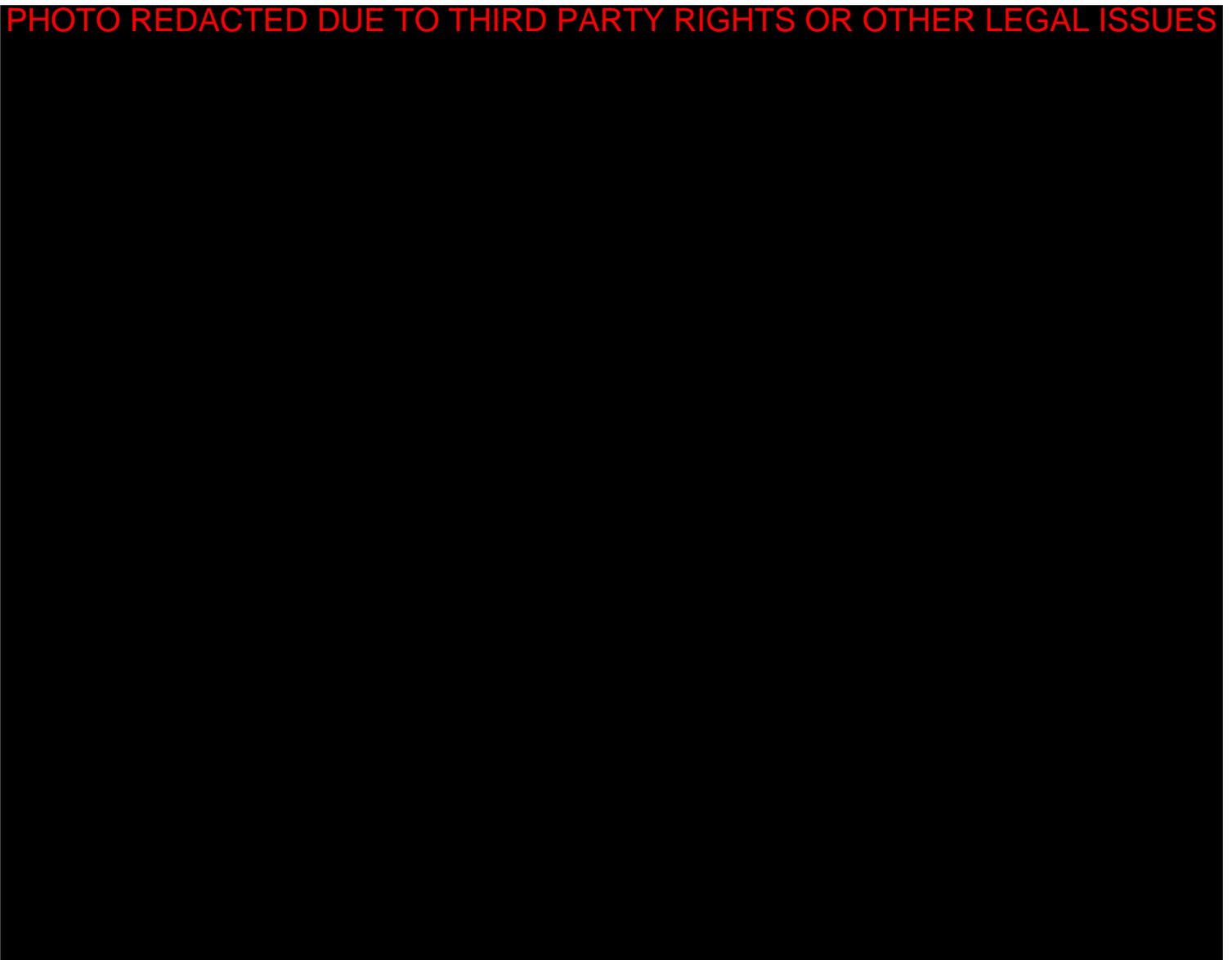

The impact of the Additional Training Graduate Programme (Teach First) in Wales

February 2016

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Introduction

This report is published in response to a request for advice about the effectiveness of the Additional Training Graduate Programme (ATGP) in Wales from the Welsh Government in the Minister's annual remit letter to Estyn. The report is intended for the Welsh Government and leaders and staff of the ATGP in Wales and their partnership schools. It may also be of wider interest to participants (that is, trainees on the Teach First programme), to leaders and staff who work in schools, and to those who work in teacher education and training. The report draws on the evidence noted in Appendix 1.

Background

The Additional Graduate Training Programme in Wales

In 2013, the Welsh Government introduced a new employment-based route into teaching, called the Additional Graduate Training Programme (ATGP), in addition to the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP). The ATGP differs from the GTP in that ATGP participants must be 'high quality' graduate entrants to the profession who are normally placed in secondary schools in areas of economic disadvantage.

