



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

**A report on**

**Coleg Elidyr**

**Date of inspection: June 2022**

**by**

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education**

**and Training in Wales**

**This report is also available in Welsh.**

## About Coleg Elidyr

Coleg Elidyr is a residential independent specialist college for young people aged 18 to 30 years. It is administered by Elidyr Communities Trust, a charitable company. The college is located in a rural setting near Llandovery within an estate that extends to 180 acres and includes a kitchen garden, farmland and woodlands.

There are currently 20 learners at the college, all of whom live in one of the seven residential houses on the site. Learners at the college have a range of learning difficulties and disabilities. About half of learners come from Wales.

The current head of education and deputy head of education have both been in post for just over a year.

Inspectors' judgements on this limited inspection should not prejudice the findings of a future full Section 77 inspection.

## Main findings

### Strengths

Since the core inspection in 2019, the college has faced considerable challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, staff worked together flexibly to ensure the college remained open and prioritised supporting learners' well-being needs effectively. At a strategic level, senior leaders also used this time successfully to progress the college's capital projects programme for enhancing the quality of accommodation and environment. For example, the project for building the college's dedicated 'education hub' is now almost complete, and construction of the learner craft centre is well underway. These major developments represent a considerable investment in helping to ensure that learners are educated in a stimulating environment that meets their needs effectively.

Almost all learners at the college develop positive working relationships with their peers and teaching staff. With their peers, most learners demonstrate considerable respect for each other and celebrate achievements together positively. During sessions, over time almost all learners build up trust with teaching staff and the approaches they use to support individual learner development, which helps them to manage their own behaviour successfully and improve the quality of their work.

During the sessions observed and scrutiny of learners' work during this monitoring visit, nearly all learners make at least strong progress from their individual starting points. Over time, almost all learners develop their communication and practical skills particularly well, for example when following visual recipe prompts for cooking a meal for supper or signing or talking when making an oak bench in the woodwork area.

Almost all teaching staff have extremely positive working relationships with learners. They know their individual learner's specific needs and what motivates them very well. Nearly all tutors use this knowledge skilfully to plan flexibly for sessions and to challenge learners to achieve their best. Almost all teaching staff also use a variety of communication methods assuredly to help ensure that learners' communication needs are met, for example through the consistent use of signing and symbol support.

### Areas for development

Senior leaders have revised the college's arrangements for quality assuring teaching and learning. However, overall quality assurance and improvement planning processes do not always provide a consistent enough focus on the impact of the quality of teaching on learner standards, progress and attitudes to learning.

## Recommendations

### **The college should:**

- R1 Ensure that the college's quality assurance arrangements focus suitably on the impact of teaching on learner standards, progress and attitudes to learning

## **Progress in addressing recommendations from previous visit or inspection report**

### **R1. Ensure that the college's arrangements for quality assuring teaching and learning focus appropriately on strengths and areas for development**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the college introduced arrangements for restricting staff movement across the site such as establishing learner and staff 'bubbles' to reduce the risk of infection. This context presented a considerable challenge to senior leaders for quality assuring teaching and learning, particularly arrangements for session observations. As a result, senior leaders have used this academic year to give a much higher priority to ensuring that the college's arrangements for quality assuring teaching and learning focus appropriately on strengths and areas for development.

In the 2021-2022 academic year, a teaching staff consultation group has been established to refine and improve the college's processes and documentation for session observations. These revised arrangements place a much stronger emphasis on teaching staff reflecting on and evaluating their own practice, the identification of strengths and areas for development, peer-to-peer learning and action planning for improvement. However, as the first cycle of these revised arrangements is not fully complete, it is too early to judge the impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Senior leaders routinely discuss outcomes from session observations including strengths and areas for development as part of the college's planning for improvement processes. However, within these processes there is not a consistent enough focus on the impact of the quality of teaching on learner standards, progress and attitudes to learning.

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the provider and from the Estyn website (<https://www.estyn.gov.wales>)

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

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