



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

Annual monitoring inspection report on

**The Potteries
Abermule
SY15 6JH**

Date of inspection: October 2016

by

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

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Context

The Potteries school opened in November 2012. The classroom is based in a large house in Abermule near Newtown, which is also a children's home. The Potteries is an assessment centre. Nearly all pupils attend a 26-week programme, which includes a 16-week assessment, before moving on to long-term placements.

The proprietor, CareTech UK, is a limited company, which owns children's homes across England and Wales. The children's home is registered with CCSIW for up to four young people aged 10 to 18. All the young people placed at the Potteries are looked after by a local authority and have a statement of special educational needs. The primary identified need is social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The school provides full-time education for all the young people placed in the children's home. Residential care workers support the headteacher on a day-to-day basis. They attend educational visits and sports activities with the pupils during the school day. A head of education oversees the education provision across the company's schools .

Main findings

Strengths

All pupils make steady progress in their learning during their placement. They develop their skills in areas such as literacy, numeracy, social and life skills and apply these appropriately in practical situations.

Pupils behave well. They are polite and courteous to staff and visitors.

The school has a thorough system of baseline assessments for all pupils. This allows the headteacher to identify pupils' current strengths and abilities. This information is used well to inform the planning of lessons in the classroom. As a result, the headteacher has a good understanding of the pupils' needs and makes sure that the learning is relevant to the interests of the individual pupils.

The headteacher shows a strong commitment to improving the quality of education at the school. He has a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and main areas for development.

Areas for development

All educational activities, both onsite and offsite, have learning objectives that are set by the headteacher. These objectives relate well to the activity and make useful links to literacy, numeracy and social skills development. However, in many of the offsite activities, the learning objectives are too generic and do not link well enough with the

objectives set in the classroom. Staff do not always use the learning objectives well enough to evaluate pupil progress and identify the next steps in their learning.

The school has recently introduced a thorough process of observations for all staff. However, the school does not collate the outcomes of these observations well enough to inform professional development or to enable the school to share best practice.

The school has produced a useful self-evaluation report that identifies its strengths and main areas for development. However, the school does not use the information it collects from regular assessments well enough in the self-evaluation report to analyse pupil progress against their individual targets. As a result, the self-evaluation does not focus sufficiently on standards.

Recommendations

R1 Ensure that learning objectives are specific and are planned consistently across all areas of educational provision provided by the school

R2 Ensure that self-evaluation processes focus clearly on the standards that pupils achieve in all educational activities provided by the school

R3 Collate information from staff observations to inform staff development

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

Recommendation 1: Further improve pupils' attendance

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Pupils attending the school have a range of complex social and emotional difficulties. All pupils have a history of poor attendance at previous education settings and many have experienced multiple placement breakdowns.

The attendance rate of pupils at school has improved by 14 percentage points over the last two years. Attendance levels for many pupils show an improvement on their attendance prior to joining the school. The average attendance rate for 2015-2016 is 81.6%. The rate of authorised absences has reduced over the last two years. However, the rate of unauthorised absences has remained unchanged over the same period. The headteacher monitors and tracks attendance data appropriately.

A very few pupils continue to be persistent non- attenders and this is having a significant impact on the overall attendance rate of the school.

Recommendation 2: Make sure that all pupils have access to sex and relationship education

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Pupils have access to an appropriate personal and social education programme that provides useful information about a range of important issues such as personal safety and sex and relationships. The school has recently introduced an accredited sex and relationships scheme of work for all pupils in Year 9 and above.

The school works effectively with external agencies to address the specific needs of pupils attending the school. The school has very recently formalised the arrangements with the local health service to make sure that every pupil has access to the looked-after children (LAC) nurse service for at least two sessions during their placement.

Recommendation 3: Extend the educational for post-16 pupils

This recommendation is no longer relevant.

Recommendation 4: Improve self- evaluation to include feedback from all stakeholders and focus more on outcomes

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The school has recently developed appropriate systems to evaluate the impact of most of its work. It draws on a wide range of first-hand evidence such as attendance data, outcomes of lesson observations and wellbeing assessments. The school has

introduced suitable processes to collect the views of stakeholders including placing authorities, parents and carers. This information is used well to inform the self-evaluation and the school improvement plan.

The most recent self-evaluation report is an honest evaluation of the school's work. It identifies the school's strengths and a few areas for improvement. However, the self-evaluation report does not analyse well enough the progress pupils make across the whole range of educational activities. As a result, it does not focus sufficiently on pupil standards

Recommendation 5: Introduce quality assurance process across all providers of educational activities

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

At the time of the monitoring visit, pupils were not accessing any educational activities provided by outside organisations.

The headteacher is responsible for the co-ordination of all educational activities provided by the school. The residential care workers facilitate many of the educational activities during the week.

The school has recently introduced a wide range of quality assurance processes, which involve all staff. There are now well-planned activities to monitor the work of residential care workers in the education setting. For example, the headteacher undertakes regular observations of activities and provides written feedback with areas for improvement to staff. However, the school does not collate the outcomes of these observations well enough to inform staff development. It does not provide support for staff to evaluate pupil progress during educational activities.

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

Standard 5: Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools

On the 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 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	The Potteries
School number	6666051
Purpose of visit	Annual monitoring inspection
Date of visit	31/10/2016
Proprietor	Care Tec uk
Staff	1 Full –Time teacher (who is also headteacher, 1 Full time manager, 20 Full and part time residential care workers in care setting
Number of pupils	2
Provision	Day education for pupils in the linked children's home
Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school	Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
Last annual monitoring inspection	05/10/2015
Last CSSIW inspection	04/08/2016

Team information

Margaret Elisabeth Davies	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Gill Sims	Team Inspector