



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

A report on

National Star in Wales - Mamhilad

Date of inspection: November 2018

by

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

About National Star in Wales - Mamhilad

National Star in Wales – Mamhilad opened in September 2016. The college provides day placements for learners with a range of complex learning difficulties, including acquired brain injuries, physical disabilities, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and communication difficulties. The college currently has 17 learners aged 18 to 23 years of age.

The college curriculum offers personalised learning pathways with goals for learning and independent living. The college's mission is 'to enable people with disabilities to realise their potential through personalised learning, transition and destination services'.

The college is located on the Mamhilad Park Estate, near Pontypool. The accommodation includes a sensory classroom, a digital literacy suite, a therapy room and a kitchen for the development of cooking and life skills.

National Star in Wales - Mamhilad is part of National Star Foundation and shares key functions with National Star College. These include technical services, estates management, human resources, health and safety management, staff training and development, and financial support. The head of service for the college also has responsibility for a day provision service in Hereford. Overall strategic leadership for the college is provided by National Star College.

This is the college's second monitoring visit.

Main findings

Strengths

The college has expanded rapidly since it opened in September 2016. It has reviewed successfully aspects of its provision to accommodate the growing number of learners. For example, it has increased the classroom accommodation, and the number of staff to support learners.

Learners enjoy attending college and make good progress against their personal targets. In lessons, they engage well in activities. They interact positively with each other and with staff.

The college has robust assessment processes to identify learners' baselines on entry to the college, including valuable input from the college's multi-disciplinary team. Tutors and therapists work together well to set learners' primary learning goals and provide valuable input into regular reviews of learners' progress. This well co-ordinated approach supports learners very effectively.

Leaders track closely the progress learners make against their targets, as well as important aspects of their wellbeing such as attendance and behaviour. This helps the college plan to meet the broad range of learners' individual needs as they move through the college.

The college has responded positively to the recommendations from the last monitoring visit and has made good progress against many aspects of these recommendations.

Areas for development

The college has a strong focus on equipping learners with the skills they need to live a more independent life. However, tutors' lesson planning does not consistently promote opportunities for independent learning. For example, the deployment of facilitators to support learning does not promote independence well enough. In addition, learning activities are not always matched closely enough to learners' individual abilities.

The college provides a welcoming and attractive learning environment. However, the available space, internally and externally, limits opportunities for learners to access a curriculum that meets their needs fully.

There are limited opportunities for learners to participate in work-related learning in realistic settings.

Recommendations

The college should:

- R1 Ensure that tutors' planning promotes opportunities for independent learning in line with learners' abilities
- R2 Increase opportunities for learners to participate in work-related activities

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

Recommendation 1: Improve the assessment of and planning for learners' literacy and numeracy skills

The college has improved suitably the assessment of learners' literacy and numeracy skills. On entry to college all learners have detailed initial baseline assessments to establish their literacy and numeracy levels. There are robust processes to ensure short-term targets link effectively to long-term goals. The college reviews learners' progress against their targets regularly.

Tutors' lesson planning has an appropriate focus on developing learners' literacy and numeracy skills in lessons. However, learning activities are not consistently purposeful. In many lessons, there is a lack of challenge and opportunities for learners to make progress are missed.

Recommendation 2: Make sure that there is a designated safeguarding officer on site at the college at all times

The college has addressed fully this recommendation. The college now has a designated safeguarding lead who is based at the college. The college has effective safeguarding procedures which are shared successfully with learners, parents and staff. Policies and procedures clearly identify the college's safeguarding lead and her role within the wider organisation.

Recommendation 3: Develop robust self-assessment processes and use these to inform improvement planning

Since the last monitoring visit, the college has established suitable processes to evaluate its work. The college's self-evaluation report provides a detailed and helpful overview of the college's work. It draws on an appropriate range of first-hand evidence, such as observations of teaching and learning and includes input from parents, pupils and other stakeholders.

In a few cases, such as observations of teaching and learning, processes do not focus clearly enough on the standards of learners' skills or the progress they make in lessons. Overall, the college's self-evaluation report is too descriptive and focuses too much on aspects of the college's provision rather than on the impact of this on learners' outcomes.

Areas for development in the college's self-evaluation report link broadly to priorities for improvement in the college's improvement plan. However, the improvement plan does not contain enough detail to show how the college will achieve these goals. In particular, it does not identify the specific actions required to improve outcomes for learners.

Recommendation 4: Ensure that all policies and procedures are specific to National Star in Wales at Mamhilad

The college has met this recommendation fully. Policies and procedures now reflect all relevant Welsh legislation, guidance and advice, and reflect suitably the needs of learners who attend National Star in Wales at Mamhilad.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

The report was produced in accordance with Section 77 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.wales

© Crown Copyright 2019: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 04/02/2019