



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

**Quality and standards in education  
and training in Wales**

**A report on the quality of  
further education**

**in**

**Coleg Elidyr**

**Date of inspection: December 2009**

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

**Date of publication: February 2010**



**The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:**

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- ▲ primary schools;
- ▲ secondary schools;
- ▲ special schools;
- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community-based learning;
- ▲ youth support services;
- ▲ youth and community work training;
- ▲ local authority education services (LAES);
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies;
- ▲ offender learning; and
- ▲ the education, guidance and training elements of the Department for Work and Pensions funded training programmes.

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- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court

Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.uk](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

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## Introduction

Coleg Elidyr was inspected as part of a six-year (2003–2009) national programme of inspections of all post-16 providers in Wales. The purpose of the programme is to identify good features and shortcomings in order that the college may improve the quality of education and training offered and raise the standards achieved by learners. Inspection is also designed to give learners more information about the quality of providers of further education.

All inspections conducted under the arrangements apply the following principles:

- the use of a common framework which is common to all sectors of education and training in Wales;
- an emphasis on the college's evaluation of its work;
- the involvement of a provider nominee who worked with the inspection team; and
- the inspection of a sample of provision.

The inspection took place between 1 December 2009 and 3 December 2009. A team led by Her Majesty's Inspectors from Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the Welsh Assembly Government, undertook the inspection. As the college is in receipt of public funding from the Learning and Skills Council in England, the team included Her Majesty's Inspector from Ofsted.

The team was required to report on standards achieved by learners, the quality of education and training provided, the quality of leadership and management and to judge if the college provides value for money.

### Explanation of words and phrases used to describe our evaluations

The words and phrases used in the left-hand column below are those that we use to describe our evaluations. The phrases in the right-hand column are the more precise explanations.

|                         |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>nearly all</b>       | with very few exceptions |
| <b>most</b>             | 90% or more              |
| <b>many</b>             | 70% or more              |
| <b>a majority</b>       | over 60%                 |
| <b>half/around half</b> | close to 50%             |
| <b>a minority</b>       | below 40%                |
| <b>few</b>              | below 20%                |
| <b>very few</b>         | less than 10%            |

## **Grade descriptions**

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

- Grade 1**      good with outstanding features
- Grade 2**      good features and no important shortcomings
- Grade 3**      good features outweigh shortcomings
- Grade 4**      some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
- Grade 5**      many important shortcomings

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 requires the college to prepare a written statement of the action that they propose to take to address the recommendations in the inspection report and the timescales for completing the proposed actions.

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

- 1 Coleg Elidyr is an independent specialist college run by the charity Coleg Elidyr, Camphill Communities, offering residential provision for learners aged 18 to 30 years. During the inspection there were 33 learners, 11 funded by the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) of the Welsh Assembly Government and nine funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in England. Social service departments funded 10 learners from England and two learners from Wales. One learner was funded by a health trust in England. The learners all have learning difficulties ranging from moderate to severe often accompanied by another disability and a few have mild physical disabilities. Many learners have specific syndromes such as Down's Syndrome, Williams Syndrome or Asperger's Syndrome. The community is a member of the Association of Camphill Communities, which works to create communities for vulnerable children or adults with learning difficulties where they can live, work and learn with others in healthy social relationships built on mutual care, support and respect. Camphill community life is based on the work of Rudolf Steiner and Doctor Karl König who used non-denominational Christian ideals as the basis for their teaching.
- 2 Coleg Elidyr is set in 180 acres of farmland on the edge of the village of Rhandirmwyn, seven miles from the town of Llandoverly. There are eight houses in the grounds where learners live in extended supportive family groups, and attend the education and training provision on the site, and where necessary, receive individual therapy. Learners follow a three year programme which includes developing independent living skills, vocational and craft skills, and the development of basic and key skills. They can progress to become trainees at the Rhandirmwyn site or move on to Victoria House in Llangadog, both of which aim to provide a more adult, vocational programme. The emphasis in Victoria House is on integration into the wider community.

