



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

A report on

Ynys Hywel Learning Community

Date of inspection: December 2024

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About Ynys Hywel Learning Community

Name of provider	Ynys Hywel Learning Community
Proprietor status	Positif Education, a private limited company
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Independent special
Residential provision?	Yes
Number of pupils on roll	4
Pupils of statutory school age	4
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
<p>School context:</p> <p>Ynys Hywel Learning Community was registered in August 2024 as an independent day school providing additional learning provision for pupils with social, emotional, and mental health difficulties. The school is located in the Sirhowy Valley Country Park near Cwmfelinfach. The school is owned by Positif Education and is the company's first school in Wales.</p> <p>The school is registered for up to five pupils aged 11 to 16 years. There are currently four pupils on roll at the school, all of whom have an individual development plan (IDP) or equivalent. All pupils are care experienced children and live in the residential homes owned by the wider organisation.</p> <p>The headteacher has been in post since the school opened. They are supported by a teaching assistant, team of support staff from the residential home and instructors from the organisation's activity centre.</p>	

Main findings

There is no report on pupils' progress and standards in their skills development. This is because the number of pupils on the school roll at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individuals.

The headteacher has a clear vision to support pupils to engage with and succeed in their education. Along with the proprietors, they share a desire to establish a successful school that meets each individual pupil's learning and well-being needs effectively.

Staff know the pupils very well and in a short period of time have established a calm, purposeful learning environment. As a result, pupils feel safe, secure and nurtured. Staff successfully support pupils in developing positive attitudes towards learning. Highly effective re-engagement of disaffected learners is a strength of the school.

The school provides a highly bespoke curriculum for each pupil, which meets their well-being and educational needs extremely well. This includes an appropriate range of classroom-based lessons as well as outdoor and community-based learning activities, including lessons in a music studio, and activities such as mountain biking or gorge walking. The curriculum has a clear emphasis on improving pupils' core literacy and numeracy skills and provides a secure foundation for future learning. The school is developing a thematic approach to teaching and detailed plans are in the early stages of development. The school's planning for and tracking of the progressive development of pupils' skills is underdeveloped.

Small group and 1:1 teaching develops pupils' literacy and numeracy skills effectively, often in a relevant context. For example, developing skimming and scanning techniques when extracting information from a text about animal cruelty. Valuable support from the teaching assistant ensures that inaccuracies are swiftly identified, and pupils are supported to improve their responses.

The headteacher combines a full-time classroom teaching timetable with sole responsibility for the operational running of the school. This limits their capacity to plan strategically and complete quality assurance processes, self-evaluation and plan for improvement.

Recommended areas for action

The school should comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024, specifically relating to maintaining admission and attendance registers and ensuring that pre-employment checks are carried out and recorded for all staff employed by the school.

By refining planning, assessment and monitoring processes staff will have a clearer understanding of pupils' progress and skill development across the curriculum.

When reviewing the content of the planned themes, planning for the delivery of science education could be strengthened.

When considering the future development of the school consider the current staffing model and how this may be enhanced to ensure that the quality of educational provision remains high.

Compliance with the regulations for registration

Independent school inspections are governed by the Education Act 2002 and related regulations: the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024. These regulations require an independent school to meet an appropriate standard in the following areas:

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.

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.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Although the school meets almost all of the regulatory requirements for this standard, in order to comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024 the school should:

- Obtain an up-to-date fire risk assessment appropriate to the school's current context [3(14)]
- Ensure that admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with regulations made under section 434 of the 1996 Act [3(17)]

The suitability of proprietors and staff

The school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Although the school meets most of the regulatory requirements for this standard, in order to comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024 the school should:

- Provide evidence that all pre-employment checks have been completed for all staff employed by the school [4 {20(2 a-g) (3)}]
- Ensure that a single central register (SCR) is completed with details of all staff employed by the school [4(24)]

Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect this standard.

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.

The manner in which complaints are to be handled

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

Recommendation regarding registration

The school does not currently meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024. To comply fully with these requirements, the school should address the issues identified above for each standard.

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 (Wales) Regulations 2024. In schools that provide non-maintained nursery education, this report also satisfies the requirements of Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework

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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