



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

A report on:

Caban Aur

Date of inspection: February 2017

by

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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:

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Context

Caban Aur is a small independent school owned by Afon Goch Children's Homes Limited. It is set in its own grounds, in a rural setting on the Isle of Anglesey, surrounded by a nature reserve. The school provides education for boys and girls with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties who are resident at one of the company's two children's homes. At the time of the inspection, three pupils aged 15 to 16 were attending the school. All of the children are looked after by a local authority. Two of the pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

The school accommodation consists of a small classroom within Caban Aur children's home. Most lessons involve one-to-one teaching within the classroom. The school also makes use of other areas of the home, such as the kitchen and lounge, for teaching aspects of the curriculum. A headteacher manages the school, supported by one full-time and four part-time teachers. The headteacher has been in post since the school opened, in 2012.

Due to the fact that the school is based within a children's home, care staff are on site during the day. As part of their role, they support pupils when they display challenging behaviour and do not engage in education.

The company's second children's home, Afon Goch, is situated in Gwynedd. Where appropriate, pupils from Afon Goch attend the school at Caban Aur. In addition, teachers from Caban Aur provide education at Afon Goch for a very few pupils who are unable to access Caban Aur.

The school year consists of eight five-week terms, with one or two gap weeks between each term.

This is the first full inspection of the school.

As there are fewer than five pupils at the school, inspectors did not give a judgement for Key Question 1, standards or wellbeing. This is because the number of pupils was too few to report on without identifying individual pupils.

Summary

The school's current performance	Adequate
The school's prospects for improvement	Adequate

Current performance

Caban Aur is adequate because:

- The school provides a full-time well-structured timetable that includes lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, as well as art, religious studies and Welsh
- The school plans relevant individual work to help pupils make suitable progress
- Teachers use regular praise and encouragement to motivate pupils
- Teachers provide effective care for pupils that helps them build confidence and raises their self-esteem

However:

- Overall, programmes of study lack innovation and do not always engage pupils well
- Systems to promote good behaviour are not effective
- Targets in pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) are not specific enough and do not take full account of the information in the pupils' statements of special educational needs
- The layout of the premises makes it difficult for pupils to focus well enough on their learning
- The school does not meet all of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- The headteacher and teaching staff show a strong commitment to the school
- The headteacher and proprietor communicate a clear vision that focuses on supporting pupils to manage their difficulties and anxieties and engage in education
- The headteacher has a clear understanding of strengths and areas for development at the school and these are reflected well in the school development plan
- The school has made a few important improvements which have had a positive impact on the work of the school

However:

- Policies and procedures for the school and children's home do not link well enough
- Education meetings deal mainly with the day-to-day running of the school and do not focus enough on strategic issues
- The school has made limited progress against recommendations from previous Estyn monitoring visits
- Managers do not have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve

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 2003. These regulations require an independent school to meet an appropriate standard in the following areas:

The quality of education provided by the school

- 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 Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:
 - Ensure that, where pupils have a statement, the education provided fulfils its requirements 1(2)(e)

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- The school meets 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 most of the regulatory requirements for this standard, in order to comply fully with the Independent Schools Standards 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 Assembly Government Circular 005/2008 3(2)(b)
 - Prepare and implement a written policy relating to the health and safety of pupils on activities outside the school which has regard to Welsh Assembly Government Guidance: 'Educational Visits – A safety guide for learning outside the classroom' 2008. 3(2)(c)
 - Prepare and implement a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils which sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving 3(2)(d)
 - Keep written records of sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious disciplinary offences 3(8)

The suitability of proprietors and staff

- The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools

- The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The provision of information

- The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The manner in which complaints are to be handled

- The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Recommendations

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

R2 Ensure that there is a clear strategy for managing pupils' behaviour that is implemented consistently across the organisation

R3 Make the most of the learning environment to provide learning experiences that are varied and motivating

R4 Ensure that roles and responsibilities of education and care staff during the school day are clearly understood

What happens next?

Estyn advises the proprietor to amend its current development plan to show what action the school intends to take in response to the recommendations. It is also advisable to circulate this plan, or a summary of it, to all parents at the school.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	n/a
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Standards: No judgement made

Wellbeing: No judgement made

Inspectors did not make a judgement for standards or wellbeing.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Adequate
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Learning experiences: Adequate

The curriculum meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. The school provides a full-time well-structured timetable that includes lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school also offers art, religious studies and Welsh. There are detailed, appropriate schemes of work for these subjects that are based on the requirements for GCSE courses. The school has recently introduced a few additional accredited courses, for example vocational construction, in response to a pupil's request.

Pupils have suitable opportunities to learn about other topics through the effective personal and social education programme, and also through occasional visits to places of interest. These include visits to local castles, a lifeboat station and a slate mine.

Teachers ensure that planning gives appropriate attention to improving pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. New pupils have often missed large sections of the curriculum in their previous placements and the school plans relevant individual work to help them make suitable progress. The five-week term helps pupils to maintain momentum in their learning. Staff plan modules of suitable physical activities for one afternoon each week, for example climbing or hill walking.

