



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**

**Date of inspection: October 2015**

**by**

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

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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court

Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.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 also houses a children's home. The children's home is registered with CSSIW for up to four young people aged 10 to 18. The Proprietor, CareTech UK, is a limited company, which owns children's homes across England and Wales. The Potteries has been set up as an intake and assessment centre. Most of the young people attend a 26 week programme, which includes 16 weeks of assessment, before moving on to other placements. Young people can be placed by local authorities in England and Wales. Currently all young people are from England. The school provides full-time education, including National Curriculum subjects and qualifications such as ASDAN and AQA awards. Learners are able to sit GCSE examinations at another school within the company.

## Main findings

### Strengths

#### The school's strengths are that:

- The headteacher has begun to collect and use a wide range of data to inform annual and self-evaluation reports; this includes data on attendance, initial assessments, examination outcomes, exclusions and physical intervention
- The proprietor has improved its challenge and support for the headteacher through employing a head of education
- Pupils who have often missed many years of school prior to joining the Potteries become enthusiastic about learning
- The quality of teaching is good
- Pupils learn in a welcoming and attractive environment
- The rewards system is working well and pupils' behaviour is good

### Areas for development

#### The school's areas for development are that:

- All pupils begin to engage with education, often from a very low baseline, although the overall attendance rate of 68% is too low
- The proprietor has put in place a useful programme of lesson observations and supervision for the headteacher, although this is a recent development and other staff and external providers of education are not observed
- Pupils have access to two sessions with the LAC nurse on sex education and relationships although, if pupils miss these sessions, they cannot cover this important work in the classroom; there is no structured programme within the school curriculum on sex and relationships
- The school is finding it difficult to make links with the local further education (FE) college due to issues around the supervision of their pupils within the FE college lessons

## **Recommendations**

### **The school should:**

- R1 Further improve pupils' attendance
- R2 Make sure that all pupils have access to sex and relationship education
- R3 Extend the educational opportunities for post-16 pupils
- R4 Improve self-evaluation to include feedback from all stakeholders and focus more on outcomes
- R5 Introduce quality assurance processes across all providers of educational activities

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

**Recommendation 1: Ensure that self-evaluation processes are comprehensive and draw on evidence from a wide range of stakeholders**

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The headteacher has made good use of the Estyn self-evaluation manual for independent schools to guide his work on self-evaluation. However, not enough use is made of the views of pupils, parents, social workers and other stakeholders to inform the report. The report does not focus enough on outcomes.

The headteacher collects and uses a wide range of data to complete a comprehensive annual report on school performance. This report evaluates how well pupils have reengaged with education and links well to the section on standards in the school selfevaluation report.

The school can show that pupils have improved their attainment in English and mathematics during their stay at the Potteries.

**Recommendation 2: Ensure that lesson observations are included in the self-evaluation process and identify targets for staff development and improved outcomes for pupils**

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The proprietor has recently appointed a new Head of Education to line manage the work of the headteacher. In September 2015, he introduced a programme of lesson observations that includes clear written feedback for the headteacher outlining strengths and areas for improvement. However, there is no quality assurance of the sessions managed by other staff and external providers. Quality assurance is at a very early stage and it is too early to judge the impact.

**Recommendation 3: Ensure that the proprietor supports the school as a critical friend and holds the school to account for the standards pupils achieve**

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The proprietor has improved the quality of support and challenge provided for the school. Last term, an external consultant was employed to identify priorities for school improvement. He is now employed full time. His role is to secure progress and improvement across CareTech's schools. He is introducing a new quality assurance framework for education across the company. This includes performance management, regular supervision and annual performance review for all school leaders.

## **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 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 this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 7.

### 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

<b>School</b>	The Potteries
<b>School number</b>	6666051
<b>Purpose of visit</b>	Annual monitoring inspection
<b>Date of visit</b>	05/10/2015
<b>Proprietor</b>	CareTech UK
<b>Staff</b>	1 full-time manager 28 full & part-time residential care workers
<b>Number of pupils</b>	3
<b>Provision</b>	Day provision for pupils who reside in the company's children's home.
<b>Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school</b>	Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
<b>Last Section 163 inspection</b>	N/A
<b>Last annual monitoring inspection</b>	01/10/2014
<b>Last CSSIW inspection</b>	17/07/2015

### Team information

Mrs Claire Yardley	Reporting Inspector
Ms Jassa Scott	Team Inspector