Teach First

Teach First began as an England-based education charity with a vision that no child's educational success should be limited by their socio-economic background. A two-year 'Leadership Development Programme' for trainee teachers was launched in England in 2002, as an employment-based route into teaching. Participants join Teach First and their university partners for six weeks of intensive training before teaching in a school in a low-income community for two years. After Year 1 of the programme, successful participants achieve a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) and Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Teach First participants are employed by the school on the unqualified teachers' pay scale until they achieve QTS, after which they are paid as teachers. During the two-year programme, they are supported by university tutors, school mentors and Teach First Leadership Development Officers. In England, Teach First is organised in 10 regions, each with a local director.

Teach First Cymru

In 2013, the Welsh Government awarded Teach First a contract to run a three-year pilot ATGP in Wales. Teach First established Teach First Cymru to run the ATGP in partnership with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD).

The UWTSD provides initial teacher training through the South West Wales Centre of Initial Teacher Education and Training (SWWCTE). Initial teacher training at the centre is founded on well-established provision at two former partner universities Trinity College and Swansea Metropolitan University.

As part of the ATGP, UWTSD provides much of the on-going training towards the PGCE qualification which is awarded after a year's teaching experience. The programme begins with a six-week 'summer institute' preparation for the first school experience, comprising of four weeks training at UWTSD, followed by two weeks when the participants from Wales join with Teach First participants from England (see Appendix 2).

In years one and two of the programme, participants worked in English, mathematics, science and modern foreign languages departments in 31 schools across ten local authorities in South Wales. In year three, the programme was extended to schools in the north of Wales.

In 2015, the Welsh Government extended the pilot for a further academic year (2016-2017), with a target intake of 30 participants.

Recruitment and selection

The targets for recruiting onto the programme for the three-year pilot were set by the Welsh Government at 40, 50 and 60 graduates respectively. In 2013, 29 graduates were recruited to the first cohort, 37 graduates were recruited to the second cohort in 2014, and, in 2015, 58 graduates were recruited to the third cohort.

Teach First recruit participants at a central UK recruitment centre where candidates undertake a series of tasks. Candidates are assessed against eight core competencies:

- Leadership
- Humility, respect and empathy
- Resilience
- Interaction
- Problem-solving
- Planning and organisation
- Knowledge
- Self-evaluation

Successful candidates are offered a conditional place on the programme. This is subject to a check on their qualifications, assessments in literacy and numeracy, and an assessment of the candidate's knowledge of the subject in which they are training to teach. The final stage of the recruitment process consists of preparation work, including that for one week's observation in a school and successful completion of the six-week summer institute training.

Main findings

- 1 Around half of the Additional Training Graduate Programme (ATGP) participants achieve good standards and a few excellent standards. Many participants make good progress in their teaching, but too few achieve their potential of becoming excellent teachers. A few participants do not complete the programme successfully and do not achieve Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
- 2 Most participants display very good professional values and attitudes and establish effective relationships with teachers and pupils. They are highly motivated to improve their teaching, are reflective and make valuable links between educational theory and classroom practice. For example, they use their research into tackling poverty in schools to identify approaches to support disadvantaged pupils.
- 3 Many participants set very high expectations for themselves. In a minority of cases, participants experience difficulties in managing deadlines for lesson planning and for assignments, and this has a negative impact on their health and wellbeing.
- 4 Most participants have good subject knowledge, and nearly all participants plan lessons thoroughly. Many use a wide range of often innovative teaching strategies. However, around half of participants do not consider carefully enough how best to teach the skills, knowledge and understanding of their subject.
- 5 Many of the participants who achieved QTS were still in teaching posts in September 2015, two years after starting the ATGP programme, but only a minority are teaching in Wales.
- 6 The university-based training ('summer institute') provides participants with a wide range of useful experiences to start to develop their knowledge and understanding of teaching. Written assignments give participants valuable opportunities to explore educational theory and to make useful links to their teaching. Tutors' marking generally gives participants helpful formative feedback.
- 7 In the school-based training, most mentors support participants to be creative in their planning. However, around half of mentors give participants feedback on their teaching that is too generous or too superficial and not sufficiently focused on the progress that pupils make in lessons as a measure of successful teaching. These mentors do not provide participants with challenging enough targets and this limits participants' ability to achieve more highly.
- 8 In a few schools, subject departments do not have the capacity to support participants effectively. In these weaker departments, mentors do not monitor pupils' work carefully enough. As they do not identify weaknesses in their own practice, they are not able to improve aspects of the participants' teaching.
- 9 Participants find the first few weeks in their schools very demanding. There is too much variability in participants' first experiences of teaching in their placement schools, and this means that participants do not make enough progress in the first term of teaching. A few schools have developed approaches to mentoring that support participants well in the first few weeks of taking up their post, and this has had a positive impact on participants' confidence, progress and wellbeing.

