



A report on:

Coleg Elidyr Camphill Communities

Date of inspection: June 2014

by

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the provider's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with section 77 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

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Context

Coleg Elidyr is a residential independent specialist college located within a Camphill Community for young people aged 18-30. The college estate includes a working farm, kitchen garden and woodlands. There are currently 18 learners at the college who are funded for education, all of whom live on site in one of the six residential houses. The majority of these learners come from Wales. The others come from England. Thirteen learners are male; five are female. All are aged between 18 and 22.

The campus is also home to a further 18 young adults, aged between 23 and 29, who are funded by social services for residential placements within the community. Estyn did not inspect this provision.

The curriculum at Coleg Elidyr was originally inspired by the educational and social philosophy of Rudolf Steiner and Karl König. It emphasises experiential, practical learning and offers a combination of land-based, vocational and craft subjects to help learners to develop skills for a more independent life.

The college is led by a leadership team, responsible to a board of trustees. The principal has led the leadership team through two phases of restructuring since 2010.

Summary

The provider's current performance	Excellent
The provider's prospects for improvement	Excellent

Current performance

The current performance of the college is excellent because:

- nearly all learners make exceptional progress in the development of their learning skills, literacy and numeracy and independent living skills within a very short timescale;
- all learners make outstanding progress in applying their skills in practical, meaningful situations across the college;
- all learners take part in relevant work experience that prepares them well for future life;
- the college provides a very wide range of meaningful learning experiences that are very well matched to the needs of individual learners and have a clear focus on the development of skills;
- most teaching is good or excellent; and
- all staff have a very good understanding of the individual needs of the learners, and provide effective care and support.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement at the college are excellent because:

- leaders and managers provide a very clear direction for the college;
- they have made significant improvements to the college in a short space of time;
- the trustees provide a very high level of support and challenge;
- leaders and managers have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for development at the college;
- there is a clear link between the self-evaluation report and quality improvement plan;
- the college uses data effectively to track learners' progress and inform planning; and
- all staff work very effectively together to ensure improvement.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that all tutors and learning support assistants consistently involve all learners in assessment for and assessment of learning
- R2 Develop a broader range of strategies to communicate targets to the learners in ways that are meaningful to them
- R3 Further develop the ability of tutors and learning support assistants to reflect on their own practice

What happens next?

Estyn advises the proprietor to amend its current quality development plan to show what action the college intends to take in response to the recommendations. It is also advisable to circulate this plan, or a summary of it, to all parents at the college.

Estyn will monitor progress against the recommendations at the next annual monitoring inspection.

Estyn will invite the college to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Excellent

Standards: Excellent

Nearly all learners make exceptional progress in the development of their literacy, numeracy and independent living skills within a very short timescale. They make outstanding progress in applying their skills in practical, meaningful situations across the college.

All learners have a wide range of suitably challenging targets relating to their essential skills, subject areas and work experience. Nearly all learners make extremely good progress against these targets.

All learners develop their communication skills very well, using their preferred method of communication. They listen attentively and respond accurately to questioning. More able learners can talk fluently about the work they are doing, using subject specific vocabulary. Learners with complex communication needs use signs and symbols effectively to express their views.

Nearly all learners communicate extremely confidently with college staff and other adults. For example, they welcome visitors to the college, show them where to park and ask them to sign in at reception.

All learners develop their literacy skills well in line with their ability. More able learners read written information accurately, for example when they follow instructions for building a solar oven or use a shopping list to select items in the shop. Learners with more complex communication needs use symbols or pictures effectively to gain information, for example to follow a recipe in cookery sessions. More able learners record their work and learn to identify spelling mistakes and make corrections. They use emails regularly to contact staff when they have a request or concern.

All learners apply their numeracy skills extremely effectively across a range of practical situations. For example, those who carry out work experience in the college shop handle money, count out items ordered by the customers and weigh food such as flour and rice. In the 'Green Woodwork' sessions, they measure the length and width of pieces of wood to make stools. On the farm, they weigh the lambs before they go to market. They develop their understanding of money in line with their ability through managing their weekly allowance.

All learners develop a very good understanding of the importance of time. As a result, they arrive in college on time in the morning and start their lessons promptly throughout the day.

