



Annual monitoring inspection report on:

Priory College South Wales

Date of inspection: March 2014

by

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

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Context

Priory College South Wales provides post-school education for around 40 learners, aged 16 to 25 years, with Asperger syndrome.

The Priory College South Wales learning centre is set within the grounds of Coleg Gwent's Pontypool campus. Priory College South Wales learners access a wide range of facilities including an extensive construction building and professional hair and beauty salons that are open to the public. Nearly all Priory College South Wales learners attend classes provided by Coleg Gwent in the main campus buildings and receive support as needed from the specialist Priory College South Wales learning centre.

In addition, Priory College South Wales offers a small number of specific courses for employability, social use of language, art therapy and independent living skills.

Learners are supported by an extensive team of support workers. The centre manager has been in post for six months.

Main findings

Strengths

The college's strengths are that:

- it provides a very well-equipped and maintained learning and support area for learners;
- the Priory College South Wales learning centre is in a central position within a mainstream college and learners have very easy access to a wide range of facilities where they can develop their social skills;
- the learning centre offers a very welcoming, calm environment where learners overcome their individual difficulties and gain in confidence;
- the new college manager provides very strong leadership and has a clear vision for the development of the college;
- the college has a clear focus on preparing learners for progression to further learning or employment;
- record keeping at the college is of a high quality;
- college documents are well presented and policies are reviewed and updated on a regular basis; and
- the college has made very good progress in addressing nearly all the recommendations from the previous visit.

Areas for development

The college's areas for development are that:

- although the college's policies and procedures for safeguarding are clear, well established and understood by all staff, the documentation relating to specific procedures in the case of disclosure is not clear enough to be followed easily by all staff;
- the college has a wide range of good quality, clear and well written policies. However, a very few are joint policies for both the North and South Wales Priory Colleges. These are not specific enough to meet the very diverse needs of each college;
- the self-evaluation report is detailed and comprehensive. However, it is too descriptive in places and does not focus well enough on areas for improvement. As a result, it does not inform the quality development plan well enough; and
- formal tracking of learner progress on vocational and academic courses is underdeveloped. As a result, the college is not able to monitor progress easily to ensure that all learners achieve to the best of their ability.

Recommendations

- R1 Amend the safeguarding policy to make procedures clear and easy to follow
- R2 Ensure that all policies are specific to the college
- R3 Make sure the self-assessment report is evaluative and clearly identifies strengths and areas for development
- R4 Develop a robust quality cycle where self-assessment fully informs the quality development plan
- R5 Establish a formal system to track and evaluate learner progress on vocational and academic courses

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

Recommendation 1: Make sure that there is a designated child protection officer and deputy on site at the college at all times

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The college has a designated safeguarding officer and has appointed a deputy officer to ensure that the site is covered at all times. Both the designated officer and deputy officer have had comprehensive training to undertake their roles. Policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection are well established and understood within the college.

Recommendation 2: Provide learners with a formal personal and social education course which includes sex and relationship education

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The college has developed a comprehensive personal and social education programme. This includes specific accredited units for sex and relationship education. Staff have received useful training to deliver this programme and to support learners on a one-to-one basis where required.

Recommendation 3: Continue to increase provision in Welsh language skills and in knowledge of Welsh culture within the college

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

Although this is not a statutory requirement for the college, they have made good progress in introducing learners to basic Welsh language and to providing stimulating external visits that promote Welsh culture and values. Learners also benefit from the Welsh language and culture development programmes within the mainstream college.

Recommendation 4: Record and analyse the use of the calm room and remove the lock

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The college has removed all locks on the door of the calm room and this now provides an appropriate space for learners who require some time alone. The college retains appropriate records of the use of the calm room with details of the time spent in the room by individual learners, the supervising member of staff and the reason for use. This information is analysed regularly by managers to ensure that learners receive relevant advice, guidance and support as required.

Recommendation 5: Set up an integrated system for tracking, recording and reporting learners' progress and achievements

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The college has made good progress in tracking, recording and reporting on the progress of learners within the Priory College South Wales provision. This includes progress in relation to the social use of language programme, personal and social education, employability skills and independent living skills.

At present, Priory College South Wales meets on a regular basis with staff from Coleg Gwent to discuss individual learner progress and to plan effectively to meet individual needs. There are plans in place for Priory College South Wales to have access to relevant learners' records from the mainstream college. However, these plans are in the very early stage of development and it is too early to see the impact on learner tracking.

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

School information

College	Priory College South Wales
College number	F0006005
Purpose of visit	Annual Monitoring Visit
Date of visit	26 and 27 March 2014
Proprietor	Priory Education Services
Staff	Service Manager/Principal College Manager Business Manager Senior team leader Education coordinator x2 Tutor Speech and language therapist Counsellor/art therapist Shift leaders/learning support x 3 Learning support staff x 29
Number of learners	41
Provision	Day (38 weeks)
Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the college	Autistic Spectrum Disorder (including Asperger Syndrome and associated conditions)
Last Section 163 inspection	N/A
Last annual monitoring inspection	5 December 2012
Last CSSIW inspection	N/A

Team information

Reporting Inspector	Gill Sims
Team Inspector	Caroline Rees

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March 2014