- 10 A majority of schools report that the participants have brought new ideas to the department in which they work. A minority of schools say that their participants have had a positive impact on the attitudes and performance of some small groups of pupils in the classes that they teach. A few departments have found that participants challenge established practice and bring new ideas to teaching and schemes of work.
- 11 In a majority of departments, where participants have taught for two years, pupils' performance at GCSE has improved. However, it is difficult to attribute these improvements directly to the school's partnership with the ATGP programme. The evidence is not robust enough to show that the ATGP programme has made a positive impact on schools, departments or pupils.
- 12 Programme leaders have gathered a wide range of evidence to inform self-evaluation processes, including the views of participants and partner schools. Programme leaders have improved communications with schools, and developed the programme team, the programme content, and mentor training and guidance well. However, self-evaluation does not focus well enough on the training in school, and this has limited the improvement of mentors' assessment. Schools are unsure as to how to evaluate the impact of the ATGP programme and this limits their ability to plan sustainable strategies to improve outcomes for pupils.

Recommendations

To strengthen the ATGP and other routes into teaching, the Welsh Government should:

- R1 Ensure that teacher training providers in Wales help trainees to develop the most effective pedagogies for their subject and phase
- R2 Consider strategies to improve the quality of mentoring in schools, to enable trainee teachers to make good progress and to achieve their potential
- R3 Ensure that all programmes for initial teacher training support trainee teachers effectively in the first few weeks of teaching
- R4 Improve the collection of data in initial teacher training to evaluate the effectiveness of training programmes

How good are the standards achieved by the participants?

Progress against the standards for qualified teacher status

- 13 The table below shows the success of participants in completing the first year of their programme and in being awarded QTS in 2014 and 2015 in Wales.

	Teach First Cymru (academic year 2013-2014)	%	Teach First Cymru (academic year 2014-2015)	%
Number of participants recruited to the programme**	29		37	
Number of participants awarded QTS	25	86.2%	31	83.8%
Number of participants who withdrew from the programme	*	*	6	16.2%
Number of participants who failed the programme	*	*	*	*
Number of participants who deferred from the programme	*	*	*	*

Source: Education Workforce Council, 2015, unpublished.

* data which cannot be given for reasons of confidentiality

** that is, the number who completed the summer institute training successfully and started teaching in school in September.

- 14 In 2013-2014, the percentage of participants who gained QTS was just below that of post-graduate secondary trainees following the university-based routes in Wales. In 2014-2015, a larger proportion of participants failed to successfully complete the programme than in 2013-2014, and the percentage of participants who gained QTS was lower than that of those following PGCE secondary programmes in Wales (Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, Initial Teacher Training in Wales, Statistical Information 2012-2013).

Standards

- 15 Around half of participants recruited achieve standards that are good or better. Of these, a few attain excellent standards. Over the two years of the programme, most participants make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning. Many participants make good progress in their teaching skills, although, considering their starting points, too few participants achieve their potential to become excellent teachers.
- 16 Most participants demonstrate good personal and professional characteristics. They are well motivated in their ambition to be excellent teachers and to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils. Most participants are highly qualified, and many engage well with the summer institute training, taking an intelligent and critical

approach to the learning experiences offered to them. During the summer training, most candidates work well together to explore ideas and approaches to teaching. They form positive networks with their peers and tutors, which help them to withstand the challenges of their first year.

- 17 Most participants are committed to improving their teaching and they act diligently on advice and guidance from their tutors and mentors. Many participants form good relationships with staff and pupils.
- 18 Many participants develop their reflective skills well. They evaluate their lessons carefully and they make considered links between classroom practice and education theory.
- 19 Most participants have a good knowledge of the subject in which they are training to teach. A few participants are teaching outside of their degree subject area, and most of these participants make good progress in developing their subject knowledge.
- 20 Many participants endeavour to know their pupils well. A few take good account of the specific needs of pupils, for example those with additional learning needs. They organise the learning to make sure that these pupils receive the help that they require.
- 21 Nearly all participants prepare and plan thoroughly for lessons. They structure their lessons well to create a productive working environment. Many participants plan for the different abilities of pupils in their classes. They set differentiated challenges for their pupils, although these activities do not always enable pupils to make good progress because the participants do not teach the pupils all they need to know and do to succeed.
- 22 Most participants use a good range of teaching strategies, and many are innovative in their approaches to teaching new or difficult ideas to pupils. However, a minority of participants do not explain key concepts in a way that aids pupils' understanding or deal with pupils' misconceptions well enough. Occasionally, their teaching is overly imaginative, at the expense of using more effective ways of teaching, and this limits pupils' learning. A minority of participants do not identify specific learning goals for their pupils, and do not select the most appropriate teaching and learning approaches.
- 23 A few participants have outstanding teaching skills. They challenge pupils' thinking and use strategies that enable pupils to make excellent progress.
- 24 Many participants use questioning well to engage learners. However, in a minority of instances, they do not question in a way that probes or extends pupils' understanding or ascertains pupils' grasp of key learning points. A minority of participants do not develop pupils' thinking well enough.
- 25 Many participants are developing a useful range of strategies to encourage pupils' good behaviour. A minority of participants make slow progress in being able to employ appropriate behaviour management techniques and this limits their progress in developing their teaching skills.

