



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

A report on

The Haven

Date of inspection: June 2023

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

This report is also available in Welsh

About The Haven

The Haven is an independent day school registered to provide education for up to ten pupils aged 11-19 years who have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum condition (ASC). It is owned and managed by the charity Autism Initiatives.

The school is situated on the outskirts of Mold in North Wales. There are currently nine pupils on roll. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or individual development plan (IDP).

The headteacher has been in post since January 2019. She is supported by a teacher, a team of seven permanent teaching assistants and an executive head of education from the wider organisation.

The school's last monitoring visit was in June 2022.

Main findings

Strengths

The Haven provides a warm and nurturing environment for pupils, which positively impacts on pupil well-being. Staff know their pupils well and over time build trusting relationships with them. This helps to create a culture of mutual respect, trust and tolerance. As a result, pupils engage well in learning and settle quickly into the routines of the school day.

Since the last monitoring visit, leaders have taken suitable steps to strengthen provision at the school. For example, they have established a staffing structure that allows continuity in the delivery of the curriculum. Teachers and teaching assistants work together closely to plan and deliver lessons that effectively meet the needs of the pupils in the school.

Pupils have valuable opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills in the community on a regular basis, for example planning and budgeting a trip to a local café after visiting the library to select a reading book. This effectively supports the pupils development of valuable life skills.

Teaching staff have a strong understanding of what pupils need to learn in terms of their primary needs and future goals. The targets on pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) link appropriately to targets from statements of educational needs or individual development plans (IDPs). Nearly all pupils have a strong understanding of their targets and work purposefully to progress these on a daily basis.

The school meets all the Independent School Standards (Wales) 2003 regulations considered on this visit.

Areas for development

Improvements to the longer term planning of the curriculum to include valuable skills such as personal, social, health and education, independent living and work-related skills are in the early stages of development.

There are limited opportunities to formally assess the literacy, numeracy and digital skills of the pupils. For example, pupils do not complete initial reading, spelling or numeracy assessments when they join the school. This makes it difficult to identify appropriate support for these pupils, to monitor their progress or to evaluate the impact of teaching and learning on progress.

A consistent approach to the collection, monitoring, and analysis of evidence by leaders is underdeveloped. For example, lesson observations, learning walks and book scrutinies are generally completed informally and have little focus on the progress pupils are making. As a result, leaders cannot robustly evaluate the impact of new or refined processes and systems.

Recommendations

The school should:

- R1 Continue to develop the curriculum to ensure that planning includes the progressive development of skills over time
- R2 Strengthen the school's approach to initial assessment to improve understanding of the progress pupils make, particularly in literacy, numeracy and digital skills
- R3 Develop self-evaluation and improvement planning so that processes focus consistently on the impact of teaching on learning

Progress in addressing recommendations from previous visit or inspection report

R1 Ensure stability in staffing, and recruit and retain a suitably qualified permanent teacher

Since the last visit, the school has recruited a well-qualified, experienced class teacher. The school now also has a full team of permanent teaching assistants.

The class teacher and teaching assistants consistently encourage pupils to take interest, enjoy their learning and challenge themselves. They know the pupils well and make effective use of this knowledge to tailor learning to enable pupils to make suitable progress. As a result, the school has made strong progress in meeting this recommendation.

R2 Improve the consistency and quality of planning across the curriculum

The school has addressed aspects of this recommendation by the appointment of a permanent class teacher. As a result, the quality of planning across the curriculum is more consistent. However, many of these changes in planning are in the early stages of development and are not yet fully embedded in all areas of the curriculum. For example, aspects of the teaching that were observed during the visit as good practice are not always reflected in the planning.

R3 Improve the assessment of pupils' learning and use this information more effectively to plan for pupils' next steps in learning

The school has made limited progress in addressing this recommendation.

The school is currently in the early stages of developing an appropriate assessment framework for their new curriculum. Teaching staff assess pupils regularly and use this to inform future planning. However whole-school systems for assessing pupils' starting points are not robust enough. As a consequence, it is difficult to measure the

impact of planning and assessment on progress in learning, particularly in the areas of literacy, numeracy and digital competence.

R4 Make better use of the school's external environment to promote learning

The school is in the early stages of planning to use the outdoor areas within the curriculum. In addition, much of the outdoor equipment has been installed recently and as a consequence it is too early to judge the impact of these improvements.

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 this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 2.

Standard 3: Welfare, health and safety of pupils

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 3.

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

Standard 7: 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 continued 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 (<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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publications Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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