



Annual monitoring inspection report on:

Prospects School

Date of inspection: January 2014

by

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

Estyn's annual monitoring visits to independent and independent special schools in Wales are required to report on whether the National Assembly for Wales (NAW) registration standards regulations for independent schools are met and, where they are not met, what they need to do in order to comply.

Further information regarding the regulations governing this monitoring visit can be found in the following documentation:

- Welsh Assembly Government: *Independent Schools Information and Registration Handbook*, April 2004; and
- Welsh Office Circular 37/94: *Independent schools which admit pupils with special educational needs*:
 - paragraphs 1-8: granting/removing approval;
 - paragraph 42: changes in character, management or control of the school; and
 - 37/94 paragraph 43: significant differences from approved number.

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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court

Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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Context

Prospects School is an independent specialist school for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school provides education for young people who are subject to care orders and who reside with Prospects for Young People Ltd, as well as offering day placements for young people. Prospects for Young People Ltd has 11 different registered children's homes, all in the Wrexham area, with one of the children's homes sharing the site of the school.

The school has a 'continuum of provision'. Pupils are assessed on entry and placed in the different settings according to their individual needs. The provision includes home tuition in the children's home, provided by the teachers, and nurture provision or a full timetable of educational activities in the school.

The school currently has 14 pupils on roll. They come predominantly from English authorities with a few pupils from Welsh authorities. Nearly all pupils have 52 week residential placements and very few pupils attend as day pupils. Nearly all pupils have 'looked-after child' (LAC) status and six pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN).

The school has gone through a period of significant staffing changes since June 2012. These include the appointment of a new headteacher (formerly the deputy headteacher), an assistant headteacher and a special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). The role of assistant headteacher is new to the school and replaces the deputy headteacher role.

The school is using the Lodge as an additional teaching resource. This resource enables pupils with significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, previously educated in the children's home, to be integrated successfully back into school.

Main findings

Strengths

The school's strengths are that:

- it has made very good progress in addressing the recommendations of the last inspection;
- leaders and staff focus appropriately on improving outcomes for pupils;
- pupils achieve good progress in their learning and improve their behaviour and social skills well, over time;
- teachers and learning support assistants work effectively as a team;
- staff manage pupils' behaviour effectively;
- pupils gain an appropriate range of qualifications before they leave school; and
- partnerships are a strength.

Areas for development

The school's areas for development are that:

- although it has made very good progress in addressing the recommendations of the last inspection, work relating to two of the recommendations is at an early stage;
- the school provides good support and guidance for Year 11 pupils to move on to post-16 provision. It has good links with a local further education college, a local mainstream school and local businesses and training providers. Transition arrangements make sure that pupils can re-integrate, when appropriate, with their peers and access courses of their choice when they leave Prospects. There has been an increase during the past three years in the number of pupils gaining external accreditation and qualifications at the end of Year 11. These include GCSEs, entry level, ASDAN, Agored Cymru and Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Although this is an area of strength, the school has appropriately identified the need to further broaden these opportunities to meet the changing and diverse needs of the pupils; and
- the school has produced a detailed self-evaluation report, which links to its improvement plan. However, the report is too descriptive, and does not take into account enough first-hand evidence, for example classroom observations. It does not focus sufficiently on pupils' progress, achievement and outcomes. Areas for improvement are not always well prioritised.

Recommendations

- R1** Continue to develop the school's policy and procedures for improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the school
- R2** Make sure that pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) include specific literacy and numeracy targets which show small steps of progress that can be reviewed effectively across the school
- R3** Broaden the range of accredited courses to meet the changing and diverse needs of the pupils
- R4** Further develop the self-evaluation report as a comprehensive and evaluative document, which clearly identifies areas for improvement with a focus on raising pupils' standards

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

Recommendation 1: Take steps to make sure that the school complies fully with the regulations required for registration

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

Recommendation 2: Focus on the standards of achievement and the wellbeing of pupils in all monitoring and subsequent plans for improvement

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

Individual behaviour plan (IBP) targets are being addressed very effectively using the school's own incentive scheme. The scheme records pupils' progress in the areas of time keeping, respect, engagement, communication and safety (TRECS).

Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are in place. They focus effectively on the standards of achievement and the wellbeing of pupils. The school focuses appropriately on the standards of achievement and the wellbeing of pupils when monitoring medium term plans, curriculum plans, baseline assessment and observations of teaching. This information is used appropriately in subsequent improvement plans.

Recommendation 3: Make sure that all pupils' additional learning needs are met

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The Lodge is used as an additional teaching resource. This enables pupils with significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, previously educated in the children's home, to be integrated successfully back into school. A classroom in the main school building has been adapted to meet the individual needs of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.

The school has comprehensive pupil profiles detailing each individual pupil's additional learning needs. Profiles include pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. These profiles are used effectively by staff in medium-term planning, when delivering lessons and for agreeing on appropriate interventions, for example to improve reading skills.

Recommendation 4: Provide more opportunities for pupils to be involved in decision-making about the life and work of the school

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

A school council has been established and pupils are actively involved in decision-making about the life and work of the school. They feel that they have a voice and that their contribution is valued by staff. Minutes of their half-termly meetings include appropriate actions to be taken. These include reducing the lunch hour to accommodate an afternoon break and refurbishing an area for pupils to access as a common room.

Recommendation 5: Improve the planning to improve pupils' basic skills across the school

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has carried out a review of literacy and numeracy development across the school and staff have received appropriate training. The school has developed a whole school strategy to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. They have introduced valuable interventions, for example to improve pupils' reading skills. However it is too early to evaluate the impact of the policy and procedures across the curriculum.

Recommendation 6: Devise a policy for personal and social education, which links carefully to improved social, emotional and behavioural outcomes for pupils

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has an appropriate policy for personal and social education, which makes specific reference to key issues, including sex and relationships education. These issues relate well to improving social, emotional and behavioural outcomes of pupils at Prospects. Pupils, over time, develop the knowledge and understanding they require to keep themselves and others safe.

Recommendation 7: Ensure that pupils' specific IEP targets, and literacy and numeracy skills are included in all lesson planning and delivery

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

IEPs are used appropriately across the school and literacy and numeracy targets are included in the delivery of lessons. However, targets are not always specific and measurable and are not embedded well enough in lesson planning across the school.

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	Prospects School
School number	665/6039
Purpose of visit	Annual monitoring inspection
Date of visit	29 and 30 January 2014
Proprietor	Prospects for Young People Ltd
Staff	1 headteacher with qualified teacher status (QTS) 1 assistant headteacher with QTS 4 full time teachers with QTS 1 part time (0.6) teacher with QTS 1 full time learning support manager 4 full time learning support assistants (LSAs) There is a separate team of care staff in the residential children's homes.
Number of pupils	14 pupils
Provision	Day, 39 week residential placements and 52 week residential placements.
Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school	Pupils, boys and girls, in key stages 3 and 4 (aged 11-16) with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and moderate learning difficulties.
Last Section 163 inspection	February 2012
Last annual monitoring inspection	19 and 20 February 2013
Last CSSIW inspection	31 October 2013

Team information

Reporting Inspector	Meinir Rees
Team Inspector	Ann Dackevych