



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: May 2024

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

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 ten pupils on roll. All pupils have an individual development plan (IDP) or a statement of special educational need (SEN). All pupils are placed by Flintshire local authority.

The headteacher has been in post since January 2019. They are supported by a full-time teacher and a team of seven permanent teaching assistants. At the time of the inspection, the school also had an additional four teaching assistants and a newly qualified teacher on short term contracts from an agency.

The school was last visited by Estyn in June 2023. At this time, the school was fully compliant with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024.

In May 2024, the Welsh Government formally requested Estyn to undertake an announced focused inspection of The Haven under section 163 of the Education Act 2002. The inspection had a particular focus to evaluate the school's capacity to meet standard 3 of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024, which relates to the welfare, health and safety of pupils and aspects of standard 5, which relates to the security of the school site.

Main findings

Strengths

All staff at The Haven engaged positively with the inspection team and co-operated fully with the inspection process.

The proprietor ensured that relevant representatives from the wider organisation, with particular focus on health and safety and safeguarding, were on site during the inspection to assist the inspection team and support the staff team where necessary.

Areas for development

The proprietor should ensure that the school complies fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024.

To strengthen safeguarding procedures at the school, leaders and staff should ensure that:

- the school's safeguarding policy reflects school practice, the specific context of the school and Welsh Government guidance, particularly Keeping Learners Safe 283/2022
- all staff understand how to report safeguarding concerns
- safeguarding training is regular, effective and specific to the particular context of the school so that all members of staff, including supply staff, are clear and confident in their roles and responsibilities
- a detailed record is kept of all safeguarding training and this is monitored regularly to ensure staff training remains up to date
- access to confidential safeguarding records is restricted to designated personnel

To strengthen the school's approaches to managing incidents of challenging behaviour and bullying, leaders and staff should ensure that:

- all staff are aware of how and where to record and report incidents of challenging behaviour and alleged bullying
- the recording and the quality of information provided in records of incidents involving challenging behaviour and bullying is rigorous and thorough
- the quality assurance around the reporting and recording of incidents of challenging behaviour is strengthened
- support for pupils and managing their behaviour is consistent across the school

Leaders should also ensure that:

- all staff working in the school, including those on short term or temporary contracts, have a suitable induction which includes safeguarding and behaviour management strategies and procedures
- actions from the most recent fire risk assessment are addressed
- all school policies refer appropriately to Welsh Government guidance and guide practice at the school

- the governance to provide support and challenge to the school is strengthened so that it is fulfilling its statutory duties, particularly in relation to health and safety and safeguarding
- The school is currently using part of the school as a sensory room which has not previously been registered for educational purposes. Leaders should request a material change from Welsh Government and immediately cease using this building for education.

These shortcomings mean that the safety and well-being of pupils and staff is inadequate and a cause for concern.

Given the areas of non-compliance with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024, the Welsh Government may wish to recommend formally to the school that it should not accept new pupils at the school until these matters have been addressed.

Compliance with the standards for registration

Standard 1: The quality of education provided by the school

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 1.

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

The school does not fully meet the regulatory requirements for this standard. In order to comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024, the proprietor should:

- ensure arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school [6 (a)]
- ensure that a written policy to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils is drawn up and effectively implemented [6 (b)]
- ensure those arrangements and that policy have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers [6 (c)]
- ensure appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified [8 (b)]
- the proprietor should ensure that all staff, supply staff and persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the independent school actively promote the well-being of pupils [9]
- ensure that all staff, supply staff, volunteers and pupils receive appropriate training in the school's safeguarding policy in accordance with any guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers in relation to safeguarding [10 (a)]
- ensure a written record of that training is maintained. [10 (b)]
- ensure a written behaviour policy is drawn up and effectively implemented that:
 - encourages and rewards good behaviour
 - sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour
 - has regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers [11 (a)]
- ensure a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour [11 (b)]
- ensure that bullying at the school is prevented so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy [12]
- ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [14]
- ensure that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written first aid policy [15]
- ensure that the policies and strategies required by this Part are reviewed regularly and updated when appropriate, and [18 (a)]

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

The school does not fully meet the regulatory requirements for this standard. In order to comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024, the proprietor should:

- ensure that the school has effective security arrangements for the grounds and building [27 (d)]

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 continued registration

When considering this school's registration the Welsh Government may wish to have regard to the following recommendation:

The school does not currently meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024. To comply fully with these requirements, the school should address the issues identified above for each standard.

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 2024. 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

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.wales