- 26 Most participants mark pupils' work regularly and write helpful feedback that enables pupils to make progress in their learning. Around half of participants do not set challenging enough targets for pupils, especially for those pupils who are more able.
- 27 In their university assignments, participants make valuable connections between research literature, including references to the Welsh education system, and their teaching. A few participants read widely and connect theory and practice with an excellent level of understanding. Many participants write well, and all have suitable literacy skills, although a few struggle with the standards expected in academic writing. A few produce assignments of a very high quality. Through their written work, many participants show a good understanding of the context of the school in which they are working and, in particular, recognise the specific needs of the pupils that they teach.
- 28 In their reflective journals, participants record their developing knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning in an increasingly critical manner throughout their first year. Most participants analyse their teaching and pupils' learning very usefully and demonstrate how their reading of key educational texts makes a difference to their planning and evaluation. A minority of participants reflect successfully on their classroom practice. They evaluate their teaching and pupils' learning skilfully and suggest pertinent ways to develop their practice.

Wellbeing

- 29 Many participants have strategies to manage their workload effectively. However, a minority of participants find that the demands of the programme have a negative impact on their health and wellbeing. In particular, these participants experience difficulties in managing deadlines for their academic assignments and in planning their lessons. In the main, these difficulties arise because participants set very high expectations for themselves. In the first year of the programme running in Wales, many participants also experienced difficulties caused by heavy school timetable commitments, although this was alleviated in the second year of the programme, due to improved communication between the university, Teach First Cymru and their partner schools.
- 30 A few participants who are teaching beyond the parameters of their degree subject find that the extra demands of developing their subject knowledge alongside their teaching skills is particularly stressful. The university has supported these participants well with additional materials to develop their knowledge, although this has increased the workload on individuals and, in a very few cases, has caused additional anxiety.
- 31 Participants attend well and are punctual in the university-based parts of the programme. Most participants take responsibility for their own learning and professional development, and make the most of opportunities in school to develop their knowledge and understanding.
- 32 Many participants contribute well to extra-curricular learning in their schools, such as subject and homework clubs and supporting pupils working towards the Duke of

Edinburgh Award. A minority of participants engage well with initiatives to support more able pupils.

- 33 Participants are clear about safeguarding arrangements and understand how to apply these in school.
- 34 Many participants demonstrate the capacity to develop their leadership skills to contribute to school development. A minority of participants have led new approaches in school. For instance, they have contributed to developments in digital learning, or have led a working group of teachers to improve experiences for more able pupils.

Destinations

- 35 In the first year of the programme, 25 participants achieved QTS. A very few of these participants did not progress to the second year of the programme.
- 36 The table below shows the destinations, in September 2015, of the 22 participants who completed the second year of the programme.

		Number	Percentage
Participants who achieved QTS		25	100%
Participants who completed Year 2 of the programme		22	88%
	Participants teaching in Wales in September 2015	8	32%
	Participants in teaching posts outside Wales in September 2015	10	40%
	Participants seeking teaching posts in September 2015	*	*
	Participants in employment other than teaching in September 2015	*	*

Source: Teach First Cymru, 2015, unpublished.

* figure less than 5: this figure has been removed to avoid disclosure.

- 37 Many of the participants from the first cohort who achieved QTS in 2014 were in teaching posts in September 2015, two years after starting the Teach First Cymru programme. However, only a minority are teaching in Wales. All the participants who gained teaching posts outside Wales are now teaching in England. Of these,

many moved to England because of personal circumstances. A majority of participants expressed a wish for career development, and a minority moved out of Wales to enable them to advance in their leadership roles, such as becoming head of department. A very few schools did not renew their participants' contracts due to financial constraints.

How good are the training and assessment in the university-based programme?

- 38 The Teach First Cymru programme (see appendix 2) begins with the summer institute which comprises six weeks of university-led training. Participants are based at the Carmarthen campus of UWTSD for the first four weeks of the summer institute, and spend the final two weeks at a university in England, where they are engaged in training with participants from across the UK regions.
- 39 During their time in UWTSD, nearly half of the training time is spent in school. In week two of the programme, participants have a five-day school experience in school that has been identified as having leading practice on the basis of the National School Categorisation System (a colour-coded system used by local authorities and regional consortia to identify schools, ranging from those in need of significant support to those schools which are highly effective), or by being judged as excellent by Estyn.
- 40 In 2015, participants were placed in groups in eight effective schools in South West Wales, as determined by the national categorisation. Half of these schools are categorised as highly effective (green category) schools, and half as effective schools (yellow category).
- 41 Overall, the school-based experience gives participants a valuable forum to reflect on current practice in schools, to interact with senior staff in schools, and to practise their teaching skills in a supportive environment.
- 42 All of the schools provide useful experiences for participants that include the core expectations of the Teach First Cymru programme, but also allow the schools to adapt the experiences that they offer in a way that exemplifies particularly effective strategies that the school employs, for example, restorative practice (a behaviour management approach to resolving conflict and preventing harm).
- 43 Most of the training sessions provided by the schools are relevant to the needs of participants and well-planned and presented clearly by staff in schools. Many sessions give participants a useful overview of the ways in which effective schools have responded to national strategies. In particular, the schools provide valuable guidance on and practical approaches to tackling poverty and disadvantage in schools. A few sessions lack clarity or focus too heavily on processes and school systems, rather than on giving the participants practical guidance. In a very few instances, school staff missed opportunities to provide participants with important information about dealing with safeguarding procedures.