### The college's priorities and targets

- 3 The college aims to:
  - develop learners' skills for life and work and a respect for the environment;
  - celebrate diversity and encourage personal growth and development; and
  - enable learners to reflect on the deeper meaning of their own lives and those of the people around them.
- 4 The college transformation plan contains objectives to improve the following aspects of provision:
  - the overall effectiveness of leadership and management;
  - quality assurance across the college;

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- standards and the quality of teaching;
- resources for ICT; and
- curriculum provision.



## Summary

- 5 Overall the profile of grades awarded to the college is satisfactory. There are good features and no important shortcomings in standards of achievement. Nearly all learners make good progress in relation to their starting points. However, there are shortcomings in the quality of teaching, the curriculum, care guidance and support, and in how leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards and use resources. The quality of leadership and management is inadequate. The very recent closer involvement by the trustees and the resulting changes and plans made by the college managers have yet to impact on the overall quality of provision. Nevertheless, overall, the college gives satisfactory value for money.

### Table of grades awarded

- 6 The inspection team judged the college's work as follows:

| Key Question   | Inspection grade |
|--|------------------|
| 1 How well do learners achieve?  | 2                |
| 2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?   | 3                |
| 3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community? | 3                |
| 4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 3                |
| 5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?   | 4                |
| 6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?                           | 3                |
| 7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?   | 3                |

### Standards

- 7 Learners gain independence and become more self confident often from a very low baseline. There are instances where learners work independently very well and with little prompting. Learners gain an increasing range of appropriate accreditation at entry level and a good understanding of the routines required to work in the wider community or in a more sheltered environment. More able learners make good progress in developing their basic and key skills such as working with others and improving their own learning.
- 8 Nearly all learners are well motivated, enjoy college life and make good progress. They generally attend and behave well. However, a very few learners do not behave well or engage in the sessions. They sometimes arrive late.

## **The quality of education and training**

- 9 Most teachers plan their sessions well and match the work to learners' abilities and needs. They make good use of practical and realistic contexts to reinforce learning. They set objectives at the beginning of the sessions and make good use of recapping and summing up to show learners what they have learned and how well they have behaved.
- 10 However, teachers do not all make enough use of the careful assessment and target setting recorded in the individual learning plans, and the work related records of achievement and learning, to inform their planning. They do not always plan carefully enough for managing difficult behaviour or meeting the needs of adult trainees.
- 11 Managers' planning of the curriculum is satisfactory and they work well in partnership with parents, carers and external bodies. There is appropriate emphasis on independent living, and basic, key and vocational skills. Learners can gain an appropriate range of qualifications and develop their spiritual, moral and cultural awareness. They have good opportunities to find out about the world of work in the vocational workshops and also in off-site work placements and learn about the democratic process. However, the college is not making enough use of its own facilities and site to give work tasters to learners with more complex needs. The college does not plan well enough to prepare learners for leaving the college. More able learners do not receive an appropriate personal, health, social and relationship programme.
- 12 The quality of care, support and guidance is satisfactory. Staff and learners know and respect each other well. The college makes good use of external professionals to give extra support to learners with particular difficulties. Staff increasingly use augmented communication well across the college to make sure that all learners have their voices heard. Guest volunteers provide good role models for learners. Policies and procedures support learners' wellbeing appropriately. Induction arrangements help learners quickly settle and understand what is expected of them. Managers assess learners well and use this valuable information to set appropriate targets for literacy, numeracy, independent living skills and behaviour. However, the college has been slow to respond to its contractual obligations in safeguarding and there is not enough attention to equality and diversity issues.

## **The quality of leadership and management**

- 13 Overall leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Although there is an appropriate mission, which is shared and understood by all staff, and an appropriate three year development plan, trustees and senior managers have not yet set up clear lines of accountability and do not work well enough to better inform decision making.
- 14 There are well-developed plans to improve staff performance management and to restructure management functions. However, these plans have yet to be implemented. Trustees and managers are not always clear about who is responsible for monitoring equality and diversity and do not make enough use of data to identify under performance and set targets for improvement. They do not monitor the action plans relating to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and Disability Equality.

Trustees do not assess their own performance and have not had equality and diversity training. They have not monitored the progress in addressing shortcomings identified in previous inspections and annual monitoring visits well enough.