All learners develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills effectively, in line with their ability. For example, they produce leaflets to advertise events at the college and use the internet to research information about the local

area. One learner runs an ICT club for the other learners. Those learners who have more complex communication needs use ICT well to express opinions and make choices.

All learners make extremely good progress against targets to develop their independence, problem solving and thinking skills. For example, they work out where to go to find the materials or tools that they need.

The skills that learners develop enable them to participate successfully in work experience both within and outside the college. All learners participate in internal work experience, including working on the farm, in the office and in the garden. Many of them progress to regular external work experience in Years 2 and 3, including gardening and working in a local community shop. The progress that learners make in developing work-related skills through meaningful work experience is a clear strength and is sector-leading.

All learners gain units of credit in courses that are well matched to their abilities. These include Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3 and Level 1 units in a range of practical subjects, such as basic feeding of livestock, as well as important living skills, for example managing personal finances, shopping skills, working as part of a group and developing communication skills.

The skills that the learners develop prepare them very well for life after they leave the college.

It is not possible to compare the college's performance with national averages, as there is no benchmark data available. Learners' attainment and achievement are judged on an individual learner basis.

Wellbeing: Excellent

The rate of learners' attendance at Coleg Elidyr is very high and amongst the best within the sector. Learners attend sessions on time, settle to work quickly, concentrate and remain engaged in learning throughout the day. They are enthusiastic about their work and enjoy the wide variety of learning experiences provided at the college. They respond very well to staff advice and support.

All learners feel safe. They have a clear understanding of how to keep safe, for example by using the correct tools in the workshops. They have the confidence to challenge visitors who are not wearing the correct protective clothing. They have positive attitudes towards physical exercise and are fundraising to buy a multi gym and fitness suite for the college.

Learners make outstanding progress in developing their social skills. They build very positive relationships with members of staff and relate well to each other. They develop appropriate interpersonal skills to enable them to work co-operatively with others. Learners are very courteous and polite to visitors when welcoming them to the college and showing them where to go. They gain valuable life skills, for example the ability to shop for food and to prepare and cook nutritious meals.

Over time, all learners improve their behaviour during formal learning activities and in less structured times of the day. For many learners this is a significant achievement.

Many learners take on a variety of leadership roles in activities appropriate to their age, ability and interests. For example, learners welcome visitors to the college and prepare and serve their meals. They attend local festivals to represent the college and to sell their products and they visit local schools and care homes to describe their life at the college. They are very proud of their achievements.

Learners contribute extremely effectively to the decision-making process at the college through the Learner Forum. Learners elect members of the forum who meet regularly to discuss issues of importance to their peers. They report back the results of forum discussions to the wider college group and the Trustees. This careful sharing of information is a very positive feature. Learners also play an important role in the recruitment process by interviewing applicants for jobs at the college.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Excellent
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Learning experiences: Excellent

The college has an extremely well-planned and well-managed curriculum, which it reviews regularly and adapts, where appropriate, to enhance the learning experiences for learners and meet their individual needs. This is a significant strength of the college.

Planning for work experience opportunities is outstanding. Work placements within the college and in the community are developed on an individual basis to respond fully to the choices and interests of the learners. This contributes to their independence and employability skills. The college undertakes comprehensive evaluations of the quality and impact of work experience to inform future planning.

The college provides all learners with valuable opportunities to achieve units of credit in a wide range of relevant subjects, appropriate to their ability.

Planning for skills, including literacy, numeracy and thinking skills, is a clear strength of the college. The focus of all lesson-planning is the development of skills through practical and relevant activities such as working in the on-site shop or on the farm. Schemes of work and lesson plans clearly identify opportunities for learners to apply these skills in a range of settings and enable them to make outstanding progress against their targets. Problem-solving skills are an important part of the curriculum, and tutors plan very well for learners to develop these skills through group work.

The college places a clear emphasis on developing learners' social and independent living skills. Education and residential staff work together extremely closely to provide opportunities for learners to develop these skills across the whole college setting

The college provides a good range of extra-curricular activities such as swimming, music and zumba. These opportunities help learners improve their social skills very effectively and enable them to gain in confidence.