- 44 For their second school experience, participants attend the schools in which they will be working in the following September. This gives participants an opportunity to become familiar with the school, its pupils and its context, and to discuss their teaching responsibilities. A minority of senior leaders in schools found organising a productive experience for participants at the end of the summer term particularly challenging and expressed concerns that participants are unable to gain enough experience of classroom practice.
- 45 The university training sessions at UWTSD pay good attention to current issues in teaching and learning in Wales and tutors provide useful ideas and strategies for teaching. A few sessions focus too heavily on theory and tutors do not provide enough opportunities for participants to use their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- 46 In the best subject sessions, tutors question participants effectively and provide a high level of challenge and good opportunities for reflection. Tutors provide good models of teaching and learning for participants, and help them to consider theory alongside classroom practice. In a few sessions, the learning intentions are not clear enough and participants do not focus upon the most important aspects that will help them to make progress in their teaching skills and in their knowledge about how pupils learn.
- 47 At the summer institute training in the university centre in England, most tutors have good subject knowledge and encourage participants to share their thinking and questions. Generally, subject sessions are well planned and contain appropriate material at the right level, and most provide suitable challenge to the participants. However, within subject areas, these sessions vary too much in quality and content, and do not take a consistent approach to developing participants' subject pedagogy.
- 48 The summer institute conference in the English university provides an impressive range of options for participants to engage with current issues in teaching and learning. Most presenters are experts in their field, and deliver thought-provoking learning experiences. Welsh participants benefit from being part of the whole Teach First cohort in England, and from being able to share their views with a wider group of people. However, the sessions in England do not address the differences in the Welsh education system well enough.
- 49 Although participants benefit from some engaging and at best inspiring sessions, summer institute training does not focus well enough on the basic skills that participants need to be 'classroom ready'. In particular, many schools and participants do not feel that the training has given them enough advice about and experience of strategies to deal with challenging behaviour.
- 50 Subject studies days held throughout year one of the programme are helpful for participants to develop ideas and to improve their planning. Many of these sessions are focused on developing specific aspects of teaching and learning, such as literacy across the curriculum, strategies for more able pupils, and the development of creative and problem-solving skills in lessons. In general, tutors plan a good range of stimulating activities. However, because these sessions are organised mainly in

subject groups, participants' thinking is sometimes limited either by the small number of participants in the group, or by the lack of diversity of viewpoints within the group.

- 51 Some of these training sessions are held in school and provide very valuable opportunities for participants to develop their knowledge and understanding in the school setting, by, for example, observing experienced practitioners or by using school-based resources, such as digital equipment.
- 52 Participants benefit from extra-curricular 'Super Saturday' sessions, held four times during the academic year. However, attendance at these events is variable, and participants attend when they perceive that the value of the content is directly applicable to their progress.
- 53 Written assignments provide participants with a wide range of useful opportunities to put their teaching into context. Tutors have developed support materials to help participants plan and produce better assignments and these have had a positive impact on the quality of participants' written work.
- 54 Overall, marking by tutors is fair and thorough, and enables participants to make good progress. Most tutors use the assessment criteria well to provide valuable formative feedback to participants. In the main, tutors' marking helps participants to improve their literacy skills, although in a few cases, tutors do not correct participants' literacy errors thoroughly or support participants well enough to develop their academic writing skills.
- 55 There are systematic processes to moderate participants' written work. Collaborative approaches to assessment and moderation with tutors from the UWTSD PGCE programme have helped to improve assessment practice.

How good are the training and assessment in the school-based programme?

- 56 There is a strong relationship between the quality of mentoring and the progress made by participants.
- 57 Most mentors are experienced mentors of PGCE trainees. A minority of mentors have adapted their practice well to tailor their mentoring to the specific needs of ATGP participants. For example, a minority of mentors work effectively with participants to help them plan lessons, and in designing a series of lessons, and this has had a positive impact in participants' progress and in helping them to manage their workload.
- 58 Many participants receive personal support from the school that helps them to fit into school life. They provide good opportunities for the participant to develop an understanding of the wider context of the school and other facets of the school's work.