- 15 There are satisfactory arrangements for evaluating and improving quality and standards in the college. There is an appropriate quality assurance cycle which includes teacher observations and self-evaluation. However, these arrangements have not been brought together in a clear framework for staff to understand. Senior managers have visited other providers but other staff have not had similar opportunities to measure their practice against other providers and make improvements. The self-evaluation report is detailed but in places is too descriptive. The college has begun to address a few of the recommendations from the previous inspection visits but there has not been a sense of urgency until recently and many recommendations are still not fully met.
- 16 Managers use resources appropriately. There are enough teaching and support staff with suitable experience to deliver the curriculum well. The college supports teachers without a teaching qualification well in providing the opportunity to gain qualified teacher status (QTS). Staff development is a good feature of the college but its impact is not measured well enough. Guest volunteers are not given enough training to fulfil their roles. Overall, learning resources are satisfactory except for basic skills books and materials. Information Communication Technology (ICT) resources have recently improved. Staff are committed to using sustainable resources. The accommodation is suitable and there is an appropriate strategy to further improve the site. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

## Recommendations

- 17 In order to improve, the staff and proprietors need to:
- R1 make sure that the college complies fully with the requirements of funding bodies particularly in relation to equality and diversity and safeguarding;
  - R2 make sure that all learners are fully engaged in all sessions;
  - R3 improve teachers' planning to make better use of assessment information to plan for improving behaviour and meeting the needs of all learners;
  - R4 make sure that the personal, health, social and relationship course prepares learners to deal with the more difficult issues they may face in the wider community.
  - R5 give greater priority to transition issues throughout all learners' programmes and devise a distinct programme for trainees;
  - R6 clarify the responsibilities and accountability of senior managers and make sure that trustees give them an appropriate balance of support and challenge to promote and sustain improvement; and
  - R7 implement and embed rigorous performance review procedures to promote and secure planning for improvement.

## Standards

### Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

#### Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

18 In its self-evaluation report, the college awarded a grade 2 for this key question. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the college.

19 The standards achieved in sessions are as follows:

| Learners' standards of achievement |         |         |         |         |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grade 1                            | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
| 12%                                | 63%     | 25%     | 0%      | 0%      |

20 In three quarters of the sessions, standards are good or better, however in the remaining sessions there are shortcomings in the standards that learners achieve.

21 Learners enjoy being part of a college community and learn to be more independent, often from a very low baseline. As a result of this growth in independence learners gain self confidence. They make new friends. They gain new interests designed to sustain them in later life such as going to the college youth club, socialising in the local pub, salsa dancing and youth hostelling.

22 In the residential houses, learners practise and improve the skills that they need to look after themselves and as a result they become more independent. These skills include personal hygiene, looking after their clothes and planning and preparing meals. Learners are now gaining appropriate accreditation for this important work.

23 Learners behave responsibly in the vocational workshops and house kitchens. There are good, and on occasion outstanding, examples of independent working. These learners organise themselves very well and need very few prompts from the teacher. They pay good attention to health and safety and hygiene. For example they handle tools in the carpentry workshop with care, they make sure that they have the correct safety footwear on the farm and understand that knives are sharp and the kettle can be hot. More able learners have a good understanding of how to use the internet safely.

24 The recent introduction of good quality work placements help learners develop a responsible attitude to the routines that are necessary to maintain employment such as being punctual and dressing appropriately. They plan and organise their packed lunches and make sure in good time that they have the appropriate clothing and footwear. They are enthusiastic about these improved opportunities and are keen to discuss their achievement with staff and visitors.

25 A few more able learners make good progress in developing their basic skills. In cookery and in retail they have the confidence to read aloud, learn to write simple text and read about and discuss hazards and potential risks. They make good use of their improving numeracy skills to count and weigh stock and ingredients. They recognise their progress and take great pride in these achievements.