However, overall, programmes of study lack innovation and do not always engage pupils well. The small classroom restricts activities. Staff do not consider this well enough in their planning. They are not creative enough in planning how to use the wider environment. For example, they do not use the outdoor space or arrange off-site learning opportunities enough so as to broaden the curriculum and enable more appropriate use of the classroom for formal activities.

There are very few opportunities for pupils to experience the world of work either in the school or within the local community.

Teaching: Adequate

All teachers plan lessons thoroughly and set clear lesson objectives. They work hard to motivate and engage pupils, through regular praise and encouragement. They have a calm manner, which helps pupils gain in confidence.

Most teachers use discussion well to motivate and challenge pupils' thinking, for example when working on the rights of the child. They serve as good language models.

In a majority of lessons, teachers provide interesting tasks that engage pupils well. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers do not use a wide enough range of activities to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. Teachers do not have consistent strategies to manage challenging behaviour. As a result, a minority of pupils leave the classroom regularly and do not return promptly. This means that they miss out on important teaching and learning activities.

The school carries out suitable baseline assessments, including reading and spelling tests, when pupils join the school. This information is useful in determining an appropriate starting point for pupils' work. Teachers track pupils' progress in core subjects and share this information with the pupils. This helps pupils to understand the progress they are making. Teachers complete daily engagement and attainment rating scales but do not always use this information effectively to adapt future teaching to meet pupils' needs.

Teachers provide regular helpful verbal feedback. However, written feedback does not often indicate a way forward for pupils to improve.

The school provides clear and informative termly and end of placement reports on pupils' educational progress for parents and placing authorities.

Care, support and guidance: Unsatisfactory

Teachers provide effective care for pupils that helps them build confidence and raises their self-esteem. The school encourages pupils to develop a healthy lifestyle through outdoor education and the provision of nutritious meals.

The school arranges a useful PSE programme that supports pupils' social and moral development well. For example, pupils learn about current affairs and aspects of daily living, including relationships education. There is an appropriate opportunity at the end of each school day for pupils to reflect on their own behaviour and engagement in lessons. Religious studies and art lessons and visits from a local minister help pupils to develop an understanding of other people's spiritual beliefs and their cultural differences.

A range of professional specialists, including the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), provide appropriate support for pupils' individual needs.

The school has appropriate arrangements for staff training and site security as well as policies regarding, for example the school's response to bullying allegations.

However, overall, the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not meet requirements and give serious cause for concern. This is partly because policies and procedures for the school and children's home do not link well enough. Although staff are required to carry out risk assessments for school activities, the arrangements for recording and collating information are unclear. As a result, managers do not monitor these activities well enough and do not have an accurate overview of safety procedures.

Systems to promote good behaviour are not effective. The school does not set out clear procedures that are followed consistently by education and care staff. Individual pupils do not have behaviour plans. The school's policy for giving rewards and sanctions is too general. Staff do not always record serious incidents carefully enough to provide a formal record.

Targets in pupils' individual education plans (IEP) are not specific enough and do not take full account of the information in the pupils' statements of special educational needs. Although IEPs are reviewed at the end of each five-week term, targets often remain the same because they are too general. It is not easy for pupils to gauge their progress against these targets.

Learning environment: Adequate

The school is an inclusive community, where pupils receive equal access to all areas of the school's provision. The school provides regular, valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect on equality and diversity issues and to learn the meaning of respect.

The small classroom provides an appropriate learning environment for whole class activities. However, where pupils follow individual programmes, the limited space restricts the ability of teachers to provide varied, interesting sessions and impacts on the quality of learning. The school has made attempts to reorganise timetables to improve this. The layout of the premises makes it difficult to establish a clear distinction between school and home, especially when pupils disengage and leave the classroom. At times, this makes it hard for pupils to focus well enough on their learning.

There is a good range of text books and non-fiction resources, and a few suitable practical resources including computers. There are appropriate displays to support learning and celebrate pupils' skills in the classroom and lounge area. However, overall, the accommodation looks tired and parts of the school are in a poor state of repair.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Adequate
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Leadership: Adequate

The headteacher and proprietor have a clear vision for the school that focuses on supporting pupils to manage their difficulties and anxieties and engage in education. The proprietor places a strong focus on the importance of education and supports the staff to carry out their roles by providing relevant training and appropriate resources.

The headteacher and teaching staff show a strong commitment to the school, and work well together as a team. Communication within the education team is effective. The headteacher provides a strong role model for the staff, and promotes a calm and supportive environment in which pupils gain in confidence and self-esteem. He uses his experience effectively to support new staff.

The school holds regular education meetings, involving teachers and care managers. Staff keep detailed notes of these meetings, which include relevant action points. However, these meetings deal mainly with the day-to-day running of the school and do not focus enough on strategic issues such as self-evaluation and planning for improvement.

