

5 August 2022

Reverend Nigel Genders
Chief Education Officer
Church of England Education Office
Church House
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3AZ

Dear Reverend Genders

Lead provider monitoring visit (LPMV) of the Church of England

Following my visit with Malcolm Kirtley and Nick Turvey, Her Majesty's Inspectors, on 28 to 30 June 2022, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the LPMV findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you have taken to date.

This inspection was the first LPMV since the start of your delivery of the national professional qualification (NPQ) programmes. It was carried out under Part 8 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that, at this time:

Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action towards ensuring that the NPQ professional development is of a high standard.

The lead provider should take further action to:

- further embed strong existing processes for checking the quality of NPQ professional development delivery to ensure the programmes have a sustained and consistent impact on improving leaders' practice.

I am copying this letter to the Department for Education.

This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Chris Stevens
Her Majesty's Inspector

Context

The Church of England currently has 1885 NPQ participants accessing professional development courses. There are 80 delivery partners spread across all regions of England. This includes partners affiliated to the Church of England, the Catholic Education Service and those with no religious affiliation.

Report

- Leaders have established a clear vision for developing highly skilled leaders in education, underpinned by a strong culture of collaboration and mutual respect. The provider's values of 'Called, Connected and Committed' underpin the positive and professional relationships between lead provider staff, regional delivery managers, delivery partners and participants.
- Leaders, together with partnership staff, academic specialists and higher education institutions, have developed an effective and ambitious curriculum across all NPQ programmes. Each programme is characterised by a four-stage learning model across every unit – Activate, Teach, Practice and Apply. These units are consistently well supported by high-quality and meticulous training materials and resources. Leaders have thoughtfully considered how the curriculum is sequenced, ensuring fidelity to the required national training content. Assessment systems are well designed and thorough.
- Leaders have high expectations. They have developed rigorous recruitment processes to ensure trainers are of a high calibre. Course facilitators are well trained. This includes coaches who are required to be certified in 'evidence-informed practice' by the Chartered College of Teaching. The large majority of participants who expressed an opinion value highly the quality and flexibility of the training they receive. One participant, typical of many, said: 'The course content is very relevant and interesting. The reading is manageable and there are opportunities to discuss and explore the reading further with fellow participants and facilitators.'
- Leaders have established an effective model for the delivery of the NPQ programmes. Regional delivery managers play a pivotal role in ensuring lead provider principles and practice are matched by local delivery. They are highly regarded by delivery partners who appreciate the effective communication systems, opportunities for networking and the support offered during self-evaluation processes. Staff and participants alike say they are proud to be associated with the lead provider because relationships are positive and trusting.
- Leaders have thoughtfully considered and implemented a range of effective processes to check the effectiveness of their professional development programmes. They make regular use of participant and trainer feedback surveys. Delivery partners are required to evaluate the effectiveness of their local provision, and the findings are collated regionally and nationally, ensuring that leaders have a precise understanding of what is working well

and future priorities. Leaders acknowledge that their systems need to be strongly embedded across all delivery partners. They have devised robust plans to keep a check on this over the coming months.

- Members of the National Society NPQ governance subcommittee are highly skilled and well informed. They have an accurate understanding of the effectiveness of the NPQ professional development programmes and the accuracy of leaders' reports. They hold leaders to account well.
- A spirit of partnership and inclusion lies at the heart of leaders' delivery model. Delivery partners and regional delivery managers feel well consulted and supported. Participants know that they can raise any issues or concerns about safeguarding or equalities in a safe and trusting environment. The large majority say that they are listened to. Leaders adapt course programmes appropriately when needed.

Evidence

Inspectors met with senior leaders and other lead provider representatives, including leaders from three higher education institutions. The lead inspector met with members of the National Society NPQ subcommittee with responsibility for governance, including the chair. He also met with the chief education officer. Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including policies and staff/participant handbooks.

Inspectors visited five NPQ delivery partners and met with senior leaders, delivery partner staff, trainers and NPQ participants to discuss the training being delivered. An inspector observed part of a training session delivered during one of the delivery partner's visits. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's inspection survey for participants, delivery partners and school leaders.