



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

**Annual monitoring inspection report on
Headlands School**

Date of inspection: May 2018

by

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

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Context

Headlands School is an independent special school, situated in a residential area of Penarth in the Vale of Glamorgan. It is part of the Action for Children charity. The school provides term time residential and day placements for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders (ASD).

The school currently educates 63 pupils from key stage 2 to post-16. Nearly all pupils come from Welsh local authorities, with a very few from English local authorities. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and 20 pupils have looked-after child (LAC) status.

The school's aim is to develop young people's wellbeing and independence through an individual approach to education and care.

The last full inspection by Estyn was in October 2012.

Main findings

Strengths

Most pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Most pupils in key stage 4 and post-16 acquire nationally recognised qualifications in a worthwhile range of subjects. In the last three years, all pupils who have left the school have moved on to further education, specialist provision, training or work.

Most pupils learn how to manage their behaviour more effectively during their time at the school. They generally behave well in lessons and around the school, and respond courteously and positively to visitors to the school.

Many pupils engage well in lessons. They build constructive relationships with teaching staff and demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. They work well independently and with others in relation to their individual needs.

Teachers and support staff know the needs of their pupils well and work together successfully as a team. They plan enjoyable lessons that include worthwhile opportunities to develop pupils' social skills such as turn-taking, discussion and compromise. Staff provide regular verbal feedback to support and encourage pupils in their learning.

The school provides a calm and nurturing environment that focuses strongly on meeting pupils' social, emotional and academic needs.

Senior leaders communicate a clear vision for the school based on the school's ethos of high expectations for all. They are highly visible around the school and provide positive role models for staff and pupils.

The school complies with the independent school standards inspected on this visit.

Areas for development

The school has identified suitably challenging priorities for improvement based on its self-evaluation activities. This work is beginning to impact positively on areas for improvement identified on the last monitoring visit, for example regarding the recording of pupils' attendance. However, these actions have not had sufficient impact on addressing key priorities in relation to teaching and learning, such as improving the consistency of teachers' planning or the development of pupils' writing skills.

The school keeps detailed daily logs relating to pupils' engagement in learning and behaviour. Daily staff meetings provide valuable opportunities for staff to discuss concerns relating to pupils' progress, wellbeing and behaviour. However, staff do not record the outcomes of these discussions in pupils' behaviour support documents consistently enough. As a result, a few plans do not identify clearly what actions staff should take to support a few individual pupils who present specific examples of challenging behaviour or who do not engage consistently in learning.

Recommendations

- R1 Continue to address the outstanding areas for improvement identified in the school's improvement plan
- R2 Review behaviour support plans to ensure that guidance for staff is clear and reflects agreed strategies

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

Recommendation 1: Review all policies carefully on a regular basis to ensure that they are easy to read and that they contain all necessary information

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Leaders have worked productively with consultants to review a range of key policies. This work has helped to ensure that these policies are succinct and easier to read, and that they comply with the appropriate guidance. As a result, these policies are relevant to the school and contain the necessary information to support staff in their work with pupils.

The school has well-developed plans to review the remaining policies in order of priority at regular points annually.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that self-evaluation processes identify clearly the key areas that need to be improved

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Leaders draw on a wide range of first-hand evidence to evaluate the work of the school. This includes achievement data, observations of teaching and the scrutiny of pupils' work. The school gathers the views of parents, pupils and staff through regular questionnaires, feedback from pupil reviews and the school's meetings structure. The school works suitably with a range of strategic partners to moderate its judgements and inform its self-evaluation work.

These processes help to ensure leaders have an effective understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They scrutinise this information carefully and ensure that areas for improvement are clearly identified in the school's detailed self-evaluation report. Areas for development link closely to priorities in the school's improvement plan. This is helping leaders to plan productively for improvements to the school's provision.

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

School	Headlands School
School number	6736025
Purpose of visit	Annual monitoring inspection
Date of visit	16/05/2018
Proprietor	Action for Children
Staff	1 principal, 1 vice-principal, 17 teachers, 28 teaching assistants, 24 residential support workers
Number of pupils	65
Provision	Day/38 week residential/52 week residential
Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school	Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders and associated difficulties
Last Section 163 inspection	08/10/2012
Last annual monitoring inspection	02/01/2017
Last CSSIW inspection	Insert text