to the induction and support for the children of migrant workers effectively meets their immediate needs and enables them to settle into school life well.

- 75 The effective and flexible use of bilingual or multilingual learning support assistants to support new arrival learners is a common feature in schools where the quality of care and guidance is good. For example, a learning assistant was allocated time to spend with a particular child for several days until she had overcome her initial difficulties at the school.
- 76 Schools have adopted a range of different approaches to celebrating diversity and overall, these arrangements are effective. Most schools celebrate and study the cultures represented in the school by children of migrant workers as this enables other learners to understand and appreciate diversity.
- 77 Many of the schools visited effectively display signs in many languages throughout the school. They also make good provision to celebrate specific festivals that reflect pupils' backgrounds. Many schools arrange for the children of migrant workers to make presentations about the heritage and culture of their home countries in school assemblies. This raises awareness amongst all learners and celebrates the cultures and languages of the children of migrant workers. All learners react very positively to these presentations.
- 78 In many schools, staff effectively learn a range basic words and phrases in the languages represented by the children of migrant workers. This enables staff to greet the children and parents in their first languages.
- 79 The majority of children of migrant workers integrate well into schools. Many of these children attend Roman Catholic schools. Their shared religion gives the children an additional commonality with other learners and this further aids good induction and integration.

The effectiveness of leadership and strategic management

- 80 In most schools, high priority is given by the headteacher and senior staff to providing effective support for the children of migrant workers. Provision and support for these learners generally feature prominently in the development plans for most schools where there are large numbers of these children. The clear direction given in these schools by senior staff, in many cases, ensures that these learners are well supported and make good progress.
- 81 Most schools provide training to develop teachers' and other staff's awareness and understanding of how learners acquire and develop their English language skills. However, the quality of this training in many schools is often not good enough to provide teachers and support staff with the skills needed to effectively support the children of migrant workers and other EAL learners. In many schools, there is not a well-structured training programme for teachers and support staff and often training is confined to occasional short courses.
- 82 Only in a few local authorities is training well structured, providing teachers and support staff with the necessary skills to effectively support EAL learners. In these few local authorities, specialist staff are used on a regular basis in schools to provide training and to enhance and develop the classroom skills of teachers and support staff. This ongoing training and support helps teachers to develop the skills necessary to fully provide for learners whose first language is not English or Welsh.
- 83 The performance management of centrally employed specialist teachers and support staff varies between local authorities. A few local authorities have very effective systems in place while in others very little monitoring is carried out. In the best local authority EAL services, rigorous performance management procedures are in place with specialist teachers regarded as essential in identifying the strengths and shortcomings of the support they provide to learners and schools.
- 84 The current variation in the effectiveness of performance management means that local authority managers generally do not know enough about the strengths and weaknesses of their staff, and are therefore unable to effectively identify individual training and development needs. This is particularly true in local authorities that buy in EAL services and have only very limited contact with specialist staff.
- 85 Although in most schools there are arrangements in place to record individual EAL learners' progress, few schools track the progress and achievement of these learners by their ethnic background. This finding is in line with Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's Annual Report for 2007-2008 that states, "Most local authorities and schools do not make good use of a range of performance data to analyse the performance of groups of learners at risk of underachievement".
- 86 Welsh Assembly Government financial support to local authorities specifically for the children of migrant workers is provided by the MEAG. This funding is based on the numbers of EAL learners and their stages of English language acquisition based on the agreed five-stage model. However, in many local authority areas there are limited systems in place to moderate and check the English language acquisition levels awarded to learners. This means that, in these local authorities, they are not certain of the accuracy of the language acquisition levels of EAL learners.

- 87 In many local authorities, the criteria for deciding the amount of support that schools receive is not clearly conveyed to headteachers. In these cases, headteachers are not sure of the levels of support that they are entitled to in order to provide support for EAL learners.
- 88 The majority of schools have purchased good quality resources to support the language development of EAL learners. However, in a few schools, materials are not always appropriate for learners as they are often not age related. This means that there is a general lack of suitably matched and subject specific materials. This hinders the progress of groups of EAL learners.

Case study 4: Good practice in one local authority to provide support for EAL learners

Context

In one urban local authority, the ethnic minority language and achievement service meets the particular needs of 2000+ learners from minority ethnic backgrounds including the children of migrant workers.

Strategy/action

Staff are subject to a very supportive performance management process that ensures high quality provision. All schools in the local authority comply with the service's advice on supporting EAL learners, are well supported by specialist staff and receive high quality training. Specialist EAL teachers are observed by designated EAL team leaders and detailed criteria for the observations are shared between the team leaders and the specialist staff. Following the observations, detailed feedback is provided to the specialist teachers identifying strengths, shortcomings and areas for development.

The service provides high quality professional development and training for its specialist EAL staff, school managers, teachers and school support staff. Some good training is provided jointly with the psychological service in order to better meet the needs of EAL children who have SEN.

The way the service supports schools is based on good partnership working including:

- the direct support for school staff and learners; and
- the provision of effective classroom support designed to develop teachers' skills in effectively providing appropriate support for children of migrant workers.

The service provides a high quality interpreting and translating service for school staff, learners, parents and other education staff.

Estyn inspection reports of this service indicate that the support provided to learners and school staff is good, with some outstanding features.

Outcomes

The quality of teaching has improved. The service also effectively tracks the progress that learners make and is able to demonstrate that the overall progress of most learners is very good.

Appendix 1: An analysis of numbers of children of parents from the 12 Accession states

Pupils from EU Accession Countries							
Arrivals since September 2008							
Country of origin	No. of children already registered at school			No. of new arrivals			Overall total
	Primary	Secondary	Total	Primary	Secondary	Total	
Bulgaria	8	8	16	2	3	5	21
Cyprus	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
Czech Republic	84	31	115	28	11	39	154
Estonia	2	3	5	0	0	0	5
Hungary	20	14	34	7	2	9	43
Latvia	13	13	26	4	1	5	31
Lithuania	43	25	68	16	4	20	88
Malta	14	10	24	3	0	3	27
Poland	740	381	1,121	192	102	294	1,415
Romania	24	12	36	17	2	19	55
Slovakia	44	14	58	10	4	14	72
Slovenia	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
Total	994	511	1,505	281	129	410	1,915

Newly registered at schools in Wales at the beginning of September 2008, along with the numbers of such learners already on roll

Glossary/references

Glossary

EAL	This refers to those learners for whom English is an additional language.
MEAG	The Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant. This grant covers support for EAL learners as well as for other minority ethnic learners who have English as their first language and are at risk of underachieving.

References

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