



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

A report on

Ty Bronllys

Date of inspection: July 2023

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About Ty Bronllys

Tŷ Bronllys is an independent special school situated just outside Brecon. The school provides residential education and care for up to 13 pupils aged 8 to 19 years who have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum condition (ASC). The school opened in 2007 and is one of five schools owned by the Orbis Group, part of the portfolio of August Equity, a private equity investment company.

Currently, there are nine pupils on the school roll. All pupils have a statement of educational needs or education, health and care plan and have English as a first language. All pupils are placed by local authorities from Wales or England.

The head of education has been in post since January 2023 and she is supported by a director of education who oversees the education provision across the company's schools. In addition to the head of education, there are two class teachers, two senior learning support assistants and three learning support assistants. The education team is supported by a clinical team including a speech and language therapist, behaviour specialist and an occupational therapist.

Main findings

Strengths

All staff at Tŷ Bronllys foster very positive professional working relationships with their pupils. They understand and respond to their pupils' additional learning and emotional needs well. For example, when pupils are unsettled, staff confidently use a range of techniques to support them sensitively and calmly to help them understand the situation and reengage in their learning.

Staff have a strong sense of purpose and work together extremely well to promote pupils' education and well-being. They adapt quickly to make the most of learning opportunities as they arise, for example supporting learning outside when pupils are struggling to remain in the classroom. As a result, nearly all pupils make strong progress in a range of skills including communication, numeracy and independent skills over their time at the school.

Staff in the school employ communication strategies successfully and consistently across the school. As a result, during the visit, many pupils demonstrated sound use of communication systems that are appropriate to them, including signs and symbols.

Leaders have developed an effective system of recording and communicating the progress pupils make from admission to the school. These documents are written in pupil friendly vocabulary with a beneficial use of symbols and embedded videos. As a result, parents, stakeholders and the pupils themselves have a developing understanding of the progress they make over time.

Areas for development

Since the last visit, the school has reviewed its educational provision and has implemented new curriculum and planning approaches in line with an organisation wide model. Leaders are beginning to evaluate the impact of this new approach on the progress the pupils are making.

Recommendations

The school should:

- R1 Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of new approaches to curriculum design, planning and assessment on pupil progress and refine where necessary

Progress in addressing recommendations from previous visit or inspection report

R1 Improve the target setting and success criteria in pupils' individual education plans (IEPs)

The school has made strong progress in meeting this recommendation. Since the last visit, the school has reviewed all documents relating to target setting for pupils. They are no longer using distinct individual education plans and now use a one-page curriculum document for all pupils. This document includes targets from pupils' individual development plans (IDPs), statements of special educational needs (SEN) or education, health and care plans (EHCPs). In addition, the document includes appropriate reference to the pupils' clinical targets. As a result, staff have a clear understanding of the pupils' individual targets and success criteria. This supports pupils well to make progress in the areas of most importance for them.

R2 Strengthen curriculum and lesson planning to enable staff to meet the needs of individual pupils, measure progress over time and plan securely for pupils' next steps in learning

Since the last visit, leaders from Tŷ Bronllys have taken suitable steps to strengthen the curriculum at the school, working alongside leaders from other schools within the Orbis group. The school has also reviewed the way that lessons are planned across the school. Elements of the schools individualised curriculum and teaching and learning strategies are very closely and successfully linked. Planning is now centralised around a one-page curriculum planning tool for all pupils. This is tailored to the individual needs of the pupil and includes an appropriate consideration of their next steps in learning.

Weekly learning trackers are shared with all learning support staff, including staff from within the residential home and clinical staff. This ensures that all staff working with the pupil are aware of the pupil's needs and their learning objectives. In addition, staff working with individual pupils are given helpful lanyards which emphasise the key skills each individual needs to develop to ensure progress in learning.

Leaders are beginning to evaluate the impact of this new approach on the progress the pupils are making.

R3 Enhance the professional learning opportunities for all teaching staff to extend their knowledge and understanding of issues relating to teaching and learning

Staff have regular opportunities to engage in professional development and benefit from collaborative practice across the Orbis group of schools. For example, all staff have received training from the group teaching and learning lead, which focused on the successful implementation of a bespoke approach to curriculum design across all schools.

In addition, through recent internally delivered training, staff demonstrate a sound understanding of their approach to teaching and preparing pupils to be ready to learn.

All staff receive monthly updates to their signing skills and work closely with the on-site therapeutic team to effectively implement appropriate communication strategies with pupils. These approaches align coherently with the school's developmental targets and are beginning to have a beneficial effect on pupils' progress.

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 this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 7.

Recommendation regarding continued 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 (<http://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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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