



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

**Annual monitoring inspection report on  
Bettws Lifehouse**

**Date of inspection: July 2017**

**by**

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

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## Context

Bettws Lifehouse is an independent special school situated in a small, rural village in mid Wales. The school opened in 2007. It provides day education for pupils aged nine to nineteen years who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Pupils are placed by authorities in Wales and England.

At the time of this inspection, all pupils have a statement of special educational needs or education health care plans, and a very few pupils are looked after by their placing authority.

Since the last visit, the National Assembly for Wales agreed to the school's request to increase capacity from 20 to 30 pupils.

Currently the school is providing part-time education for a very few pupils. It is also operating at a satellite site in Welshpool.

## Main findings

### Strengths

Over time, pupils make good progress in their learning, improve their emotional wellbeing and develop the skills to manage their behaviour successfully.

Older pupils gain an appropriate range of qualifications and accreditation for their learning, including GCSEs and Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

Nearly all pupils engage well in lessons.

Learning experiences are pupil centred and interesting, with a suitable focus on engaging pupils and developing their communication skills, confidence and self-esteem.

Staff work together effectively to provide sensitive, well considered support.

The school works well with families to help support pupils' emotional development.

Leaders have made good progress in meeting the recommendations from the previous monitoring visit.

### Areas for development

The school does not have an effective procedure to establish a clear baseline of pupils' ability on entry from which to assess future progress.

Staff provide pupils with effective oral feedback in lessons. However, written

feedback does not always give pupils clear advice on how to improve their work.

The school has separate systems to assess and track pupil progress. However, staff do not use these systems well enough to plan and monitor pupils' small and significant steps in progress.

Leaders do not use data about pupils' progress effectively to inform strategic planning and improvement.

### **Recommendations**

R1 Develop a consistent procedure to establish a clear base line of pupils' needs and abilities from which to assess future progress

R2 Establish a consistent tracking system to monitor small and significant steps in progress throughout the pupils' time at school

R3 Make sure that feedback is effective and indicates areas for improvement

R4 Continue to develop ways of engaging stakeholders in self-evaluation

R5 Submit a material change request to the Welsh Government for the use of the second site

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

**Recommendation 1: Develop a school prospectus**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The prospectus provides parents and other stakeholders with useful information about the school

**Recommendation 2: Involve staff, pupils and other stakeholders in the self-evaluation process**

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

There has been significant improvement to the way the school involves pupils and staff in the process of self-evaluation. Pupils now discuss how well the school provides for them and what would improve their learning experiences at their school council meetings. Staff meetings provide regular opportunities for engaging staff in discussion and evaluation about teaching and learning. Placing authorities are now involved in evaluating the work of the school. The input of pupils, staff and placing authorities is highly valued and feeds directly into school development planning.

Parental input, through annual questionnaires, does not yet feed into the process of evaluation and school improvement.

The involvement of stakeholders remains an area for improvement.

**Recommendation 3: Ensure that the school development plan includes clear actions and timescales**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The revised format for the school development plan provides staff and leaders with a clear understanding of the actions and timescale for planned improvements.

## **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 this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 7.

## 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

<b>School</b>	Bettws Lifehouse
<b>School number</b>	6666048
<b>Purpose of visit</b>	Annual monitoring inspection
<b>Date of visit</b>	12/07/2017
<b>Proprietor</b>	Meg Jones, Kay Jones & Adrian Jones
<b>Staff</b>	1 headteacher, 4 full-time teachers, 5 part-time teachers, 2 full-time and 8 part-time instructors.
<b>Number of pupils</b>	24 full-time pupils 3 part-time pupils
<b>Provision</b>	Day
<b>Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school</b>	Social emotional and behavioural difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders and moderate learning difficulties.
<b>Last Section 163 inspection</b>	07/05/2012
<b>Last annual monitoring inspection</b>	04/05/2015
<b>Last CSSIW inspection</b>	N/A

## Team information

Mrs Susan Roberts	Reporting Inspector
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