- 26 Learners benefit from good opportunities to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness and understanding. They enjoy finding out about other cultures. The ethos of the community, which values the uniqueness of individuals, gives them a very clear understanding of how to treat others.
- 27 The college has undertaken a recent drive to increase the use of augmented communication. As a result, learners generally show a good understanding of signing and learners with more complex needs are now able to take part in a wider range of activities.
- 28 Learners with more complex needs have an increased range of appropriate support from a range of external professionals and therapists. There are a few very good examples of learners who, with this valuable support, have made significant strides in improving their levels of self-control and managing their behaviour. They have become calmer and can now take part in activities that were previously considered too risky. Parents and carers have noted these improvements.
- 29 Nearly all learners enjoy their sessions, attend and behave well and make good progress in their learning. They learn to work well with and alongside others. They work well in teams particularly in farm and agriculture and gardening. They listen carefully to staff and to each other and learn to follow instructions. There are good examples of progression such as making good quality finger joints and moving on to dovetail joints in carpentry. However there are a few learners who do not engage in sessions and do not always behave well. On occasion, learners arrive too late to their sessions. As a result they do not make as much progress as they could do.

## The quality of education and training

### Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?

#### Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

- 30 In its self-evaluation report, the college awarded a grade 2 for this key question. The inspection team awarded a lower grade because there are shortcomings in the quality of teaching. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

| The quality of teaching in the learning areas inspected |         |         |         |         |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grade 1   | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
| 0%  | 75%     | 25%     | 0%      | 0%      |

- 31 The quality of teaching is mostly good with some shortcomings. In three quarters of the sessions, teaching is good with no important shortcomings however in the remaining quarter of the sessions there are shortcomings.
- 32 Where teaching is good, there is clear evidence of careful planning using a common proforma. These lesson plans show links to basic and key skills and wider cross-curricular themes such as team enterprise and the Welsh curriculum. In these sessions teachers recap on previous sessions and set clear objectives at the beginning of the session. They plan an interesting range of activities to hold learners' interests. There is good use of questioning to help learners' understanding and good attention to basic and the wider key skills. Teachers give clear explanations and useful feedback on how well learners are working and at the end of the sessions they sum up what learners have learned and how well they have behaved.
- 33 Most teachers set individual or group tasks that are well matched to the learners' needs and abilities. Most teachers use their increasing expertise in augmented communication to make sure that all learners are involved in the sessions. There are good examples of tailor-made worksheets with symbols to capture learners' interests and increase the understanding of what they have to do.
- 34 Teachers make very good use of practical realistic contexts such as the shop, the farm and the garden to reinforce and develop skills over time such as weighing sugar, planting seeds and customer care.
- 35 Where there are shortcomings, teachers do not always use enough signing to make sure that all learners are engaged throughout the session. Session plans do not always show the strategies to be used to manage the more difficult behaviour and on occasion teachers do not act quickly enough to prevent poor behaviour. When learners arrive late they are not always challenged enough. Lesson plans do not always contain enough detail about how teachers will match the needs of adult trainees.
- 36 Guest volunteers give valuable practical support in sessions. They know and relate to the learners well. However their contribution to the sessions is not always formally planned or recorded.

- 37 The results of the thorough initial assessments are used to set individual targets for all learners which are carefully recorded in the workplace records of learning and achievement, and the individual learning plans. However, these useful targets are not used consistently by all teaching staff to inform their day-to-day planning. Also, the recently introduced communication targets are not always informing workplace records for learning and achievement and the lesson planning. Lesson planning proformas do not contain a section for planning to give learners opportunities to meet their targets during the session.

**Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?**

**Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

- 38 In its self-evaluation report the college awarded itself grade 3 for this key question. The findings of the inspection team match this grade.
- 39 Overall the college provides a suitable curriculum to meet the needs and interests of the learners. There is appropriate emphasis on independent living skills, vocational and basic and key skills. Courses include garden and nature, woodland and conservation, weaving, sport and health, eurhythmmy and drama, and ICT. There are increasing opportunities for learners to achieve an appropriate range of accreditation across all areas of the curriculum mainly through the Open College Network Awards (OCNs). The college has very recently introduced the Gateway Award.
- 40 The college has recently recognised the need for learners to have more access to ICT across the curriculum. Learners have improved access to computers and the appropriate software during discrete sessions. This improved access does not extend across the curriculum.
- 41 The college provides an increasing range of opportunities for learners to join in with the local and the wider community. These include visits to the pony club, the swimming pool, a holiday camp and shopping trips. These valuable experiences give learners a wider perspective and a chance to practise their developing social and independent living skills.
- 42 There is good provision to promote learners' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Staff make good use of festivals from a variety of cultures and beliefs to build in activities throughout the year. They link these carefully to curriculum areas, assemblies and extra-curricular activities. The Year 3 biography retreat in Ciliau Aeron gives learners opportunities to reflect on and review their progress and make plans for the future.
- 43 The college uses fund-raising activities well to encourage learners to think about and understand the needs of people in other parts of the world. For example, learners make and sell produce to raise money for a project in Madagascar.
- 44 The college has recently introduced a Personal, Health, Social and Relationship programme. This includes sessions on sex and sexual health education, relationships and how to treat others. However, the programme does not meet the needs of the more able learners who may one day live independently and have to



