



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

A report on

Bryn Tirion Hall School

Date of inspection: January 2023

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About Bryn Tirion Hall School

Bryn Tirion Hall school is located just outside Wrexham. The original site for the school was at Caergwrlle where the company's residential children's home is situated. The school acquired its Bersham site in 2019 and moved the school completely to this site in October 2021.

The school is owned by QEwC Ltd, a private limited company, which aims to provide 'quality education supported by a full range of residential and therapeutic care services'. The school provides day and 52-week residential provision for up to 80 pupils with a range of needs, including social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder.

There are currently 79 pupils on roll, which consists of 68 day pupils and 11 residential pupils. Pupils range in age from 7 to 19 years. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs, individual development plan or an education, health and care plan. A minority of pupils have looked-after child status and around half of these pupils live in the company's children's homes. Most pupils are placed by Welsh local authorities. A very few are placed by English local authorities.

The school was inspected in March 2020, shortly before the lockdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic. At the time of the inspection, the school complied fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

Main findings

Strengths

Bryn Tirion Hall School is a caring and nurturing community with a welcoming and engaging learning environment. Pupils benefit from a wide range of engaging learning opportunities, for example the nurture and outdoor education provisions and a recent school ski trip to Chamonix.

Staff are very positive role models for pupils. They have high expectations of pupil progress and communicate an enthusiasm for learning. School staff know their pupils extremely well and make highly effective use of this knowledge to tailor learning opportunities in order to interest and engage pupils. This is a strength of the school.

In lessons and around the school, most pupils display positive attitudes to their peers and staff and towards their learning. Overall, pupils engage well, display enthusiasm and pride in their learning and are eager to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Many pupils make strong progress from their starting points and gain wide range of qualifications.

Over their time at the school, pupils demonstrate increasing levels of confidence and become resilient learners who are willing to broaden their learning and challenge themselves to improve.

The school provides an extensive range of high-quality learning experiences to prepare pupils for adult life. For example, through careers and work-related education, pupils benefit from “meet the professional”, one-to-one careers interviews and visits to colleges and universities. In addition, staff are developing a powerful personal, health and social education (PHSE) curriculum. This covers important aspects such as healthy relationships, sex education, radicalisation and the law. As a result, pupils develop the skills and knowledge to keep themselves safe.

Leaders at all levels have an accurate understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for improvement and understand their roles and responsibilities well. They are reflective and caring and communicate a clear vision, share a strong commitment to continuous school improvement and have high expectations of pupil attainment and behaviour.

The school meets all of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003 inspected during this visit.

Areas for development

Since the core inspection, the school has reviewed its arrangements for self-evaluation and improvement planning. These processes now have a greater focus on using the assessment and tracking of pupil progress as well as an extensive range of first-hand evidence. The school has identified valuable areas to improve and has a clear plan to address these areas, many of which have already been completed. This is still in the early stages of implementation.

In common with many schools, a few pupils at Bryn Tirion Hall have struggled to attend regularly since the COVID-19 pandemic. 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, well-being and behaviour, and the school provides supportive interventions when required. However, a few pupils do not attend well enough.

Recommendations

The school should:

- R1 Continue to address the areas for improvement identified in the school self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- R2 Continue to develop strategies to improve pupil attendance.

Progress in addressing recommendations from previous visit or inspection report

R1. Strengthen the planning for and assessment of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum

Since the core inspection, the school has made strong progress in meeting this recommendation.

Lesson planning documents now include valuable opportunities for teachers to record pupils' progress against their learning objectives for each lesson. Alongside written work, online platforms evidence progress, which is mapped against the key skills of literacy, numeracy and digital competence. This approach ensures that teachers effectively capture the small steps of progress in skills pupils make in each lesson to support their future planning.

In lessons and over time, many pupils make at least good progress in developing their knowledge and skills across the curriculum. Planned outcomes and qualifications map effectively to each area of learning and individual learner, which ensures that progress can be effectively tracked.

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, 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 this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 3.

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 the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Standard 7: The manner in which complaints are to be handled

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 7.

Recommendation regarding continued registration

When considering this school's registration the Welsh Government 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 limited inspection should not prejudice the findings of a future full Section 163 inspection.

Copies of the report

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

The report was produced in accordance with section 163 of the Education Act 2002. The main purpose of inspection under this section is to report on compliance with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003. In schools that provide non-maintained nursery education, this report also satisfies the requirements of Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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