Teaching: Good

In most lessons, teaching is good or better. In these lessons, tutors' planning is very detailed with a clear focus on skills. In all lessons tutors set clear learning objectives that are closely linked to learners' individual targets. Tutors and learning support assistants work effectively together to provide challenging activities that engage all learners well. They prepare a wide range of suitable and interesting resources, well matched to learners' needs.

Tutors and learning support assistants have a very clear understanding of the needs of the individual learners. They use a range of communication methods effectively. They provide clear instructions and give learners enough time to carry out tasks as independently as possible.

The college has robust assessment processes, which enable staff to plan effectively and track learner progress rigorously. A wide range of staff contribute to a comprehensive initial assessment of learners' strengths and needs. This ensures that individual targets are appropriate and challenging. The college has robust processes in place for reviewing progress against these targets through the six-weekly progress review meetings.

In many lessons, tutors and learning support assistants use a range of appropriate strategies to review progress with the learners. For example, they use technology to capture the very small steps of progress made by learners with more complex needs. This enables the learners to see the progress they make and understand what they need to do to improve. However, in a few lessons, staff miss opportunities to involve all learners fully in the assessment of their learning.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The college has well-developed policies and strategies for care, support and guidance that make a strong contribution to learners' learning outcomes and wellbeing. All staff understand the needs of the learners particularly well and have high expectations of their behaviour and engagement in learning.

There is an extremely well co-ordinated process for identifying learners' additional needs and providing highly effective support. As a result, all learners make outstanding progress in developing their confidence, behaviour and skills.

Staff have access to detailed advice on strategies to support their work with each learner. For example, the clinical psychologist and speech and language therapist provide highly effective support for staff in designing and reviewing learning and behaviour support programmes.

Individual learning plans are detailed, and include relevant, achievable targets that are very well matched to learners' assessed needs. However, on a very few occasions, these targets are not fully accessible to those learners who have more complex needs.

The college provides valuable opportunities for learners to gain an understanding of healthy eating, through cookery sessions and work in the on-site shop, as well as activities in the residential setting. There are regular opportunities for learners to develop their physical fitness.

The personal development programme provides learners with comprehensive, age-appropriate information and guidance, including sex and relationship education. Programmes are tailored to match the needs of individual learners. They are delivered in discrete sessions and are also interwoven into the planning across all areas of the college. This enables learners to develop self-awareness and positive attitudes towards personal safety.

The college places a strong emphasis on developing the learners' understanding of living in a community, relating to each other and taking responsibility for their actions. The opportunities all learners have to contribute to decision-making are outstanding.

The college's arrangements for safeguarding learners meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Excellent

The college has a very positive and inclusive ethos which promotes diversity extremely well and reflects the values of the college and the organisation. Learners are fully involved in discussions regarding diversity and equality through the well-established learner forum. The college is a nurturing community in which all learners and staff are highly valued and respected. The college has effective policies and procedures in place to make sure that it deals with any form of discrimination.

The college environment is calm and welcoming. The extensive outdoor facilities promote the learners' health and wellbeing extremely well. The layout of the grounds enables learners to travel independently and confidently around the site.

The farm, the shop and the workshops allow the college to provide a wide range of extremely stimulating opportunities for the learners to develop their skills in practical real-life situations and prepare them very well for future life.

The college regularly reviews site security, and works well with partners to assess and manage risk.

The college has a wide range of appropriate resources that are well matched to the learners' needs. This includes specialist equipment in the workshops and appropriate up-to-date ICT to support teaching and learning.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Excellent
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Leadership: Excellent

The college principal has introduced a new, very effective leadership team and this has had an influential and positive impact on the ethos and culture of the college. The principal has a clear vision of how to ensure that the college remains a viable

and valuable provider of learning. The leadership team promote this vision and the values of the college exceptionally well. They provide an exceptionally strong strategic lead and this has contributed very effectively to the improvements in standards and teaching practice at the college over the last three years.

The vice principal and head of education promote high standards at the college through extremely high expectations of all staff. They provide effective support and challenge for the work area co-ordinators and this has had a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. All staff at the college demonstrate a pride in their work and particularly in the achievements of their learners.

