



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

**Annual monitoring inspection report on
Gwenllian Education Centre**

Date of inspection: March 2017

by

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

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Context

The Welsh Government registered Gwenllian Education Centre as an independent day school in 2012. The initial registration was for pupils aged 5 to 11 with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Until September 2016, the school had one pupil on roll. In May 2016, the proprietors submitted a material change request to extend the age range of pupils to 5 to 19 years. Over the last two terms, the number on roll has increased rapidly to 10 pupils from across this age range. All pupils have complex needs that include communication difficulties, and all of them have a statement of special educational needs. All pupils live at home with their families, where English is the first language.

The well-qualified headteacher is also the school's proprietor. Since September 2016, he has employed new staff with a range of teaching, learning support and other useful and relevant professional qualifications. There is a full programme of staff induction that includes training, for example in safeguarding, first aid and minibus driving. The headteacher also provides in-house training to raise staff awareness of pupils' ASD needs and to ensure consistency in the staff's delivery of behavioural interventions.

The school operates in single storey premises that provide several small teaching spaces. There is additional accommodation for older pupils in an on-site mobile unit. The school has a small outdoor play area and also makes extensive use of off-site local facilities, for example for swimming and horse-riding.

Main findings

Strengths

The school has given appropriate priority to ensuring a calm nurturing environment that has enabled new pupils to settle quickly into the routines and make progress in their learning.

There is a high level of adult to pupil support.

The curriculum is tailored appropriately to meet individual pupils' needs and provides a suitable variety of well-planned activities.

Staff use picture exchange communication consistently to enhance pupils' learning.

Staff have a range of suitable professional qualifications. In addition, the school ensures that staff receive appropriate training to develop their skills in a range of relevant areas including, for example, how to support pupils with ASD.

The school works closely with a range of professional specialists, for example an applied behaviour analysis consultant and an occupational therapist, to identify ways to improve pupils' engagement in learning.

The school uses a range of appropriate methods to assess pupils' needs and staff monitor their programmes and progress effectively. Individual pupil profiles and pen portraits provide a useful overview of each pupil's strengths, needs, likes and dislikes.

Areas for development

The school has expanded rapidly this year and has focused appropriately on developing day-to-day policies and procedures. Although these are generally appropriate, the school's administrative systems are not always clear enough. For example, there are too many separate files for each pupil that often contain duplicates of the same information. Central records are too variable in quality and do not always contain important details.

The headteacher takes an active role in managing the school's day-to-day activities and this takes up much of his time. Staff are beginning to take responsibility, for example, for areas of the curriculum, but this is at an early stage.

The focus on managing change this year has resulted in the school still being at an early stage in developing self-evaluation to inform school improvement.

Following the visit, the school submitted a material change request to the Welsh Government to allow it to use a mobile unit as additional accommodation. Estyn is currently liaising with the school regarding this request.

Recommendations

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| <p>R1 Ensure that self-evaluation processes are thorough and impact on planning for school improvement</p> <p>R2 Ensure that the school improvement plan includes clear targets and time scales and that it places an appropriate emphasis on improving learning and teaching</p> <p>R3 Improve the quality and consistency of administration and record keeping</p> <p>R4 Develop staff leadership roles to enable the headteacher to manage the school more effectively</p> |
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Progress in addressing recommendations from previous note of visit or inspection report

Recommendation 1: Ensure that self-evaluation processes are thorough and impact on planning for school development

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The school has undergone rapid expansion since the last inspection, with a significant increase in the number of pupils on roll and a wide age range. Inevitably, the headteacher's focus has been on appointing and inducting new staff, and developing day-to-day policies and procedures for the school. As a result, self-evaluation remains at an early stage. Nevertheless, the headteacher has taken account of Estyn's self-evaluation guidance to identify areas for review. For example, he monitors staff performance although, at this stage, the process is informal. He has started to seek the views of parents and carers on the work of the school through a questionnaire.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that the school improvement plan is more detailed

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The school improvement plan is too general. Although it identifies areas for improvement and the staff responsible, targets and time scales are not clear enough. Many targets refer to improving the premises and resources. Although these aspects are essential at this stage of the school's development, there is too little focus on evaluating and improving the quality of learning and teaching.

Recommendation 3: Ensure that school policies are kept under regular review

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has a comprehensive range of policies that are reviewed annually.

Recommendation 4: Apply to the Welsh Government for material change to extend the age range of pupils to include those in key stage 2

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

In May 2016, the Welsh Government approved the school's request for material change to extend the age range of pupils to 5 to 19.

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, 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.

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 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

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 National Assembly for Wales 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 annual monitoring inspection should not prejudice the findings of a future full Section 163 inspection.

School information

School	Gwenllian Education Centre
School number	6696015
Purpose of visit	Annual monitoring inspection
Date of visit	20/03/2017
Proprietor	Reflect Education Ltd
Staff	1 headteacher, 1 assistant headteacher, 2 teachers, 2 senior teaching assistants, 10 teaching assistants, 2 support assistants, 1 site manager, 1 administrative assistant, 3 lunchtime supervisors
Number of pupils	10
Provision	Day
Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school	Pupils with autistic spectrum disorder
Last Section 163 inspection	N/A
Last annual monitoring inspection	04/01/2016
Last CSSIW inspection	N/A

Team information

Mrs Rosemary Lloyd Lait	Reporting Inspector
Ms Elizabeth Ann Dackevych	Team Inspector