



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

A report on

Gwenllian Education Centre

Date of inspection: November 2019

by

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

About Gwenllian Education Centre

Gwenllian Education Centre is an independent day school in Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire. It offers individualised education for up to 18 pupils aged 5 to 19 years who have complex needs that include communication difficulties associated with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD).

Currently, there are 12 pupils on roll. All pupils have a statement of special education needs. All pupils live at home with their families, where English is the first language.

The school aims to provide a personalised educational experience to support the social, academic and independent development of its pupils.

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 makes extensive use of off-site local facilities, for example for swimming and horse-riding.

Gwenllian Education Centre opened in 2012.

Main findings

Strengths

The school provides a balanced and relevant curriculum that has a strong and appropriate focus on meeting pupils' therapeutic needs, developing positive attitudes towards learning and improving pupils' behaviour and independence.

Teachers know the needs of pupils very well. They make highly effective use of data to analyse pupils' behaviour and plan for their progress. As a result of the effective work of staff, over time pupils reduce their complex behaviour patterns.

Pupils benefit from the comprehensive support of an appropriate range of multi-disciplinary professionals, including teachers, support staff, speech, language and occupational therapists and specialists in applied behavioural analysis. Staff at the school benefit from the regular discussions, advice and guidance of this team.

Leaders foster a strong culture of learning for the school. They support staff well to improve their skills and expertise. Staff regularly update their skills and expertise through a range of focused training. This helps them to support pupils' needs effectively, such as improving their communication and co-operation so that they can engage better in learning activities.

The school works well with pupils, their families and appropriate agencies so that transition to the school is as smooth as possible. Staff provide useful support so that pupils can stagger their initial attendance whilst they get to know the staff and routines of the school. At the end of their time at school, staff support pupils to identify positive future placements, including those provided by the parent company.

The buildings and grounds of the school offer a vibrant learning environment.

Areas for development

The school provides staff with regular, appropriately focused training. However, it does not plan the training strategically as part of its cycle of development planning. It does not evaluate consistently the impact of training in a strategic manner to ensure that it is having the planned impact.

Staff at the school do not have enough opportunities to learn from the good practice of others, both within the school and from other providers.

Recommendations

The school should:

- R1 Further develop school improvement processes to incorporate all aspects of the schools' priorities, including training
- R2 Enable staff to learn from the identified good practice of others both internally and externally

Progress in addressing recommendations from previous note of visit or inspection report

Recommendation 1: Broaden curriculum opportunities for older pupils to access accredited learning that meets their needs

The school has adopted a commercial scheme to provide appropriate and meaningful accredited learning that meets pupil needs. Pupils are beginning to benefit from the curriculum opportunities offered by this scheme. Although this new curriculum is in its infancy, pupils are already enthusiastic and motivated by the learning experiences it offers. They are developing well their independent learning skills as they work towards accrediting their learning in line with their individual needs.

A very few pupils are working towards GCSEs in subjects that motivate their learning. These subjects include mathematics, music and information and communications technology. In order to enable pupils to sit examinations in an environment that is familiar and comfortable for the pupils, the school has applied to become an accredited examination centre with the WJEC. This process is on target to be completed before the end of the academic year.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that all improvement priorities have clear and measurable success criteria that are reviewed and monitored effectively

School improvement processes have improved well. The school now has a beneficial school development plan (SDP) which gives greater focus, ownership and responsibility to senior leaders.

The information that informs the SDP is based upon a useful self-evaluation process. The plan appropriately breaks down the school's targets into smaller steps and clearly identifies responsibilities, key tasks and success criteria. Senior leaders robustly monitor progress against the targets in the SDP. However, timescales for monitoring are not always clear enough.

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

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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