Roles and responsibilities at the college are clear and staff have a robust understanding of their accountability. There is a suitable range of meetings at all levels of the college and these have a clear structure and purpose. Relevant information, with a focus on learners and learner achievement, is transferred exceptionally well throughout the college from tutors and learners to the college trustees. Communication within the college is coherent, transparent and highly effective in promoting improvements.

The college trustees bring an important range of expertise to the scrutiny of the work of the college. Each trustee has a clear role that reflects their skills and experience and this allows them to provide a high degree of knowledgeable challenge and appropriate support. There are very clear processes for the appointment of new trustees with a strong focus on specific training and development to enable them to carry out their roles effectively.

Improving quality: Excellent

The principal, trustees and leadership team have a comprehensive understanding of the college strengths and areas for improvement. Self-assessment is thorough, honest and evaluative. The self-assessment report is clear, concise and an accurate reflection of the position of the college. All staff have planned time to contribute to the self-assessment process and this contributes very effectively to the improvements at the college and to the way in which staff feel valued. Tutors and learning support assistants are developing the ability to reflect on and improve their own practice.

The college collects pertinent feedback from staff, parents and stakeholders and has particularly effective strategies for gathering the views of learners by utilising their preferred method of communication. Information is used promptly to address issues and to bring about change and improvements.

The college has established a robust quality improvement cycle at all levels of its provision. The quality improvement plan is very well structured and accurately reflects the findings of the self-evaluation report. The college has identified five relevant and specific strategic targets and these are monitored and reviewed at appropriate regular intervals by the principal, trustees and leadership team.

There are clear and productive strategies for including the on-site care provision in the quality improvement cycle and this has contributed very well to the effectiveness of the 24-hour curriculum and the significant progress made by the learners.

The college uses an extensive range of data very efficiently to set challenging targets for improvement across all areas of the provision. Senior managers monitor and track progress against these targets robustly and this has had a positive impact on the improved judgement profile of teaching observations and on the improved outcomes for learners.

The college has made exceptional progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection and the recent annual monitoring visits.

Partnership working: Excellent

The college has successfully developed a wide range of strategic partnerships with schools, specialist colleges and the local community. This is sector leading. These partnerships greatly enhance the range of experiences provided to the learners.

The college has superb links with a range of local providers to promote opportunities for learners. For example, it works extremely effectively with a number of charities and a local hospital in order for learners to gain valuable experience of the world of work. Partnership with a local retail outlet has enabled the college to develop the hedgehog hospital alongside the Hedgehog Preservation Society. This has helped learners gain an understanding of the natural world around them.

Members of the leadership team attend regular meetings with other schools, colleges and professional organisations to observe and share good practice. This has helped raise the standard and quality of the provision at the college. The college has also hosted a valuable training day on Autism and Sexuality for a group of local specialist colleges and schools.

Joint planning with schools enhances and improves the transition process for prospective learners. This enables the college to plan particularly effectively for learners' needs at an early stage of their college programme.

Partnerships with parents and carers are very strong and staff maintain frequent contact with parents through regular phone calls, reports, parent weekends and a termly newsletter. The college makes effective use of social media to update parents on important college information and events.

Resource management: Excellent

The college principal, the trustees and the leadership team have a very thorough understanding of the resource requirements across the site. They prioritise their investments carefully and monitor and track targets that are clearly identified in the three-year site improvement plan.

The college manages its resources extremely well. The comprehensive workforce development plan documents a well-planned strategy for the continuing professional

development of all staff. The college actively encourages staff to develop their careers and this has led to a well-informed and effective team of tutors and learning support assistants. Learning support assistants are deployed effectively to the benefit of the learners.

Staff have good opportunities to share best practice both within and beyond the college. They have a well-planned range of internal training events that are specifically relevant to their needs and that allow them to improve their performance.

