

A report on

Oakmont School

**1 Dunleavy Drive
Cardiff
CF11 0SN**

Date of inspection: March 2026

by

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

About Oakmont School

Name of provider	Oakmont School
Proprietor status	Part of the portfolio of Oakmont Services Group a subsidiary of Audere Holdings Limited
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Independent
Residential provision?	No
Number of pupils on roll	11
Pupils of statutory school age	9
Date of previous Estyn visit	09/12/2024
Start date of visit	12/03/2026

School context

Oakmont School is an independent specialist school set in a city location in Cardiff. The school opened in September 2023 and is part of the portfolio of Oakmont Services Group and a subsidiary of Audere Holdings Limited, which are both private limited companies.

The school is registered for up to 16 pupils, aged 9 to 18 years old, who are facing challenges in relation to social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties.

Currently, there are 11 pupils on the school roll aged between 10 and 17 years old. All pupils are placed by local authorities in Wales and England and have an individual development plan (IDP) or equivalent.

The head teacher has been in post since January 2026 and is supported by a deputy head teacher, three teachers and seven learning support assistants.

At the monitoring inspection in December 2024, the school did not comply with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024.

The Welsh Government required the school to produce a post-inspection action plan (PIAP) to address the areas of non-compliance. To comply fully with these requirements, the school was required to address the following issues under each standard:

Standard 1: The Quality of Education Provided

- Ensure the written policy, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an IDP [2(1)(b)i]
- Ensure that the teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught [2(3)(a)]
- Ensure that the teaching involves well-planned lessons, effective teaching methods, suitable activities and wise management of learning time [2(3)(c)]
- Ensure that the teaching staff demonstrate a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils and ensure these are taken into account in the planning of lessons [2(3)(d)]
- Demonstrate that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from those assessments to plan teaching so that pupils can progress [2(3)(g)]
- Ensure that the teaching staff use effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly [2(3)(h)]

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

- Ensure that principles are actively promoted which encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the school community, the locality and wider society [4(c)(iii)]

Standard 3: The Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils

- Promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that a written behaviour policy is drawn up and effectively implemented that encourages and rewards good behaviour [11(a)(i)]

In July and October 2025, a team of inspectors visited the school to discuss progress against the PIAP. Subsequently, HMI visited the school in March 2026 to evaluate compliance with the previously non-compliant standards.

Main findings

Since the last inspection, the school has made strong progress in strengthening its curriculum, teaching and behaviour management arrangements. Leaders have established clearer systems for curriculum planning and assessment, including personalised 'personal journey' documents linked to pupils' individual development plans (IDPs) alongside a refined approach to baseline and ongoing assessment. The school now draws effectively on a range of assessment information, including reading and spelling tests as well as cognitive and attitudinal assessments, to develop a secure understanding pupils' aptitudes, needs and prior attainment and to inform lesson planning. Staff have also benefited from professional learning in areas such as differentiation, trauma-informed practice and behaviour management.

Curriculum and teaching policies set out an inclusive approach that takes appropriate account of pupils' needs and aligns suitably with the Curriculum for Wales. Leaders have strengthened arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress through regular reviews of behavioural, cognitive and well-being information. This helps staff identify if pupils require additional support or intervention.

As a result, teaching is increasingly purposeful and provides relevant contexts for learning. Staff draw effectively on shared experiences to support pupils' writing, research and discussion. For example, during a recent 'super-learning day' themed around 'I'm a Celebrity', pupils engaged with visiting animals such as armadillos, meerkats, binturongs (bear cats) and snakes. Staff used these experiences as a rich stimulus for research activities and descriptive writing. The curriculum also includes a suitable range of academic, practical and vocational activities that reflect pupils' needs and interests and support their engagement.

Across the school, nearly all staff demonstrate a strong understanding of pupils' needs and prior experiences. They are developing a curriculum that reflects pupils' interests and aspirations while providing appropriate opportunities to develop communication, research and digital skills. As a result, most pupils make suitable progress over time. However, opportunities for pupils to work independently are not yet consistent and, at times, high levels of adult support limit pupils' independence.

The school has strengthened its approach to behaviour management, supported by staff training in low-arousal approaches and trauma-informed practice alongside input from external specialists. This has contributed to a more positive culture that recognises and celebrates pupils' achievements. The learning environment is calm and purposeful and nearly all pupils show respect towards their peers and staff.

Leaders have introduced a revised behaviour policy alongside a clear reward system that encourages and recognises positive behaviour. Pupils are supported to reflect on and monitor their behaviour through tools such as the 'how I am doing' chart, which helps them to understand their emotions and their impact on others.

The school has strengthened its monitoring of behaviour and clarified expectations around issues such as vaping and mobile phone use. The school has clear policies to support staff in their work. However, a very few staff do not yet implement these consistently in their day-to-day practice. Leaders are beginning to support newer staff to develop a clearer understanding of these expectations so that approaches are applied more consistently across the school.

Staff act as positive role models and promote the school's 'Values in Practice' (VIPs), which are celebrated regularly and contribute to a culture of positive reinforcement. As a result, staff work collaboratively and demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting pupils' well-being and progress.

There have also been recent leadership changes, including the appointment of a new headteacher, who is continuing to build on the improvements already underway. The proprietor remains a committed and supportive presence in the school's development.

Overall, the school has successfully addressed the previously identified areas of non-compliance and there is no evidence to suggest the school does not meet the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024.

Compliance with the standards 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

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 suitability of proprietors and staff

Not considered on this visit.

Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools

Not considered on this visit.

The provision of information

Not considered on this visit.

The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Not considered on this visit.

Recommendation regarding continued registration

There is no evidence that the school does not comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024.

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 Act 1998.

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

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