



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

A report on

Caban Aur

Date of inspection: June 2023

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

This report is also available in Welsh

About Caban Aur

Caban Aur is a small independent school owned by Afon Goch Children's Homes Limited, a private limited company. It is set in its own grounds, in a rural setting on Ynys Môn, surrounded by a nature reserve.

The school is registered for up to four pupils aged 11 to 16 years who have a range of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. At the time of this visit, there were no pupils on the school roll.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2021 and is supported by two teachers and one member of teaching support staff.

Main findings

Strengths

Leaders have made sound progress in improving aspects of the education provision since the last visit. The school now has appropriate schemes of work and range of resources for pupils that enable them to offer a broad and balanced curriculum.

Since the last visit, leaders have significantly improved the resources available for pupils to support their learning. The classroom is bright and welcoming and is appropriately well equipped, particularly with digital technologies. For example, the school now has a 3D printer and programmable robots. In addition, they are well staffed with qualified teachers.

Leaders at the school have increased the opportunities for pupils to achieve accreditation across a narrow range of subjects by introducing new areas of learning. In addition, the headteacher has secured agreement from a local school to act as an examination centre to further increase the opportunities available to pupils within the school.

Areas for development

The school remains non-compliant with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

The school's arrangements to evaluate and improve the quality of its provision are not robust. As a result, leaders do not have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school.

Planning for the progressive development of skills across the curriculum is underdeveloped. Important aspects of education identified in individual education plans are not reflected in the planning of lessons. As a result, the planning for lessons does not appropriately meet the individual learning needs of the pupils.

The school has beneficial links with the care team working with the pupils, which positively support well-being. However, links between the school and the home to support the formal and informal learning of pupils are underdeveloped. In addition, leaders do not link well enough with outdoor education staff to ensure the progressive development of skills within this valuable curriculum area.

Policies for safeguarding pupils do not reflect appropriate guidance and legislation in relation to the use of personal mobile phones. In addition, aspects of school policies continue to refer to outdated Welsh Government guidance or to English legislation. However, the school addressed nearly all of these issues successfully during the visit.

Recommendations

The school should:

- R1 Comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003
- R2 Continue to develop the role of a critical friend to support and challenge leaders and drive improvement
- R3 Develop quality assurance processes to evaluate the impact of teaching on learning
- R4 Ensure that the planning for skills impacts positively on the skills development of all pupils

Progress in addressing recommendations from previous visit or inspection report

R1 Comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003

The school has made variable progress against this recommendation.

At the time of the last monitoring visit, the school did not comply with Standard 1: the quality of education provided by the school. Since then, the school has taken a number of steps to address these shortcomings. For example, it has reviewed its curriculum, accreditation and resources across the school.

Leaders have implemented new schemes of work in many areas of learning, for example in essential skills, religious education and art. In personal and social education (PSE), the school has introduced a commercial scheme of work, which enables pupils to access information on a wide range of relevant topics. However, many of these changes remain at an early stage of implementation and the school has not yet evaluated their impact. As a result, inspectors judged that the school does not fully comply with Standard 1.

The school did not previously comply with Standard 3: the welfare health and safety of pupils. This regulation remains non-compliant. In addition, new areas of non-compliance were identified on this visit linked to Standard 6: the provision of information and Standard 7: the manner in which complaints are to be handled.

R2 Clarify the responsibilities of the headteacher and provide external support for the leadership of the school

Since the last visit, the proprietor has worked with the headteacher to formalise his role within the school and ensure a clear job description is in place. Leadership roles are better understood, however roles and responsibilities for other aspects of the

provision that take part in the school day, such as the outdoor education provision remain unclear.

The headteacher alongside the proprietor have begun to make links with professionals who will offer external support for the leadership of the school. This group is in the very early stages of development. However, the current "Reflectively Supportive Friends of Ysgol Caban Aur" does not have a suitable level of understanding of the requirements for the registration and operation of independent schools. Overall, arrangements for the external support and governance of the school do not monitor the school's compliance with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003 closely enough, particularly with regards to standards of learning and the curriculum.

R3 Strengthen links with external providers to complement the school's provision and to enable pupils to access accreditation and qualifications

Since the time of the last inspection, the school has begun to develop a wider range of links with external providers suitably. For example, pupils have had opportunities to discuss their future careers with Careers Wales and other local organisations. Furthermore, the school is developing a portfolio of work experience partnerships utilising local contacts. However, this is at an early stage of development.

Recently, pupils have accessed a range of worthwhile qualifications, certifications, and accreditations successfully. The school has also established a formal agreement to use a local school as an external examination centre.

R4 Improve the co-ordination and planning of independent living skills, outdoor education and personal and social education

The school has recently strengthened the provision of personal and social education (PSE) by purchasing a commercial package, which covers a wide range of appropriate topics in the area of personal growth and well-being. In addition, the school has suitably enhanced the curriculum to support older pupils in their preparation for adult life. However, it is too early to judge the impact of this new curriculum.

Leaders are aware of the content of the outdoor education sessions, which are delivered by separate teams within the organisation. However, the school continues to have no oversight of the outdoor education provision as a whole. As a result, planning for the co-ordination of important skills within this valuable aspect of the curriculum remains underdeveloped.

R5 Ensure that school policies refer appropriately to Welsh Government guidance and guide practice at the school

The school has made suitable progress towards this recommendation in many areas. However, inspectors identified a small number of the school's policies that continued to refer to outdated Welsh or English legislation during the inspection. The school addressed nearly all of these cases successfully during the inspection.

The school's safeguarding policy continues to be non-compliant with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

Currently the school has no pupils on roll. Therefore, it is not possible to evaluate how well staff implement school policies in practice.

Compliance with the standards for registration

Standard 1: The quality of education provided by the school

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 policy enables pupils to acquire skills in speaking / listening / literacy / numeracy [1(2)(c)]
- Ensure the curriculum provides the opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress [1(2)(i)]

Standard 2: The spiritual, moral, and cultural development of pupils

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 2.

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 written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with Welsh Government Guidance 283 / 2022 Keeping Learners Safe [3(2)(b)]

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

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 that it makes the necessary information about the school available to parent/carers and placing authorities [6(2)a, 6(2)b, 6(2)e, 6(2)g, 6(2)h, 6(2)h, 6(2)i, 6(2)j, 6(2)k]

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

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 that it makes the complaints procedure available on request to parents of pupils and prospective pupils [7b]

Recommendation regarding continued registration

When considering this school's registration the Welsh Government 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 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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