



Report summary for parents and carers on Ty Dysgu

Date of inspection: September 2022

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

Overview

Pupils at Ty Dysgu PRU have a wide range of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Many pupils arrive at the PRU with a history of poor attendance and have frequently missed a considerable amount of education prior to starting at the PRU. As a result, they have gaps in their learning, and may present as having little confidence in their own ability as learners. In addition, managing their own behaviour acts as an additional barrier to their learning.

During their time at the PRU, only a minority of pupils who attend regularly make suitable progress from their individual starting points in line with their needs and ability. Overall, most pupils respond appropriately in lessons. Pupils' literacy development is limited and too slow due to the lack of opportunities for them to use these skills across the curriculum. A minority of pupils develop their numeracy skills suitably. Across all ages there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills progressively over time.

During their time at the PRU, most pupils develop strong working relationships with staff, and this helps them to feel safe and secure. A few pupils with challenging behaviour which include mental health issues are on part time bespoke timetables and only attend the PRU briefly during the week. Plans for these pupils to transition back to the PRU on a full time basis are in place. However, a very few have begun this transition process and as a result, this limits their progress. Around half of the pupils with a poor record of attendance from their previous school make limited progress during their time at the PRU.

Overall, the PRU does not provide a sufficiently broad and balanced curriculum to meet the wide and diverse needs of the pupils. The PRU is in the early stages of preparing for Curriculum for Wales. The range of learning experiences for all pupils is too narrow across the PRU.

Staff collect a suitable range of pupil assessment information. These assessments focus on pupils literacy, numeracy and well-being skills. However, this is not well established, and staff do not use these assessments effectively enough to track and monitor pupil progress. These assessments do not inform future planning well enough to deliver appropriate interventions to meet the needs of individual pupils.

The PRU does not currently have robust processes in place to track and monitor pupils' progress and well-being, including attendance and behaviour, as they move through the PRU. As a consequence, they do not reliably identify and respond to relevant issues and challenges early enough.

Leaders do not have a strategic and clear enough vision that is shared with the remainder of the staff for developing the PRU and raising standards. Self-evaluation process are ineffective and underdeveloped by leaders. Most staff are unclear what the priorities for improvement planning are at the PRU. Processes for assuring the quality of provision for pupils' progress are ineffective. The safeguarding policy is detailed and provides useful referral information. However, the implementation of the policy is inconsistent across the PRU. Leaders have failed to identify and address many safeguarding concerns at the PRU.

Recommendations

- R1 Strengthen the management of safeguarding and address the shortcomings identified during the inspection**
- R2 Strengthen the quality of strategic leadership to ensure that the PRU's self-evaluation systems identify priorities for improvement that are aligned to raising standards of learning and well-being**
- R3 Develop effective processes to track, monitor and evaluate pupil progress**
- R4 Strengthen the curriculum offer for all pupils**
- R5 Improve pupil attendance**

What happens next

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that special measures are required in relation to this PRU. The PRU will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the PRU's progress on a termly basis.

PRU context

Name of provider	Ty Dysgu
Local authority	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Pupil Referral Unit
Residential provision?	No
Multi-site provision?	Yes
Number of pupils on roll	39
Pupils of statutory school age	39
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	27/09/2022
<p>Ty Dysgu is a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) maintained by Merthyr Tydfil local authority. It educates pupils from the ages of 5-16 with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.</p> <p>The provision operates out of two sites. One for pupils aged five to eleven, Ty Dysgu Dowlais, the other Ty Dysgu Homfray for pupils from eleven up to the age of 16.</p> <p>There are currently 39 pupils on roll. Twenty-four pupils attend the secondary provision and fifteen attend the primary. Very few pupils are looked after by the local authority or have English as an additional language. Most pupils are dual registered with a mainstream school. Just over half of the pupils are entitled to free school meals.</p> <p>The PRU has not been previously inspected and was opened in September 2018 with foundation provision added in 2019.</p>	

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