- 59 Most mentors give participants good opportunities to be creative in their planning and teaching.
- 60 Around half of mentors assess participants' progress in school accurately and fairly. They provide detailed feedback that helps participants to make good progress. However, around half of mentors provide feedback that is too generous, too superficial, or not focused enough on the progress that pupils make in lessons. These mentors do not provide participants with challenging enough targets and this limits participants' ability to achieve their full potential.
- 61 A minority of mentors are unsure about the grading that they should use with participants in school, especially with regard to the incremental grading of participants' progress in summative reports.
- 62 In many schools, professional mentors and mentors responsible for different subjects discuss the progress of participants, and this helps them to provide useful feedback to trainees. In a few schools, mentors carry out internal moderation of assessments in school, by observing participants other than those for whom they are directly responsible, and by discussing jointly their written assessments. This helps mentors in their assessment practice, but they are still unsure as to whether their judgments are consistent with those of other schools.
- 63 Joint observations between university tutors and school mentors have helped mentors to assess participants' progress accurately in a majority of cases. However, in a minority of instances, mentors found that observations occur too late in the year to impact on their practice.
- 64 Most schools draw on their past experience of mentoring with trainee teachers to provide a training programme for participants that covers a range of aspects of teaching and learning. However, many schools do not have a good enough understanding of the Teach First Cymru training model to support participants to fulfil their potential, and many mentors are unaware of how best to address the particular needs of the participants, who have to develop their classroom strategies more quickly than conventional trainee teachers.
- 65 In a few schools, subject departments do not have the capacity to support participants effectively because of weaknesses in subject leadership and teaching. In these weaker departments, mentors do not monitor pupils' work carefully enough. They do not identify weaknesses in their own practice and are unable to improve aspects of the participants' teaching.
- 66 Participants find the first few weeks in their schools very demanding. Mentor development events and Teach First Cymru documentation stress that participants require 'special support' during the first term, although mentors do not have specific guidance for how this support might work in practice. This means that there is too much variability in participants' first experiences of teaching in their placement schools.
- 67 A few schools have developed approaches to mentoring that support participants well in the first few weeks of taking up their post, for example by helping participants

move towards teaching a full timetable in a phased way. They have developed a well-structured induction programme to support participants in their first half term in the school. These schools have allowed extra time for mentors to provide incremental support to the participants and have employed strategies such as team-teaching to build participants' self-assurance and their skills in the classroom, or by creating smaller classes. This has helped participants to develop their planning and teaching and to explore a broader range of strategies, especially with regard to behaviour management. This has had a positive impact on participants' confidence, progress and wellbeing.

- 68 A majority of mentors provide opportunities for participants to work with newly qualified teachers or trainee teachers in the school from other PGCE courses. Participants find this helpful and supportive.

What is the impact on the school, department and the pupils?

- 69 The Teach First vision is that 'no child's educational success is limited by their socio-economic background'. A central purpose of the Teach First Cymru programme is to give participants the tools and developmental opportunities they need to have the greatest possible impact on educational equality. The programme identifies five goals:
- Narrow the gap in literacy and numeracy at primary
 - Narrow the gap in GCSE attainment at secondary school
 - Ensure that young people develop key strengths, including resilience and wellbeing, to support key aspirations
 - Narrow the gap in the proportion of young people taking part in further education or employment training after finishing their GCSEs
 - Narrow the gap in university graduation, including from the 25% most selective universities, by 8% (Teach First/University of Wales Trinity Saint David, 2015).
- 70 Overall, there is little robust evidence to show that being in partnership with the programme has a positive impact on the school, department or pupils. In a majority of departments where participants have taught for two years, pupils' performance at GCSE has improved. However, it is very difficult to attribute these improvements directly to the impact of the participants. Many of these schools are supported by Schools Challenge Cymru (an initiative funded by the Welsh Government to raise achievement in the 40 most challenged secondary schools in Wales) and, as part of this initiative, they are employing a number of strategies to improve pupils' attainment. In a minority of departments, standards at GCSE have declined.
- 71 Participants use a number of approaches designed to measure the impact of participants' teaching on pupils' attainment. Each participant selects a class as a focus for a small-scale research project. They identify their aim, or 'vision' for this class, for example that pupils improve their confidence or resilience, and consider the impact of their teaching and learning strategies in achieving this aim. Participants use the 'pupil progress tracker' (an information system that analyses pupils' performance data), and the 'iKnowMyClass' survey tool (a questionnaire designed to find out about pupils' aspirations and motivations).

- 72 Most participants use the outcomes of the analysis to identify the progress made by groups of pupils, and many reflect thoughtfully on the improvements made by their class, and evaluate their teaching approaches well. Generally, however, participants do not share the outcomes of the pupil tracker analysis with their schools enough. This diminishes the robustness of the analysis, and because school staff are not involved enough in this collection and verification of data, the impact on schools is limited.
- 73 Many participants have a positive impact on pupils' wellbeing. They have good relationships with the pupils that they teach and support them well outside of lesson time, for example in preparing for examinations and in completing homework. A few participants have supported more able pupils well through extra-curricular clubs.
- 74 A majority of schools report that the participants have brought new ideas to the department in which they work. A minority of schools say that their participants have had a positive impact on the attitudes and performance of some small groups of pupils in the classes that they teach, such as disaffected pupils, boys and pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL). A few departments have found that participants challenge established practice and bring new ideas to teaching and schemes of work.
- 75 Around half of schools employ the Teach First Cymru participants as supernumerary members of the departments in which they are training to teach. This arrangement releases resource that allows for other members of staff to spend more time on their leadership duties, for example in co-ordinating literacy and numeracy across the school, or for classes to be split. This has had a positive impact on pupils' standards in a few cases. However, school leaders have not evaluated these approaches fully.
- 76 Many schools are happy with the quality of their participants. In a minority of schools, headteachers have experienced difficulties in appointing staff, especially in mathematics and science, and have found that the ATGP has provided a useful opportunity to employ highly-qualified teachers to these posts.

