



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

**Annual monitoring inspection report on
Genus Education**

Date of inspection: May 2017

by

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

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Context

Genus Education is registered as an independent school to provide in-house education for children resident in the company's four children's homes who are not able to access mainstream education. Each home has its own classroom accommodation.

The school initially opened in February 2011 and operated only at the Ynys-y-Bwt site. The company set up a classroom at Knowle House in 2012, Station Cottage in 2013 and another at Skirrid View in 2016

A head of education oversees the education across the four sites. The sites share common documents that include school policies, a development plan and arrangements for the assessment, planning and delivery of lessons. Each classroom has a full-time teacher.

The school offers full-time education and follows local authority term times.

Main findings

Strengths

The school provides a caring and supportive learning environment where staff and pupils have good working relationships. Staff cater very well for individual pupils' needs. Teachers plan individual learning pathways that meet the identified needs and interests of pupils well. As a result, over time, pupils improve their engagement in learning and make good progress in developing academic and social skills. Pupils are proud of their achievements.

There are many opportunities for pupils to contribute to decision making. Pupils provide staff with regular feedback on how well they have completed tasks and what they want to achieve from the courses that they follow. This helps pupils to improve their communication skills, confidence and self-esteem.

The school has responded well to the recommendations of the core inspection of 2016. Leaders have strengthened arrangements for self-evaluation and improvement planning. Quality assurance procedures now draw on first hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning and take good account of the views of staff and pupils. Self-evaluation procedures provide an accurate measure of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

Classrooms at each of the sites provide well-resourced, purposeful learning environments. Pupils make good use of the grounds for leisure and to develop valuable work related skills.

Areas for development

Leaders have a thorough understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make at each site. However, the good practice identified through self-evaluation is not drawn together into a whole school report and processes for sharing good practice across the school are underdeveloped.

Since the core inspection, the school has introduced a broad range of valuable entry level qualifications for pupils in academic and social skills. However, planning for pupil progress above entry level is at an early stage of development.

Recommendations

R1 Continue to embed self-evaluation procedures and share best practice effectively across sites

R2 Broaden the range and level of qualifications available

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

Recommendation 1: Ensure that pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) include specific learning targets showing small steps of progress that can be reviewed effectively

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Since the core inspection, the school has refined its format for individual education plans (IEPs). The IEPs now include attendance, behaviour, literacy and numeracy targets. These are reviewed regularly and most have clear success criteria. Generally, IEPs identify aspirational targets for pupils, which match well to their needs and abilities. However, in a few IEPs the targets do not always show small steps of progress pupils make well enough. The school co-ordinator for IEPs ensures that there is a consistent approach to target setting and measuring progress across all sites. The school involves pupils in developing and reviewing weekly IEP targets well. As a result, pupils are beginning to reflect on their own progress and achievements since starting at the school.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that self-evaluation processes focus more clearly on the standards pupils achieve and the quality of teaching

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Since the core inspection of February 2016, the school has reviewed and improved its quality assurance arrangements. The school has implemented new procedures

for gathering first hand evidence on the quality of teaching and the standards pupils achieve through regular lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work. Information from these activities is shared appropriately with staff at each setting and informs professional development targets for individual staff. However, the school has not drawn the findings of these activities together to form a judgement on the overall quality of teaching. Arrangements to share the good practice in teaching and learning across the four sites are underdeveloped.

Recommendation 3: Improve the processes of self-evaluation to ensure that these link more effectively with school improvement planning and staff development

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school's procedures for self-evaluation draw appropriately on the views of major stakeholders including staff and pupils. Leaders use this information well to identify priorities for school improvement. The school improvement plan identifies seven priority areas for development. It provides appropriate detail on the targets, strategies, resources and timescales allocated to address each priority. Priorities have an appropriate focus on improving pupils' writing and thinking skills and the quality of teaching.

Many of the targets in the improvement plan relate well to the findings of the self-evaluation activities. There is now a clear link between the outcomes of self-evaluation, the priorities in the school improvement plan and staff training and development.

Recommendation 4: Measure the impact of partnership work on learner achievements and outcomes

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Teachers have built useful partnerships with a broad range of providers that have a positive effect on improving pupils' learning and their social and life skills. Teachers plan these partnerships carefully and evaluate the impact of these partnerships on pupil progress regularly. For example, work experience placements and links with the local special school enhance pupils' learning experiences well.

However, strategic partnership working to enhance staff's professional development is at an early stage of development. As a result, the whole school does not always benefit from the broad range of partners working with teachers at different sites.

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, social 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 this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 6.

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 National Assembly for Wales 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 annual monitoring inspection should not prejudice the findings of a future full Section 163 inspection.

School information

School	Genus Education
School number	6726091
Purpose of visit	Annual monitoring inspection
Date of visit	22/05/2017
Proprietor	Gareth Hemming & Mark Khan
Staff	1 head of education, 4 full-time permanent teachers supported by residential care workers in the classroom at the discretion of the teacher or when risk assessment or statements require additional support
Number of pupils	2 pupils at Knowle House, 2 pupils at Station Cottage, 2 pupils at Ynys-y-Bwt , 1 pupil at Skirrid View
Provision	Day provision for pupils in the company's children's homes
Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school	Social emotional and behavioural difficulties
Last Section 163 inspection	01/02/2016
Last annual monitoring inspection	02/03/2015
Last CSSIW inspection	21/11/2016

Team information

Mr Anthony Mulcahy	Reporting Inspector
Ms Margaret Elisabeth Davies	Team Inspector