keep themselves safe. The programme does not give these learners the information that they need, or opportunities to consider and reflect on how they will deal with difficult issues that they may encounter out in the wider community. These difficult issues include the abuse of alcohol and solvents, safeguarding, racism and disability.

- 45 There is good partnership working with parents and carers through attendance at annual reviews, quarterly parents/carers weekends and learners' awards ceremonies. The college provides a good range of events which recognise and celebrate learners' achievement. The college works closely with the Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire disability team to improve augmented communication.
- 46 Learners now have a range of useful work placements which give them good opportunities to find out about the world of work. These placements include a garage, stables, florist and a café. Currently there are fewer opportunities for learners with more complex needs to experience work-related placements. The college does not make enough use of its own on-site facilities to support this work.
- 47 The college encourages respect for the environment and promotes learners' understanding of sustainable development well. Recycling, composting and energy conservation are well-established. Food is grown, cooked and eaten and enjoyed by the community on site. Many curriculum areas emphasise the value of sustainability in the curriculum.
- 48 Learners take part in small-scale team enterprise projects involving the sale of candles to residents of the local village, a car valet service and the sale of hanging baskets. These activities support the development of learners' basic and key skills, their decision-making and their understanding of economic activity.
- 49 The college provides learners with good opportunities to learn about the democratic process and how to become good citizens. These include taking part in the learner forum which discusses various college activities and initiatives. Learners have recently received useful training on electoral procedures from MENCAP. Learners benefit from meetings with locally elected members so that they can discuss and raise issues of concern with them.
- 50 The transition programme to prepare learners for leaving the college is not given sufficient priority. There are no formal arrangements for learners to receive careers education and guidance within the curriculum. Trainees join sessions with younger learners and do not have a distinct programme which matches the needs of adult learners.

#### **Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?**

|   |
|---|
| <b>Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b> |
|---|

- 51 The college awarded itself grade 2 for this key question. The findings of the inspection team did not match this grade because it identified shortcomings in some areas.

- 52 There are many good features in the college's work to support and care for its learners. There is mutual respect between learners and tutors and strong links between residential and educational provision which help learners to feel safe and well-supported. The use of guest volunteers who live in the college, and are often the same age as learners, provides learners with good role models and helps them to widen their horizons.
- 53 There is a range of appropriate policies and procedures for the wellbeing of learners and to help staff deal sensitively with any issues that may affect learners' progress. These include preventing bullying, internet safety, behaviour management and comprehensive risk assessments which involve learners. The college has recently introduced a complaints policy but it is too early to assess its impact. Incidents and 'near misses' are maintained, although these are not always analysed fully to inform future plans.
- 54 The college's induction arrangements help learners to settle quickly and understand their timetables and how staff expect them to behave. Learners have good opportunities to visit the college with their parents/carers prior to admission, to meet other learners and the staff, and get to know the college site.
- 55 The Learners' Forum is a strong feature of the college. It provides a platform for learners to air their views. Suggestions made by the forum are actioned and often influence key areas of the college such as health and safety and improving the curriculum.
- 56 Staff complete attendance registers appropriately. Senior managers have recently begun to monitor learners' attendance and punctuality more carefully so that they can offer improved support where necessary.
- 57 Careers Wales advisers attend annual reviews and give the learners useful careers advice and guidance. Learners and staff discuss future careers, and the vocational element of the curriculum gives learners an understanding of work-related issues.
- 58 Effective systems are in place to diagnose individual additional learning needs. During the first eight weeks at the college, residential and teaching staff thoroughly assess learners' needs, abilities and interests. Senior managers use the results of this careful assessment to inform learners' individual learning plans (ILPs) and work place records of learning and achievement (WRLAs) and set clear and measurable targets for literacy and numeracy, independent living skills and behaviour.
- 59 There are increasing links with a range of external professionals, support services and therapists to provide valuable assessment information resulting in plans for action. For example the college makes good use of a speech and language therapist, educational psychologist and clinical psychologist, an advocacy scheme and Bowen therapy to support learners who have particular personal difficulties such as managing their behaviour and dealing with bereavement.
- 60 The college has recently made a good start in implementing augmented communication across the college. Staff use symbols well to help learners who have communication difficulties to express their feelings and preferences and give them

