



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

**A report on**  
**Amberleigh Residential Therapeutic School**

**Date of inspection: October 2019**

**by**

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

## **About Amberleigh Residential Therapeutic School**

Amberleigh Residential Therapeutic School is an independent special school situated close to the market town of Welshpool, Powys. The school provides education, care and therapy for pupils aged between 11 to 18 years who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is administered by Amberleigh Care, a specialist children's services agency with another independent special school in England.

The school currently has 10 pupils on roll, all of whom are boys. Five of these pupils have statements of special educational needs. All of the pupils are looked after by local authorities in Wales or England and they live in the children's home that shares the school's site.

The director of education has been in post for three years and the school education manager for one year.

## Main findings

### **Strengths**

In lessons and over time, pupils make at least good progress in developing their knowledge and skills, and nearly all gain a suitable range of appropriate qualifications by the time they leave. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and show interest, particularly in practical activities. They are eager to achieve, concentrate and respond well to the support and challenge from the class teacher.

Nearly all staff manage their classrooms well and create positive and productive learning environments. There are well-established routines for how pupils should behave in lessons and around the school. These routines are reinforced consistently by the staff and when pupils transgress they are quick to recognise this and take responsibility for their actions.

Leaders and managers have established and communicated a clear vision, plans and processes, for the strategic direction and day-to-day management of the school. They set high expectations for staff, pupils and themselves. This approach has enabled them to develop an effective, engaged team of teachers and support staff.

### **Areas for development**

In a few subjects, work is not always planned well enough to meet the needs of individual pupils.

The school has a clear and helpful marking and feedback policy. Staff provide useful responses about the quality of pupils' work during lessons. Teachers also provide pupils with further tasks or questions in their workbooks to help them improve their work. However, pupils are not expected to respond to these consistently.

Since the last monitoring visit, the school is making better use of data to provide more focused feedback to individual pupils. However, data is not used well enough for linking whole-school self-evaluation, improvement planning and professional learning.

### **Recommendations**

#### **The school should:**

- R1 Ensure that lesson planning and activities meet the different ability needs of pupils
- R2 Improve the use of data for informing self-evaluation, improvement planning and professional learning

**Progress in addressing recommendations from previous note of visit or inspection report**

**Recommendation 1: Make better use of the school's multiple sources of data to inform teaching, learning and improvement planning**

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has placed a higher priority on ensuring that diagnostic and assessment data and information is used better to inform teaching and learning. Senior leaders have set up beneficial arrangements to further develop the whole-school tracking of assessment, which now includes key data from base line evaluations through to itemised topic assessments. Teaching staff record pupils' progress regularly against subject and individual behaviour targets. Leaders use this information effectively to identify underachievement and take appropriate action quickly.

Overall, data is used increasingly well at individual pupil level such as for target setting and tracking, organising pupil grouping and planning.

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

### ***Standard 4: The suitability of proprietors and staff***

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 4.

### ***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 this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 6.

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

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 7.

## **Recommendation regarding 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 ([www.estyn.gov.wales](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 going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

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