

**News release**

30 April 2009

**Estyn seeks fresh talent, wisdom and insight**

*\*Please note, case studies are profiled in the Notes to editors on page 2*

Today, Estyn, the Education and Training Inspectorate for Wales, is launching a new recruitment campaign for lay inspectors. Over the next two months, the inspectorate is hoping to attract around 30 talented people to work with school inspection teams.

This is a unique and challenging role. Lay inspectors are expected to provide an objective and impartial assessment of the provision of education and to report honestly and fairly on the aspects they inspect. They should always remember that they are there to act in the best interests of learners.

Alun Morgan, HMI, who is leading on this recruitment campaign said, *“Becoming a lay inspector is a great opportunity to get involved in working to improve the quality of education in schools.”*

*“We are looking for candidates who have excellent communication and inter-personal skills, and who are able to work under pressure and bring a fresh perspective to the provision of education.”*

Potential candidates cannot have any personal experience of the management or the provision of education in a school. However, they can have acted in a voluntary capacity or as a governor.

Interested applicants can download the application pack from the Estyn website. Once completed applications have been assessed, chosen applicants will be invited to attend a

three day training course in St Asaph, North Wales from 14 -16 July. If they successfully complete this course they will then be asked to register with Estyn as a lay inspector. Once they are placed on the list of lay inspectors candidates will be eligible for work and will be invited to tender by external contractors to assist on inspection of primary, secondary and special schools across Wales.

For further information please visit our website [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

**-ENDS-**

**Notes to Editors:**

**Lay inspector case studies**

*\*Please note the names of persons profiled below have been changed to protect their anonymity*

**Case study 1**

Daniel Smith from North Wales was recruited as a lay inspector in 1994. Since then he has participated in over 200 inspections in both primary and secondary schools throughout Wales. As a father of two and former chair of governors, he has a keen personal interest in education and is strongly aware of its importance in the lives of young people. For these reasons Daniel decided to apply for the role of a lay inspector with Estyn.

When Daniel applied for the role he was working full time for a local authority and knew that he would be able to manage his workload because of his employer's flexible working scheme. He was successful in his application and was invited to attend Estyn's training course, which he felt fully prepared him for his new role.

During an inspection, Daniel can be on site for anything up to 3 days, depending on the size of the school and his role is primarily to provide impartial advice and give a fresh perspective on the provision of education. Some of the issues he focuses on include aspects such as attendance, behaviour and the quality of school buildings and resources.

Daniel is currently managing director of a small company which provides him with the flexibility to continue with his role as a lay inspector with Estyn. When an opportunity to join an inspection team arises he is notified well in advance so that he is able to manage his business. Being a lay inspector has been both personally and professionally fulfilling, enabling him to develop his organisational and management skills.

**Case study 2**

As a self-employed manager in his own security firm, Jim Braine saw an opportunity to use his skills and knowledge of quality assurance in the role of lay inspector. As an open-minded and adaptable person he was keen to work in a new sector and be part of a team.

Jim soon established himself as a lay inspector and worked on around 100 inspections over the course of 10 years. His challenging insights were welcomed by the inspection teams he worked with. Each inspection gave him a new perspective on every area of school life, deepening his interest in education. Jim believes that the key to being a lay inspector is hard work and a commitment to getting it right.

### **Case study 3**

Working as a NVQ vocational trainer, Vanessa Shaw from South Wales was keenly interested in improving education services. When she heard that Estyn were recruiting lay inspectors she was intrigued to find out more. Already experienced in making judgements and working in a team, Vanessa quickly realised that her expertise and personal drive would be well matched to the demands of a lay inspector.

On school inspections, after training as a lay inspector, Vanessa brought many attributes to the role. From her independent position she asked many questions from perspective of someone outside the inspection process, often raising important issues. Talking to pupils and teachers in schools was an especially interesting and enjoyable part of the role.

Vanessa gained great job satisfaction in this role, and was fascinated to see how different schools work, whilst gaining knowledge and developing her skills.

Estyn is also seeking to recruit people as permanent HMI staff who have relevant experience and a broad and successful career and a background in one or more of the following areas:

- Foundation and Primary education
- Secondary education (PSE/RE or Design and Technology)
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) - from a Primary, Secondary, Special school or Local Authority background

The closing date for receipt of applications is 5 June. More information about a career in inspection and an information pack can be found on our website, [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

### **For further information please contact:**

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