Education staff have clear roles and responsibilities. However, there is a lack of clarity around the roles and responsibilities of care staff during the school day in supporting pupils and behaviour management. It is not clear whether these staff are accountable to the headteacher or the care managers. This limits the ability of the headteacher to manage the school as effectively as he could.

Teachers have regular planned meetings with the headteacher to discuss their work and raise any concerns. However, teachers do not have formal targets against which their performance can be reviewed.

The school has developed useful systems for tracking pupils' attainment and engagement in lessons. They have started to use this information to identify trends and discuss progress with the pupils.

The school does not meet all of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

Improving quality: Adequate

The headteacher has a clear understanding of strengths and areas for development at the school and these are reflected well in the school development plan. The plan consists of appropriate areas for improvement. Responsibilities are clear and timescales realistic. The headteacher monitors progress against actions regularly. However, teachers are not all fully aware of the school's priorities or the role they should play in addressing them.

Although the school produces a detailed annual self-evaluation report, ongoing self-evaluation processes are underdeveloped. The school does not have formal arrangements to seek the views of all stakeholders.

The school carries out regular informal lesson observations. The headteacher has recently introduced formal lesson observations. Written feedback identifies strengths and areas for development in relation to teaching and learning. In a few instances, this has resulted in an improvement in teaching. However, formal lesson observations do not take place on a regular basis. Managers do not analyse the findings or use these to improve practice on a whole school basis.

The school has made a few important improvements which have had a positive impact on the work of the school. An increase in the number of teachers means that the headteacher has more time to carry out his leadership and management roles. It has also enabled the school to provide a broader range of subjects taught by staff with particular specialisms, for example art. The purchase of an online information technology system means that teachers can share resources and planning documents more easily.

Although the school has made good progress in addressing a majority of recommendations from previous Estyn monitoring visits, it has been slow to address recommendations from the most recent visit. This is largely because, due to a lack of knowledge of good practice, managers do not have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve.

Partnership working: Adequate

The school has developed a very beneficial partnership with a local secondary school. This is having a positive impact on both pupils and staff. It allows pupils to gain accreditation in a range of GCSEs, including English, mathematics, science and art. The headteacher and teachers at Caban Aur also benefit from helpful advice provided by staff at this school. This includes advice on the moderation of art assignments and controlled assessments in science as well as information on requirements for an oracy examination.

The school has recently developed a useful partnership with a local business. This enables a very few pupils to broaden their learning experiences through observing a tattoo artist at work.

Close links with the company's other children's home allow a very few of its pupils to attend the school at Caban Aur when they are not able to cope with a mainstream setting. This means that they are able to continue in education and make progress.

The school works closely with a range of organisations including Careers Wales, social services, the youth justice service and CAMHS. These partnerships provide essential support for the specific needs of individual pupils.

The headteacher has recently become part of an advisory group working towards improving outcomes for looked-after children in Wales. However, it is too early to evaluate the impact on pupil standards or wellbeing.

Other strategic partnerships are very limited. Teachers do not have opportunities to observe good practice in other schools. As a result, they do not have a clear understanding of ways in which the school could improve.

Resource management: Adequate

The proprietor ensures that there are sufficient teachers with relevant experience and qualifications. Since setting up the school, she has continually increased the number of teachers employed. She supports staff to develop their knowledge and expertise through training and accredited courses. For example, the headteacher has recently achieved a qualification in additional learning needs.

The headteacher provides teachers with useful opportunities to develop their practice through peer observations. Where teachers have limited expertise in a particular subject, he encourages them to work together to share their knowledge.

The proprietor and headteacher manage the budget effectively to ensure that there are appropriate teaching resources. The school carries out regular essential repair work, such as the replacement of damaged windows and doors. However, there is less focus on maintaining the general quality of the learning environment. The school does not make the best use it can of the limited teaching areas available.

The school provides value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

The number of responses received were fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received were fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Caroline Rees	Reporting Inspector
Rosemary Lloyd Lait	Team Inspector
Susan Lynne Painter	Peer Inspector
Paul Scudamore	Independent School Standards Inspector
Neil Bridgstock	Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

Year groups, the Foundation Phase and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

Glossary of terms

Core subject indicator (CSI)	This relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum.
Level 1	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade D to G.
Level 1 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade D to G.
Level 2	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade A* to C.
Level 2 threshold including English or Welsh first language and mathematics	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C including English or Welsh first language and mathematics
Level 2 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C.
Level 3	This represents the equivalent of an A level at grade A*-E.
Level 3 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to two A levels at grade A* to E.
Average wider points score	This includes all qualifications approved for use in Wales at the relevant age, for example at aged 16 or at aged 18.
Capped wider points score	This includes the best eight results from all qualifications approved for use in Wales at aged 16.
Proprietor	The term 'proprietor', as defined in the Education Act 1996, means the person or people responsible for managing an independent school and can include a sole proprietor, governing bodies, trustees or directors. The ways that independent schools are governed and owned varies a great deal. A proprietor or trust may own a school or the school may have a governing body that appoints a headteacher. Some schools have a combination of these.