better access to the curriculum. Residential staff and cooks also make good use of symbols to involve all learners. They give good support to parents and carers in this work by sending adapted communication books home.

- 61 The college has been slow to respond to its contractual obligations in safeguarding. Staff and trustees have only very recently been included in awareness training in how to promote a safe learning environment in addition to the training new staff and volunteers receive during induction. The college safeguarding officer is trained to level 3 in safeguarding and her training is regularly updated. Although the college has now produced a single vetting and recruitment record which shows that all staff trustees and volunteers have received Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks, trustees and managers do not systematically review this information or have an overview of the implementation of the safeguarding policy.
- 62 The college does not pay enough attention to equality and diversity issues. Although staff give learners a good understanding of other cultures, they do not do enough to promote an awareness of important issues such as gender, disability, and race. The college has not brought this important work together in a single equality scheme and does not monitor or analyse the achievement of different groups of learners in order to set targets for improvement.

## Leadership and management

### Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?

#### Grade 4: Good features but shortcomings in important areas

- 63 The college awarded itself grade 3 for this key question. The findings of the inspection team did not match this grade because it identified shortcomings in some important areas. Overall, the quality of leadership and management is unsatisfactory.
- 64 The college has an appropriate mission and a clear commitment to educate, train, guide and support learners in gaining independent living skills, developing self-knowledge, communication and social skills, taking responsibility, making personal choices and learning to be good citizens. The mission is shared and owned by all staff and is reviewed regularly to make sure that it reflects the college's purpose and values.
- 65 The college manager leads a management group which comprises a Head of Education, Head of Finance, Head of Human Resources, Head of Care and a Head of Quality Assurance. This team is responsible for managing the college and together with a Council (a board of Trustees), for setting the strategic direction of the college. The college has an appropriate three-year development plan and together with the trustees, the management group have a clear responsibility for leading and managing the college strategically and operationally.
- 66 The management group has only recently established a full complement of members. Two members joined the management group over the past six months and two other members of the group have only been in post for two years. The group now has a good blend of education, care and other professional skills to support the important work that is beginning to address key aspects of the college's business. However, the group has not established clear enough lines of accountability currently and does not always operate effectively enough as a corporate group to better inform decision making.
- 67 The college has well-developed plans in place to restructure its management functions. Any new organisational structure will need time to bed in and to have any real impact. Whilst there are job descriptions in place, managers are not always clear about who is responsible and accountable for key activities such as the promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity.
- 68 The college has an appropriate meetings schedule in place to promote communication at all levels. The meetings are beginning to support more effective communication between managers and staff and to address important issues and, set appropriate targets for improvement. Generally, the college has appropriate systems for the collection of data on learners' performance, including attendance, achievement and destinations. However, the data is not used well enough to identify areas of underperformance or to set targets for improvement in those areas.

