



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

**Annual monitoring inspection report on
Ynystawe Lodge**

Date of inspection: December 2017

by

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

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Context

Ynystawe Lodge is an independent special school with an attached children's home situated in the village of Ynystawe, on the outskirts of the city of Swansea. It provides education for young people who are diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum.

There are currently five pupils between 13 and 16 years of age educated at the school. Many pupils are resident at the on-site children's home. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs and most are looked after by their local authority.

Since the annual monitoring visit of March 2017, the proprietors have appointed a new head of education. She has been in post since September 2017. At the time of this visit, managers were considering a change in the school's registration to include provision for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties as well as for those with an autistic spectrum disorder.

Main findings

Strengths

Pupils attend school well. They make suitable progress against targets in their individual development plans. This helps them to become more confident and independent in their communication and social skills.

The school focuses well on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. It tracks pupils' progress regularly against their targets in these areas.

The school has a strong emphasis on developing pupils' communication skills. Pupils benefit from the input of a speech and language therapy assistant who works regularly with pupils on personalised strategies to support their communication.

Staff understand pupils' social and emotional needs well. This helps to engage pupils successfully in their learning.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. It provides valuable opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their social skills in the community.

The school has made good progress against recommendations from the previous monitoring visit.

Areas for development

The school does not meet fully the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

The school is currently going through a period of transition. It is reviewing its provision and the category of need for which the school is registered to include pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. This planning is at an early stage of development.

The school has recently appointed a new head of education on secondment for one year. The head of education is assisted by an education consultant who provides strategic guidance to the company on a part-time basis. Both individuals have relevant knowledge of the specialist needs of pupils. However, this arrangement does not provide a sustainable model for the future leadership of the school.

The school's self-evaluation report provides a useful guide to aspects of the school's provision. However, it does not focus well enough on pupils' outcomes, progress or achievements. Self-evaluation and improvement planning processes do not identify important areas for development well enough. Quality assurance procedures are not robust enough.

The new head of education has begun to make beneficial improvements to the school's provision, such as building links with local partners to improve opportunities for volunteering in the community. The school makes suitable use of the local community to develop pupils' social skills and access to the community. However, opportunities to develop pupils' independence skills within the school remain underdeveloped.

Pupils have relevant targets for literacy, numeracy, social skills, personal targets and behaviour. Staff review targets regularly and teachers ensure they consider these suitably to inform their planning. However, in a few cases targets to improve pupils' behaviour and social skills are not specific enough to capture their small steps of learning. Pupils are unaware of their individual targets.

The school has not yet applied for a material change for the recent construction of an additional building on the school premises.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure compliance with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003
- R2 Strengthen the leadership of the school by establishing a permanent leadership team, improving self-evaluation and quality assurance processes
- R3 Apply to Welsh Government for approval for the use of the additional building already constructed, for the proposed alterations to the school's premises and for a change to the category of special educational needs for which the school is registered
- R4 Implement suitable plans to ensure that the provision for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties meets the needs of all pupils at the school

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

Recommendation 1: Ensure compliance with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has largely addressed the compliance issue identified in the previous annual monitoring visit. Leaders have reviewed the school's policy for safeguarding pupils. Pupils currently at the school respond well to safeguarding procedures and interventions. As a result, the number of physical interventions and serious incidents has decreased.

Recommendation 2: Continue to develop the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils, especially the more able

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

There is a suitable curriculum framework in place, which links well to accreditation pathways. These include opportunities to take relevant qualifications at GCSE and entry level. Pupils' timetables are differentiated appropriately to reflect pupils' interests and level of ability. Teachers consider carefully pupils' aptitudes and targets when planning lessons and schemes of work. However, the school does not currently plan well enough to promote the development of the full range of pupils' skills to meet the long-term destinations of pupils.

Recommendation 3: Secure a range of specialist therapeutic interventions to support pupils' emotional wellbeing and improve behaviour over time for a few more complex pupils

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school provides a suitable range of specialist interventions, including speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, counselling and play therapy. These meet the emotional and behavioural needs of the school's current pupils well.

Recommendation 4: Develop opportunities for all education staff to observe best practice in other similar settings

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The school has established valuable links with a range of maintained special schools. This has had a positive impact on how the school plans the curriculum so that it links to national priorities. Staff from the school recently attended a beneficial training day with staff from these maintained special schools. However, the school has not yet developed similar links with other schools in the independent special sector. As a result, leaders are not fully aware of the scope for innovation and creativity that is possible in this sector when planning 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

The school does not fully meet the regulatory requirements for this standard. In order to comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school should:

- prepare and implement a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils which sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving [3(2)d]
- have and implement a satisfactory written policy on First Aid [3(6)]
- keep written records of sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious disciplinary offences [3(8)]
- maintain an admission and an attendance register in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 [3(9)]

Standard 4: The suitability of proprietors and staff

The school does not fully meet the regulatory requirements for this standard. In order to comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school should:

- ensure the responsible individual has applied for an appropriate disclosure and barring certificate and that application has been countersigned by the National Assembly for the purposes of Part V of the Police Act 1997

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:

The school does not currently meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. To comply fully with these requirements, the school should address the issues identified above for each standard.

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

School information

School	Ynystawe Lodge
School number	6706025
Purpose of visit	Annual monitoring inspection
Date of visit	07/12/2017
Proprietor	Gerald and Allison Williams
Staff	1 head of education, 1 full-time teacher, 2 part-time teachers, 1 senior learning co-ordinator. Residential support workers support pupils according to pupil ratios. A consultant provides strategic guidance for education for 2 days per calender month.
Number of pupils	5
Provision	Residential
Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school	ASD
Last Section 163 inspection	Insert text
Last annual monitoring inspection	06/03/2017
Last CSSIW inspection	06/11/2017