How good are the leadership and management of the ATGP programme?

Communication

- 77 The overall vision and values of Teach First Cymru are clearly understood by all. This is a strength of the programme as it gives purpose and direction to schools, programme staff and participants.
- 78 Nearly all schools are aware of most of the operational requirements of the programme. Programme documentation outlines the roles and responsibilities of all involved in the programme. Most schools understand, in general terms, the roles undertaken by tutors and mentors. However, many schools are unclear about the organisation of tutor visits to the school, and most schools do not fully understand the

role of the Leadership Development Officer. During school visits, there is little contact between Teach First Cymru tutors, university tutors and school mentors. This undermines the partnership and limits the development of a co-ordinated approach to supporting participants.

- 79 In a few cases, programme leaders have not paid close enough attention to the different circumstances of partner schools. A few schools, such as those undergoing major changes, such as amalgamation, have experienced difficulties with supporting participants. There have been limited partnership processes to cope with these situations.

Mentor training and development

- 80 Initially, mentor training was not organised well enough to give schools an understanding of how they might support participants to achieve their potential, and minutes of meetings were not always sent to schools. This meant that schools were unable to support participants well enough in the first year of the programme.
- 81 In year two of the programme, staff from UWTSD and Teach First Cymru improved the content and delivery of the mentor training events. The introductory mentor training event for subject mentors and professional mentors provided a useful reflection of the strengths and weaknesses of the first year of the programme. Staff presented the views of participants on their training and included presentations by participants. This provided new mentors with valuable insights into how the Teach First Cymru programme differs from traditional PGCE programmes, and of the particular needs of Teach First Cymru participants. However, although staff stressed the need for participants to have 'special support' in the first few weeks of their training, this was not fully articulated. Furthermore, the training does not provide specific examples of where schools have mentored participants successfully in the first half-term of their school placements. Schools are still unsure as to how to evaluate the impact of the ATGP programme and this limits their ability to plan long-term strategies to improve outcomes for pupils.
- 82 Teach First Cymru and staff from UWTSD have worked to develop the quality and organisation of mentor training sessions over the first two years of the programme. Attendance at mentor training events has improved, although a few schools have experienced difficulties in releasing mentors to attend mentor training, especially where the school has a number of participants.
- 83 Training events provide a good forum for mentors to share ideas about supporting participants and complying with the requirements of their role. Tutors plan sessions to develop mentors' knowledge and understanding of mentoring by introducing relevant research. However, tutors do not engage mentors well enough in discussion about mentoring practice, and there is too little focus in mentor sessions on mentoring skills, target setting, and the need to challenge participants to achieve excellence.
- 84 Teach First Cymru, in collaboration with UWTSD and mentors in two of its partnership schools, has produced a helpful guidance booklet for mentors. This includes a week-by-week guide to training activities that mentors should undertake

with their participants in school. The guide also defines the roles and responsibilities taken by different partners. However, the guidance booklet does not explain well enough exactly what participants should know and be able to do following the summer institute, or provide enough detail on the expectations of leadership development, or explain well enough how data should be collected and analysed to demonstrate impact. There is not enough detail in the guidance about how to support participants during the first few weeks of their school placement.

- 85 A minority of mentors have benefited from participating in an accredited mentor development programme run by the university. However, it is too early to judge the impact of this training on participants' standards.

Self-evaluation

- 86 Teach First Cymru and UWTSD have established several processes for quality assurance and self-evaluation. These include internal moderation procedures of participant outcomes, feedback from participants, programme staff and mentors, and external examination.
- 87 Programme staff monitor participants' progress appropriately. This is achieved through scrutiny of participants' self-evaluation against the Standards for QTS, formative and summative assessments of participants' teaching in school, and a careful analysis of participants' progress in written assignments. An internal review board provides a valuable forum for mentors, tutors and leadership development officers to discuss the progress of individual participants and to identify processes to improve participants' development.
- 88 The programme self-evaluation report is a useful document that draws together evidence from internal and external programme scrutiny. The report is mainly evaluative, although is too descriptive of processes in a few instances, and does not provide a thorough enough analysis of data. Self-evaluation processes do not make good use of information from first-hand evidence of training in school and in university, in particular, about the quality of assessment in school.
- 89 Programme leaders in Wales have listened to the views of schools, participants and tutors, and have made changes to the programme provision in many instances. The assessment of assignments, mentor training, and the content of the summer institute have all improved over the first two years of the programme. However, there remain some important areas for development, such as the support offered to participants in the first few weeks of teaching and in developing participants' approaches to behaviour management and lesson planning, and these areas continue to have a negative impact on the progress of a minority of participants.
- 90 Leaders have made changes to the programme team that have improved the quality of university training and support for participants in school. All tutors are suitably qualified, and have a good understanding of current educational issues.

