



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

St David's College

Date of inspection: November 2018

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

About St David's College

St David's College is an independent day and boarding school that educates boys and girls from age 9 to 19 years. It is set in extensive grounds, just south of Llandudno in North Wales.

The school opened in 1965, as an educational charity established by Trust Deed. The school's mission is to 'develop the whole person through a broad education founded on Christian principles, a wide choice of interest and activity, and an achievable personal programme for each pupil.' A board of governors administers the school.

There are currently 259 pupils on roll. Just over sixteen percent of the pupils have a statement of special educational need or education health and care plan (EHCP).

The headmaster was appointed in September 2017. The new leadership team was appointed later in the same half term.

The last full inspection was in October 2012.

Main findings

Strengths

Nearly all pupils make sound progress and go on to gain a wide range of qualifications. They enjoy taking part in lessons and extra-curricular activities and are polite and respectful to each other, staff and visitors.

Pupils with statements of special educational needs and EHCPs meet the targets in their individual learning plans. Many pupils, who previously had low self-esteem and found learning challenging, develop confidence, teamwork and leadership skills. These pupils particularly benefit from the extensive range of exciting extra-curricular activities provided, such as mountaineering, caving and performing arts.

The new headmaster and school leadership team create a warm, supportive environment, where pupils and staff feel valued and listened to. They make sure that staff work well as a team and share important information about pupils' on-going academic progress and emotional wellbeing.

Teachers all have additional qualifications to help them meet the needs of pupils with specific learning difficulties. They receive regular training to update their skills and knowledge. They meet pupils' needs well.

Pupils have a strong voice at St David's College. For example, there are weekly meetings of the school council with the catering manager to discuss healthy eating options, the three week planned menu and the social media inputs.

Although this is not a curriculum requirement for independent schools, the school ensures that pupils benefit from the opportunities provided to study Welsh at key stages 2, 3 and 4.

Areas for development

The school has improved the way it uses technology to support pupils' learning. It has recently introduced new software for teachers and for pupils. However, it is too early to measure the impact of this on pupils' outcomes.

The school has an effective system and process for setting and evaluating targets for individual pupils with additional needs. However, it does not always make best use of these pupils' progress data to strategically plan improvements across the school.

The school has the permission of the Welsh Government to educate 225 pupils. Current pupil numbers exceed this number.

The school has an effective traffic management system and undertakes rigorous measures to maintain pupils' safety and reduce risks caused by the current congested site. There are well-developed plans to make permanent improvements to the site. However, these have not yet been implemented.

Recommendations

The school should:

- R1 Make better use of progress data to support improvement planning and ensure all pupils achieve their best
- R2 Make sure that pupils can make effective use of software to develop their skills
- R3 Apply to the Welsh Government for a material change to the registration of the school

Progress in addressing recommendations from previous note of visit or inspection report

Recommendation 1: Ensure greater consistency in the quality of pupils' work in subjects across the curriculum

The new school leadership team has introduced appropriate measures to help ensure greater consistency in the quality of pupils work in subjects across the curriculum. These measures include the effective use of the teaching and learning audit programme and a structured monitoring cycle. Senior leaders undertake a planned timetable of lesson observations, half-termly book scrutiny and meet with groups of pupils to discuss their views on the helpfulness of the teachers' marking.

Pupils receive useful oral feedback on the quality of their work. Teachers reinforce this feedback through the effective implementation of the whole school assessment and marking policy. This helps pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work.

Recommendation 2: Improve the monitoring of standards and provision across the curriculum in Years 5 and 6

The school has improved its curriculum arrangements and provision in years 5 and 6. It has appointed two experienced key stage 2 teachers and provided dedicated classrooms to offer pupils the benefit of a permanent base. The teachers have developed a suitable curriculum and a range of stimulating resources, appropriate to the needs of the key stage. They collaborate well to plan schemes of work and lessons that meet the needs of the individual pupils in the cohort.

Senior leaders monitor standards through a teaching and learning audit programme. This entails observation of teaching, book scrutiny and meetings with pupils.

Pupils respond well to the new provision, but it is too early to monitor the impact on their standards.

Recommendation 3: Ensure that all schemes of work are of a good quality and include the range of activities, assessment arrangements and opportunities to develop skills

The school leadership team has brought in useful systems and guidance to support the quality assurance of schemes of work. Training days have been used effectively to provide staff with exemplar schemes of work and helpful advice that aids planning, such as for the development of skills and purposeful assessments. Many schemes of work now make beneficial use of cross-curricular links and outdoor activities.

The improved schemes include teachers with useful information about the range of activities that may be undertaken and where and how to include opportunities for skills development. However, arrangements for assessment are not always included.

Recommendation 4: Provide more evaluative detail in lesson observations and book scrutiny so as to have more impact on raising standards

The school has improved its system of lesson observations and book scrutiny. Members of the school leadership team have assigned departmental responsibilities and a formal timetable is in place for observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. Information from these activities forms part of the teacher appraisal system.

Senior leaders have provided teachers with improved guidance on how to be more evaluative in feedback to pupils. The new system includes regular meetings between senior leaders and pupils to discuss the impact of teacher feedback on their work. Teachers receive valuable feedback from these meetings to support their developing practice.

Senior leaders meet regularly with heads of department to provide feedback and make recommendations for further improvements.

As a result of the improvements made by the school, pupils receive useful comments to help them understand what they need to do to improve their learning.

Compliance with the standards for registration

Standard 1: The quality of education provided by the school

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Standard 2: The spiritual, moral, and cultural development of pupils

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Standard 3: Welfare, health and safety of pupils

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Standard 4: The suitability of proprietors and staff

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 4.

Standard 5: Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 5.

Standard 6: The provision of information

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Standard 7: The manner in which complaints are to be handled

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Recommendation regarding registration

When considering this school's registration the Welsh Government may wish to have regard to the following recommendation:

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

Inspectors' judgements on this limited inspection should not prejudice the findings of a future full Section 163 inspection.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

The report was produced in accordance with section 163 of the Education Act 2002. The main purpose of inspection under this section is to report on compliance with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003. In schools that provide non-maintained nursery education, this report also satisfies the requirements of Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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