- 69 The college has appropriate policies relating to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Disability Equality Scheme in place, but there is little evidence of the rigorous monitoring of the implementation of related action plans. The college does not set challenging targets to manage equality and diversity.
- 70 All staff have regular supervision sessions with their line managers. These sessions consider general progress in the work staff undertake and identify training needs. The college has drafted an appropriate performance management system to appraise all staff and managers against clear, measurable performance targets, but this has not been implemented.
- 71 The college is supported by a small council of trustees. These six individuals know the college well and are committed to the visions and values of Coleg Elidyr. Recently they have introduced a system of linking individual trustees to important functional areas of the college. For example, one trustee with particular experience in performance management is working well with the head of human resources. Trustees bring a range of experience and expertise to the work of the council. However, the council recognises the need to increase its membership and to attract members with particular expertise as well as a parent trustee. There is no learner representation on the council.
- 72 Trustees have provided strong support particularly during the recent period of difficulties resulting from the withdrawal of funding. Training is provided to trustees to support them in their role. However, trustees have not had equality and diversity training. Trustees do not currently self-assess their own performance. Trustees provide committed support to the college manager and the management group but have not challenged the college enough to drive forward important changes. Trustees have not monitored closely enough the progress college managers have made in addressing the shortcomings from the previous inspection visits. Too many significant shortcomings identified in the last inspection visit and in some instances in the last three inspection visits have not been addressed fully.

**Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?**

**Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

- 73 In its self-evaluation report the college awarded itself grade 3 for this key question. The findings of the inspection team match this grade.
- 74 The arrangements for evaluating and improving quality and standards in the college are satisfactory. The responsibility for quality assurance rests with the head of quality assurance for education supported by the college's Head of Education.
- 75 The college's quality processes have been developed and improved over a number of years to support planning for improvement. These processes have been sustained during a period of major change within the college. There is an appropriate quality assurance cycle which usefully identifies key quality assurance activities throughout the year. These activities include regular teacher observations and recently introduced teacher self-evaluation. Teacher observations do not include the monitoring of how well staff promote equality and diversity. The quality

assurance processes are not currently brought together in a clear framework for all staff to understand the contribution they are required to make to evaluate and promote quality improvement. This is particularly important for new staff.

- 76 Very recently, a few managers have benefited from visits to other colleges to consider examples of good practice and different ways of working. However, there is not enough sharing of good practice and opportunities for staff to consider their own practice measured against that of other providers.
- 77 The quality assurance cycle begins at programme level with an analysis of the outcomes of teaching and learning. There is a programme of lesson observations and self-evaluation activities, as well as internal quality inspection activities. There is appropriate moderation of the observations undertaken. The outcomes from these activities inform the college's self-assessment report. The management group and trustees regularly discuss quality assurance in their meetings.
- 78 Functional area managers, for example, human resources and finance, have a clear understanding of their contribution to the core business of care and education. However, functional area self-assessment is currently underdeveloped and does not contribute fully to an evaluation of the impact of functional areas on learners' experiences and the standards they achieve.
- 79 The college takes good account of the views of learners. Learners attend regularly held learner forum meetings. These provide an effective platform for identifying important issues and for planning action for improvement. There are a few good examples of how issues raised by learners have resulted in improvements such as improvements to the estate. There is an increasing involvement of learners in decision-making for example, in the recent appointment of a support worker.
- 80 The college's self-assessment report is detailed and follows closely the format of the common inspection framework. It provides useful information and evaluation, but in places is too descriptive. There is a reasonable match between the self-assessment grades and those of the external inspection.
- 81 The college has recently begun to make progress in addressing a few of the recommendations from previous inspection visits. However, the pace of change has been too slow, overall. Shortcomings include the need for performance management, improved clarity of lines of accountability for managers and a PHSR course to meet the needs of all learners.

**Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?**

|   |
|---|
| <b>Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b> |
|---|

- 82 In its self-evaluation report the college awarded itself grade 3 for this key question. The findings of the inspection team match this grade.
- 83 Overall, leaders and managers use resources appropriately. The college employs enough teaching and support staff to deliver its curriculum effectively. All staff have suitable experience and an increasing number of teachers without a teaching

qualification have enrolled on a teacher training programme offered by Swansea Metropolitan University. Staff undertaking teacher training are enthusiastic about the programme. They comment on how these experiences have empowered them and describe the clear impact it is having on their professional development. Staff have appropriate job descriptions that have been recently revised to reflect their roles and responsibilities more clearly.

