



**Annual monitoring inspection report on  
Options Kinsale School**

**Date of inspection: June 2015**

**by**

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

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## Context

Kinsale School offers an integrated residential education and care package for pupils aged between 8 and 19 years who have an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) or related difficulties. Recently, it has also started to accept pupils with more complex needs.

The school currently educates 9 pupils from Year 7 to post-16. Pupils come predominantly from English authorities and a very few pupils are placed by authorities in Wales. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and nearly all pupils have 'looked-after-child' (LAC) status. There are no day placements at present.

There have been several changes in the leadership team during this academic year due to staff ill health. A new headteacher joined the school in April 2015.

## Main findings

### The school's strengths are that:

- Pupils develop independence and confidence in line with their ability and needs, for example when they learn how to use money and plan a journey
- The school council enables pupils to take responsibility and contribute to whole school decision-making; the council's minutes are recorded using an attractive and appropriate picture format that pupils can understand easily
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour well and develop effective learning relationships
- Staff have a good understanding of pupils' needs and inspire a sense of trust
- Lessons are planned well and include an appropriate range of activities and resources
- The school is developing a useful partnership with a local secondary school to promote pupils' social interaction, for example through Forest School activities
- The newly appointed headteacher has identified appropriate areas for school improvement

### Areas for development

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

- As a result of changes in leadership, a few of the school's policies and procedures have not been reviewed recently. The headteacher has identified this as an area for improvement.
- The organisation's child protection policy applies across residential care and education. However, the policy is unclear about the specific action school staff should take if they have concerns. The policy identifies the designated senior persons but does not include the headteacher. It does not include the actions

staff should take if an allegation is made against a designated person or senior member of staff. The policy is not signed. The reporting structure is confusing because the flow chart attached to the policy advises staff to notify their line manager of any concerns rather than the designated person/s. The template for recording a child protection allegation is unsuitable.

- The required information about the school, as detailed in the regulations, is not always easily available to parents/carers.
- The complaints procedure does not make clear the arrangements for a hearing before a panel.
- The school's processes for assessing pupils' performance are not systematic enough.

## **Recommendations**

### **The school should:**

- R1 Comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003
- R2 Revise the child protection policy to ensure that the responsibilities and procedures for staff working in the school are clear; ensure that the policy includes the actions the school should take if an allegation is made against a designated person or senior member of staff
- R3 Improve baseline assessment and systems to monitor pupils' performance as they move through the school

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

### **Recommendation 1: Provide an appropriate range of accredited courses to meet the changing and diverse needs of the pupils**

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Courses are tailored appropriately to meet the needs of individual pupils. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' independence skills through relevant study units, for example learning how to travel independently and how to handle money. This year the school has received approved status to provide external accreditation from a range of suitable providers in order to address the academic needs of more able pupils.

### **Recommendation 2: Further develop ways of analysing assessment data to improve planning at all levels**

This recommendation has not been addressed.

There is no formal baseline assessment of pupils' educational performance on entry to the school. Staff rely on initial referral data about individual pupils to form judgements about pupils' performance. This assessment is too informal. The organisation's clinical team carries out baseline assessment of pupils to identify pupils' sensory and speech and language needs.

Staff, including speech and language and occupational therapists, work as a team to plan and review targets in pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) and behaviour support plans.

However, the school's systematic on-going assessment of pupils' performance has lapsed during the last year because of changes in staffing. The school is currently reviewing its procedures.

## **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**

The school does not fully meet the regulatory requirements for this standard. In order to comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school should:

- Prepare and implement written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with Welsh Government circular 158/2015 '*Keeping Learners Safe*' [3(2b)]

### **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**

The school does not fully meet the regulatory requirements for this standard. In order to comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school should make available to parents/carers on request:

- Particulars of policies relating to bullying, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving [6(2h)]
- The complaints procedure adopted by the school, together with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year [6(2j)]
- The number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications [6(2k)]

### **Standard 7: The manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The school does not fully meet the regulatory requirements for this standard. In order to comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school should ensure that:

- If the parents are not satisfied with the response to a written complaint, there is provision for the establishment of a hearing before a panel appointed by the proprietor of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. [7(f)]
- Where there is a panel hearing of a complaint there is provision that one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the school. [7(g)]
- The procedure allows for parents to attend the panel hearing, and, if they wish, to be accompanied. [7(h)]

## Recommendation regarding registration

When considering this school's registration the National Assembly for Wales may wish to have regard to the following recommendation:

The school does not currently meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. To comply fully with these requirements, the school should address the issues identified above for each standard.

Inspectors' judgements on this annual monitoring inspection should not prejudice the findings of a future full Section 163 inspection.

## School information

<b>School</b>	New Options (Kinsale) School
<b>School number</b>	664/6004
<b>Purpose of visit</b>	Annual monitoring inspection
<b>Date of visit</b>	24/06/2015
<b>Proprietor</b>	New Options Ltd
<b>Staff</b>	Headteacher/ 4 full-time teachers (with QTS) / 3 full-time tutors/ 10 support workers
<b>Number of pupils</b>	9
<b>Provision</b>	52 week residential
<b>Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school</b>	Autistic spectrum disorder and complex needs
<b>Last Section 163 inspection</b>	26/03/2012
<b>Last annual monitoring inspection</b>	27/01/2014
<b>Last CSSIW inspection</b>	19/05/2015

## Team information

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