



Annual monitoring inspection report on

Bettws Lifehouse

Date of inspection: June 2015

by

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

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Context

Bettws Lifehouse is an independent special school situated in a small, rural village in mid Wales. The school opened in 2007. It provides day education for up to 20 pupils aged 9 to 19 years who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Pupils are placed by authorities in Wales and England.

At the time of this inspection, all pupils have a statement of special educational needs and a few pupils are looked after by their placing authority.

Since the last visit, the school has developed a science room, which enables pupils to follow a broader range of science courses.

Main findings

Strengths

The school's strengths are that:

- The school employs experienced, well-qualified staff who have specialist knowledge in a wide range of curriculum areas
- Planning for the short, medium and long term is detailed and takes good account of individual pupils' needs
- Where appropriate, the school develops its own courses that are tailor made to meet the needs of individual pupils, for example a course in horse care
- The school plans effectively for the development of skills across the curriculum
- The school makes very effective use of the space it has to provide a broad and balanced curriculum
- There is a wide range of appropriate resources, including electronic tablets and art and science equipment
- There is a positive ethos that promotes confidence and self-esteem
- Staff work together very effectively to support the learning, behavioural and emotional needs of the pupils
- The school places a clear focus on developing pupils' thinking skills
- The school has fully addressed all the recommendations from the previous annual monitoring visit

Areas for development

The school's areas for development are that:

- Although the school has a comprehensive website that provides useful information about the school, it does not have a school prospectus that can be given to parents or other stakeholders
- Although the self-evaluation report is detailed and identifies relevant strengths and areas for development, not all stakeholders are involved formally in the self-evaluation process

- Although the school development plan identifies appropriate areas for development, actions are not broken down into small enough steps; timescales are not specific enough, and this makes it hard for managers to monitor progress

Recommendations

The school should:

- R1. Develop a school prospectus
- R2. Involve staff, pupils and other stakeholders in the self-evaluation process
- R3. Ensure that the school development plan includes clear actions and timescales

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

Recommendation 1: Make sure that pupils' early morning work is marked and followed up to ensure that they know what they need to do to improve

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

Pupils complete useful practice sheets when they arrive in the morning. Marking consistently shows pupils what they need to do to improve.

Recommendation 2: Strengthen the recording of serious incidents

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school keeps detailed records of serious incidents and the use of physical intervention. Staff record details promptly. Witnesses provide a written account of the event, which they sign. Pupils have the opportunity to record their views.

Recommendation 3: Apply to the Welsh Government to extend the school's registration approval under S347, to include pupils with autistic spectrum disorder

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

In 2014, the school applied to Welsh Government for a material change to accept pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. The Welsh Government approved the change.

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 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	Bettws Lifehouse
School number	666 6048
Purpose of visit	Annual monitoring inspection
Date of visit	10/06/2015
Proprietor	Bettws Lifehouse Ltd
Staff	1 Headteacher 1 Managing Director 4 Full-time teachers/instructors 9 Part-time teachers/instructors 4 Part-time learning support assistants (LSAs) and cover supervising staff 1 Part-time psychodynamic practitioner 1 Part-time learning coach
Number of pupils	17
Provision	Day
Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school	Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD), moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)
Last Section 163 inspection	21/05/2012
Last annual monitoring inspection	19/05/2014
Last CSSIW inspection	

Team information

Mrs Caroline Rees	Reporting Inspector
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