



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

A report on

Birribi

Date of inspection: June 2024

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Birribi

Birribi is an independent school, which provides additional learning provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, autistic spectrum condition and associated learning difficulties. It opened in April 2016 as part of a wider organisation that also provides residential care and a care farm used by pupils at the school. The school operates from two classrooms attached to two of the company's children's homes in Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire.

The company aims to provide an integrated therapeutic approach which promotes pupils' well-being and helps them to improve their life chances and become confident, independent members of the community. The school provides education for up to ten pupils aged seven to eighteen years resident in the company's children's homes who are not able to access mainstream education.

Most pupils have a statement of educational needs or education, health, and care plan (EHCP). Currently there are six pupils on the school roll. All of the pupils are looked after by the local authority and are placed by local authorities in Wales and England. A very few pupils are from Welsh-speaking backgrounds.

At the time of the core inspection in May 2022 HMI found that the school did not meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

To comply fully with these requirements, the school was required to address the issues identified below for each standard:

The quality of education provided by the school

In order to comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003 the school should:

- Have a curriculum policy set out in writing and supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work and should implement it effectively [1(2)]
- Ensure the curriculum provides the opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress [1(2)(i)]
- Provide well planned lessons, effective teaching methods and suitable activities [1(3)(c)]
- Provide a framework to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and utilise information from such assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can make progress [1(3)(g)]

Following this visit, the school were asked to produce a post-inspection action plan. A team of HMI visited the school in May and December 2023 to discuss the school's progress against their action plan. Subsequently, HMI visited the school in June 2024 to evaluate the school's compliance with the previously non-compliant standards. At the time of this visit, HMI evaluated compliance against the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024.

Main findings

Strengths

Under the new leadership of the school, the curriculum has been reviewed and strengthened to ensure that it provides a broad and balanced offer. The curriculum is thematic and reflects the individual needs of pupils well. Staff build positive working relationships with pupils. As a result, and over time, pupils' behaviour and engagement in their learning improves from their initial starting points.

The school has developed a strong enterprise curriculum. Pupils make and sell items weekly. The development of work-related learning opportunities increases pupils understanding of the wider world and prepares them well for their next steps.

Pupils have developed an outside garden area which provides a valuable additional learning space as well as growing produce as a part of their enterprise scheme. Pupils are proud of their work and keen to show visitors around the garden and point out the different plants, vegetables and herbs they have planted.

The school has developed its own bespoke award programme as part of its outdoor learning and care farm offer. This enables pupils to engage with a wide range of activities which develop their decision-making skills, team working skills and their development of emotional resilience and self-regulation well. A robust process of monitoring the progress pupils make whilst working on the farm is in place. Further, the outdoor learning and care farm supports the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well.

The school is beginning to establish good working relationships with other providers to support the curriculum offer for pupils and to extend their social skills development experiences.

Assessments are in place to provide a baseline of each pupil's level of ability. As part of the assessment cycle data is collected bi-annually. Staff are beginning to use this data to plan for individual pupil needs suitably.

Staff have developed a pupil progress tracker, which provides valuable data to identify pupil progress and gaps in learning to be addressed. Staff recognise the need to refine this process further.

Areas for action

A cycle of lesson observations led by the headteacher is in place. However, the information included does not focus sharply enough on the progress pupils make in their learning. Further, peer observations and observing good practice in other schools are at the early stages of implementation.

The school is at the early stages of implementing the newly established progress tracker. The assessment of skills as part of this process is under development.

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 this standard

Standard 3: Welfare, health and safety of pupils

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect this standard

Standard 4: The suitability of proprietors and staff

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect this standard

Standard 5: Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect this standard

Standard 6: The provision of information

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect this standard

Standard 7: The manner in which complaints are to be handled

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect 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 2024.

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 going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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This document has been translated by Trosol (English to Welsh).