Appendix 1: Evidence base

Inspectors visited 26 schools in the summer term of 2014, the autumn term of 2014, and the summer term of 2015.

We observed:

- Twelve participants in cohort one in the first year of their programme
- Twelve participants in cohort one in the second year of their programme
- Ten participants in cohort two in the first year of their programme

Inspectors held interviews with headteachers, professional mentors and subject mentors in school, Teach First and UWTSD programme leaders and staff, and participants.

We observed:

- University training in UWTSD
- Sessions in the Summer Institute held at the University of Leeds
- Subject studies sessions
- Mentor training sessions
- Professional mentor training sessions

Inspectors scrutinised the following documentation:

- Participant assignments
- Teach First Cymru planning documents
- Teach First Cymru training materials and programme handbooks
- Teach First Cymru mentor training documents and handbooks
- Teach First Cymru self-evaluation and planning for improvement documents
- Teach First Cymru reports to the Welsh Government

Reference list

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Appendix 2

The Teach First Cymru programme

Application and assessment

- Enrolment
- Subject knowledge audit
 - Professional skills test
 - Participant preparation work



Summer Institute

- **Week one:** university studies (professional studies and subject studies), University of Wales Trinity Saint David
- **Week two:** five-day school experience in a good or excellent school in an area of economic disadvantage
- **Week three:** four-day teaching experience in placement schools (where participants will be employed throughout their time on the programme) and one day of subject studies in university
- **Week four:** university studies (professional studies and subject studies), University of Wales Trinity Saint David
- **Weeks five and six:** university studies with participants from across the UK at a central university location



Teaching in school – year one, leading to the award of PGCE at the end of the year (including 60 credits at master's level)

- Teaching an 80% timetable
- Weekly meetings with the subject mentor supporting on-going training
- Regular visits by the subject tutor
- Evaluation of lessons by the university tutor (at least two per term)
- Evaluation of lessons by the professional mentor (at least one per term)
- Evaluation of lessons by the subject mentor (at least one per half term)
- Visits from the Teach First Cymru Professional tutor
- Coaching and support provided by the leadership development officer
- Second school experience: the equivalent of five days of professional development experience in another school, with one additional day spent in a

- primary school with a focus on transition from key stage 2 to key stage 3
- Six days of subject studies training with the subject tutor, held on school days, in subject groups
 - One inter-cohort week in the summer institute
 - Completion of written assignments and a reflective journal
 - Opportunities to attend 'Super Saturday' training events



Teaching in school as a newly qualified teacher (NQT) – year two

- Visits and ongoing support from the leadership development officer
- Ongoing support from subject mentors in school
- Opportunities to attend 'Super Saturday' training events
- Preparation for activity as a Teach First ambassador, including educational careers advice and planning to support Teach First's work to improve schools



Being an ambassador for Teach First

Teach First support their ambassadors to become part of a network of individuals who support Teach First's aim of ending educational inequality.

Roles and responsibilities of the Teach First Cymru programme

Professional tutor

University professional tutors work with participants throughout year one of the programme. They conduct formal observations throughout year one, including joint observations with mentors, as appropriate. They arrange for additional support for participants experiencing difficulties. Professional tutors oversee the preparation and assessment of written assignments. They support professional mentors with their responsibilities, and oversee the quality assurance of the school-based training and support in year one of the programme.

Subject tutor

University subject tutors visit participants regularly and complete formal observations of participants' teaching in year one of the programme. Some of these observations may be carried out jointly with mentors. Subject tutors support subject mentors with their responsibilities. They assess participants' progress towards meeting the Standards for QTS during year one of the programme, and recommend the award of QTS at the end of the first year. Subject tutors provide a programme of subject-specific training days throughout the summer institute and six additional subject training days throughout year one of the programme.

Professional mentor

Professional mentors are usually senior leaders in schools who work with participants over the two years of the programme. They co-ordinate the in-school support for participants and run weekly professional development for participants in year one, and provide additional development opportunities for participants in year two. They formally observe participants once per term and moderate the termly assessment of participants in year one of the programme.

School mentor

School mentors lead the school-based subject training and support for participants throughout the two years of the programme. They provide professional development and formally and informally observe lessons, and assess the participants' progress towards meeting the Standards for QTS.

Leadership development officer

Leadership development officers are employed by Teach First to work with participants to develop a vision for their pupils, and to provide bespoke developmental support to enable participants to work towards their vision across the two years of the programme. They support participants to develop their leadership skills through their classroom practice.

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