- 84 The induction programme for new staff is comprehensive. The programme provides staff with a suitable range of information which helps them to settle into their roles effectively. However, new staff do not currently have access to a mentor to support their ongoing development.
- 85 Staff development opportunities are good. Staff benefit from valuable training and development for example, in behaviour management and autism. However, not all managers have taken up opportunities to undertake training to support the college's promotion of total communication skills. Staff development plans take good account of priorities in relation to training that is mandatory and also the individual needs of staff. The training co-ordinator keeps detailed records of staff development undertaken and analyses feedback from staff about the usefulness of professional development activities. The college does not currently measure the impact of staff development on teaching and learning and the standards achieved by learners.
- 86 Guest volunteers make a valuable contribution to the work of the college, but they are not always prepared well enough to meet the expectations of their role.
- 87 Overall, learning resources are satisfactory. Learners have access to an appropriate range of resources, including improved ICT to support their learning and achievement. The college has recently invested in information technology in the library that allows learners with complex needs access to computers with for example touch screens and tracker balls. However, basic skills books and materials remain inadequate.
- 88 Sustainability is a key priority for the college. Staff at all levels are committed to promoting sustainability in their management and use of resources. Managers have begun to use guidance from external bodies to consider improvements in energy consumption.
- 89 Most learners have access to accommodation of a suitable standard which is comfortable and welcoming to support their learning and development. The college has started to consider an appropriate strategy to support plans for improvement to the estate. There have been important recent improvements to the surface of part of the main access road through the site. A Disability Discrimination Audit (DDA) was undertaken a few years ago and is being reviewed currently to update plans, to identify priorities and take account of recent legislation. Generally, the college campus provides learners with an environment that helps them to develop appropriate independent, personal and learning skills. Learners show considerable respect for the learning environment.

- 90 The college is pursuing a range of measures to reduce the cost of resources and to secure value for money. The college has recently devolved budgets to key areas and encouraged budget holders to take responsibility for managing the budgets allocated to them.
- 91 Overall, the standards achieved by learners are good. The college provides satisfactory value for money.



## **Provider's response to the report findings**

Coleg Elidyr has welcomed the opportunity for having its performance measured at full inspection. We are grateful to Estyn and Ofsted for the sensitivity and courtesy with which the inspection was undertaken, particularly the way that inspectors engaged with our learners, quickly forming a respectful relationship with them.

It is especially pleasing to see the acknowledgement of learners' progress and the work of the Learners' Forum. These are firm foundations on which we intend to continue building. It is also satisfying to see that measures which have been introduced into the delivery of teaching (e.g. common templates for schemes of work and lesson plans, initial teacher training) are already having some impact. We have also been encouraged to continue and develop the beneficial implementation of Total Communication across the college.

To a large extent, the recommendations of the report cover issues which the college has recognised in its self assessment report, some of which are already addressed in the All College Transformation plan for quality improvement. The college will be incorporating relevant ongoing actions and its responses to the shortcomings identified at inspection into an updated action plan.

While the college is pleased that its own self-assessment report is a reasonable match for the findings of the inspection, we also acknowledge the advantages of undertaking functional area self-assessment. Furthermore, the clear identification of areas for development outlined for us in the inspection report will provide focus for ongoing improvement and development.

## Appendix 1

### **The evidence base of the inspection**

Four inspectors spent a total of eleven inspector days at the college and met as a team before the inspection. The inspectors visited:

- eight sessions or part sessions in the college.

Members of the team had meetings or discussions with:

- the council of trustees;
- the college manager;
- the head of education;
- the head of quality assurance;
- the head of care;
- teachers and residential staff; and
- learners.

The team also considered:

- documents provided by the college including the college's self-evaluation report;
- the work of the learners' forum;
- the inspection reports by Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales;
- a selection of learners' work; and
- learners' behaviour around the college at lunchtime and during the day.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| Claire Yardley HMI Estyn                  | Reporting Inspector |
| Susan Preece HMI Ofsted                   | Team Inspector      |
| Janice Thomas HMI Estyn                   | Team Inspector      |
| Mike Farrell AI Estyn                     | Team Inspector      |
| Eirlys Gravelle Head of Quality Assurance | Provider nominee    |