In view of the excellent outcomes, the college provides value for money for its learners.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Learner Questionnaire / Arolwg Dysgwyr				
All Pupils / Pob Disgybl				
	Nifer o ymatebion Number of responses	Nifer o ymatebion / Number of responses		
		Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	
I feel safe in my college	15	15 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n teimlo'n ddiogel yn fy ngholeg.
The college deals well with any bullying	16	15 94%	1 6%	Mae'r coleg yn delio'n dda ag unrhyw fwlio.
I have someone to talk to if I am worried	15	15 100%	0 0%	Mae gen i rywun i siarad ag ef/â hi os ydw i'n poeni.
The college teaches me how to keep healthy	14	14 100%	0 0%	Mae'r coleg yn fy nysgu i sut i aros yn iach.
There are plenty of opportunities at college for me to get regular exercise	15	15 100%	0 0%	Mae digonedd o gyfleoedd yn y coleg i mi gael ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
I am doing well at college	15	15 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwneud yn dda yn y coleg.
The teachers help me to learn and make progress and they help me when I have problems	15	15 100%	0 0%	Mae'r athrawon yn fy helpu i ddysgu a gwneud cynnydd ac maent yn fy helpu pan fydd gen i broblemau.
I have enough books and equipment, including computers, to do my work	16	16 100%	0 0%	Mae gen i ddigon o lyfrau, offer a chyfrifiaduron i wneud fy ngwaith.
Learners behave well and I can get my work done	15	15 100%	0 0%	Mae dysgwyr eraill yn ymddwyn yn dda ac rwy'n gallu gwneud fy ngwaith.
Staff treat all learners fairly and with respect	16	16 100%	0 0%	Mae staff yn trin pob dysgwr yn deg ac yn dangos parch atynt.
The college listens to our views and makes changes we suggest	15	15 100%	0 0%	Mae'r coleg yn gwrandao ar ein barn ac yn gwneud newidiadau rydym ni'n eu hawgrymu.
I am encouraged to do things for myself and to take on responsibility	15	15 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n cael fy annog i wneud pethau drosaf fy hun a chymryd cyfrifoldeb.
The college helps me to be ready for my next college or to start my working life	15	15 100%	0 0%	Mae'r coleg yn helpu i mi fod yn barod ar gyfer fy ngholeg nesaf, neu i ddechrau fy mywyd gwaith.
The staff respect me and my background	15	15 100%	0 0%	Mae'r staff yn fy mharchu i a'm cefndir.
The college helps me to understand and respect people from other backgrounds	16	16 100%	0 0%	Mae'r coleg yn helpu i mi ddeall a pharchu pobl o gefndiroedd eraill.
I was given good advice when choosing my courses	0	0 .	0 .	Cefais gyngor da wrth ddewis fy nghysiau yn y chweched dosbarth.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Parent Questionnaire / Arolwg Rhieni							
		Nifer o ymatebion / Number of responses					
	Nifer o ymatebion Number of responses	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the college	15	12 80%	3 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r coleg yn gyffredinol.
My child likes the college	15	11 73%	4 27%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn hoffi'r coleg.
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the college	16	8 50%	8 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhlentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y coleg.
My child is making good progress in college	16	13 81%	3 19%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y coleg.
Learners behave well in college	15	11 79%	3 21%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae dysgwyr yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y coleg.
Teaching is good	16	12 80%	3 20%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
Staff expect my child to work hard and do his or her best	16	12 75%	4 25%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn disgwyl i fy mhlentyn weithio'n galed ac i wneud ei orau.
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect	16	14 88%	2 13%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise	16	11 73%	4 27%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Caiff fy mhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
My child is safe at college	16	11 69%	5 31%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y coleg.
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs	16	12 75%	4 25%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
I am kept well informed about my child's progress	16	11 69%	5 31%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
I feel comfortable about approaching the college with questions, suggestions or a problem	16	14 88%	1 6%	1 6%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n esmwyth ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r coleg, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
I understand the college's procedure for dealing with complaints	14	8 67%	3 25%	1 8%	0 0%	2	Rwy'n deall trefn y coleg ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
The college helps my child to become more mature and take on responsibility	16	15 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r coleg yn helpu fy mhlentyn i ddod yn fwy aeddfed ac i ysgwyddo cyfrifoldeb.
My child is well prepared for moving on the next college or work	13	3 43%	3 43%	1 14%	0 0%	6	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r coleg nesaf neu waith.
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits	16	12 75%	4 25%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
The college is well run	16	13 81%	3 19%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r coleg yn cael ei rhedeg yn dda.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Mrs Caroline Rees	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Gill Sims	Team Inspector
Anthony Mulcahy	Team Inspector
Lucy Pottinger	Peer Inspector
Richard Tither	Nominee