



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

**Annual monitoring inspection report on
Headlands School**

Date of inspection: January 2017

by

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

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Context

Headlands School is an independent special school, situated in a residential area of Penarth in the Vale of Glamorgan. It is part of the Action for Children charity. The school provides term time residential and day placements for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Very recently, one of the residential houses has been registered with CSSIW as a children's home. This will enable the school to provide a residence for a very few pupils during school holidays.

The school currently educates 63 pupils from key stage 2 to post-16. Nearly all pupils come from Welsh local authorities, with a very few from English local authorities. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and 15 pupils have looked-after child (LAC) status.

The last full inspection by Estyn was in October 2012.

Main findings

Strengths

The school provides a wide range of learning experiences that meet the needs of learners well.

The curriculum is planned well at a departmental and whole-school level.

The school works with a range of partners, for example a college, a mainstream school and local charities, to broaden pupils' learning experiences.

The school places a strong focus on pupils' wellbeing. This has a positive impact on pupils' engagement in learning. Pupils generally behave well.

Pupils develop their thinking skills well.

Staff and pupils develop very strong working relationships. As a result, pupils are happy to ask for and accept help and advice.

The school collects a wide range of appropriate data on pupil progress in relation to their learning and behaviour. Staff use this data effectively to plan relevant strategies and intervention programmes.

The school is developing leadership roles within the school well. For example, heads of key stage take part in lesson observations, book scrutiny and curriculum planning.

The school has a well-established programme of lesson observations. Teachers receive helpful verbal and written feedback. Managers analyse the strengths and areas for development and discuss this information with staff on training days. This has a positive impact on teaching, for example in the use of starter activities to engage pupils.

The school carries out regular book scrutiny. Managers have recognised the need to use this activity to focus more on pupil standards and the quality of teaching in addition to the quality of written feedback.

Areas for development

Although the school has an appropriate range of policies, managers do not always review these carefully enough to ensure that they are clear and contain all the necessary information.

Although the school keeps an attendance register, this has not been completed in line with current Welsh Government guidelines. For example, the register does not identify authorised and unauthorised absences clearly and does not use the correct codes. On occasions, entries are made in pencil. During the visit, managers made sure that all staff are fully aware of correct procedures.

The school has a detailed self-evaluation report which is reviewed regularly. However, areas for development are not specific enough. As a result, it is not always clear what needs to be improved and why.

Recommendations

R1 Review all policies carefully on a regular basis to ensure that they are easy to read and that they contain all necessary information

R2 Ensure that self-evaluation processes identify clearly the key areas that need to be improved

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

Recommendation 1: Ensure that adult support in the classroom promotes pupils' independence skills

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has provided training for all staff on promoting pupils' independence skills. This includes sessions on developing thinking skills and independent group work. Teachers encourage pupils to work without adult support, either on their own or with their peers. In nearly all lessons, teachers and support staff give pupils time to think when answering questions. They encourage pupils to work out solutions to problems.

Support staff understand the importance of promoting pupils' independence through withdrawing support gradually where appropriate. Where pupils receive additional support, the school encourages them to work with more than one adult, to prevent them from becoming over reliant on any individual member of staff.

Recommendation 2: Improve the learning environment at key stage 2

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has made significant improvements to the key stage 2 accommodation. It now provides an appropriate learning environment. Colourful furniture creates a cheerful atmosphere. Attractive displays on classroom walls support pupils' learning and wellbeing effectively. For example, displays remind pupils of the importance of friendship and respect for others. In a few classrooms, pupils' work is displayed on the walls to celebrate their success.

In the long term, the school hopes to develop a new key stage 2 block, which will provide more space. Detailed plans have been drawn up and presented to the charity for consideration.

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:

- Maintain an admission and an attendance register in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 3(9)

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:

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

School	Headlands School
School number	6736025
Purpose of visit	Annual monitoring inspection
Date of visit	11/01/2017
Proprietor	Action for Children
Staff	15 teachers, 30 teaching assistants, 24 residential support workers
Number of pupils	63
Provision	Day
Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school	Challenging behaviour, social and emotional difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder, attachment disorders
Last Section 163 inspection	05/11/2012
Last annual monitoring inspection	03/02/2015
Last CSSIW inspection	08/03/2016

Team information

Mrs Caroline Rees	Reporting Inspector
Mr Anthony Mulcahy	Team Inspector