



Annual monitoring inspection report on

Marlowe St David's School

Date of inspection: February 2015

by

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

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Publication date: 16/04/2015

Context

Marlowe St David's School is a small independent school for boys and girls aged seven to eighteen. It is situated in a rural setting in north Pembrokeshire. It was set up in 2000 for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). The school is owned and managed by Marlowe Child and Family Services Ltd.

At the time of the visit, there were 13 pupils on the roll of the school. Seven pupils have looked-after child status and these pupils all reside in the company's children's homes. Eight pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN). All the pupils have English as their first language. A few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The school currently employs three full-time teachers and one part-time teacher. There are three classes, and pupils are grouped according to age and ability.

Since the time of the last inspection, the school has increased its capacity from 16 to 20 pupils and moved into new accommodation for key stage 2. This accommodation provides a suitable learning environment.

The current headteacher has been in post since February 2013.

Main findings

Strengths

The school's strengths are that:

- The school provides very good levels of support, care and guidance
- There has been an improvement in pupils' punctuality
- The school has well-prepared and comprehensive policies
- Recent changes to the line management structure have contributed to improved joint working between the care and education settings

Areas for development

The school's areas for development are that:

- Progress against recommendations has been very slow
- Opportunities for staff to observe good practice in other settings are limited
- Outside facilities for learning are under-developed

Recommendations

The school should:

- R1 Ensure that key strategic priorities are met in a timely way
- R2 Establish robust performance management for all staff
- R3 Use data effectively to track pupil progress and inform planning
- R4 Visit other providers to observe good practice

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

Recommendation 1: Ensure that the school development plan clearly prioritises areas for development, and that resources are allocated to enable priorities to be delivered in a timely way

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

There is a clear link between the self-evaluation report and the development plan. Appropriate areas for development are identified, and in a few cases resources are allocated. Although there are identified timescales for the completion of each point of action, these are not clearly prioritised to ensure the school remains focused on the key priorities. As a result, the school has been slow to make progress against key issues, in particular the recommendations from the last inspection and previous monitoring visits.

Recommendation 2: Establish robust performance management for all staff

This recommendation has not been addressed.

The school has very recently adopted a competency framework for both teaching and support staff. This has been shared with staff, and they are beginning to collect evidence of how they meet the competencies. A system of formal lesson observations has been established for both teaching and support staff. The first appraisal meetings are planned to take place in July 2015.

Recommendation 3: Use data effectively to track pupil progress and inform planning

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The school has been slow in developing its use of data. The school records individual pupil data, for example spelling ages, results of literacy and numeracy tests

and National Curriculum levels. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) tracks the progress of pupils with a statement of SEN and uses data appropriately to decide on individual pupil interventions. However, at a strategic level, the school does not use data effectively to monitor and analyse pupil progress at a whole school, class, group and individual level or to inform planning.

Recommendation 4: Ensure that all pupils improve their attendance and punctuality over time

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has implemented appropriate strategies to improve attendance and punctuality. These include a reward system and improved joint working with the care staff. As a result, nearly all pupils improve their attendance and punctuality over time.

Recommendation 5: Ensure that support staff encourage pupils to work independently and develop their skills

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

Staff have discussed the role of support staff during their team meetings. This has given them a better understanding of how teachers and support staff can work together effectively within the classroom. Very recently, teachers have started to carry out formal observations of support staff. However, this is at a very early stage. This year, all support staff are completing a one-year course on assisting in the classroom.

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 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

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| School | Marlowe St David's School |
| School number | 668 6014 |
| Purpose of visit | Annual monitoring inspection |
| Date of visit | 09/02/2015 |
| Proprietor | Marlowe Child and Family Services Ltd PO Box 283 Gloucester GL19 3YE |
| Staff | 5 Teachers, (4 & 1 HT) 5 TAs |
| Number of pupils | 13 |
| Provision | Day linked to associated children's homes |
| Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school | Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties |
| Last Section 163 inspection | 04/02/2014 |
| Last annual monitoring inspection | 03/12/2012 |
| Last CSSIW inspection | N/A |

Team information

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|--------------------|---------------------|
| Mrs Caroline Rees | Reporting Inspector |
| Ms Michelle Gosney | Team Inspector |