

**A report on**  
**Eastward House School**

**40 - 41 The Parade  
Roath  
Cardiff  
CF24 3AB**

**Date of inspection: May 2025**

**by**

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

## About Eastward House School

Name of provider	Eastward House School
Proprietor status	Eastward House School, a private limited company
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Independent special
Residential provision?	No
Number of pupils on roll	28
Pupils of statutory school age	24
Date of previous Estyn visit	22/01/2024
Start date of visit	14/05/2025

### School context:

Eastward House is an independent special school located in Cardiff, established in September 2021. The school has a second site in Bridgend, which is used as a base for outdoor education.

The school provides education for pupils between the ages of seven to eighteen years who have specific learning difficulties including dyslexia, dyspraxia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, as well as learning difficulties associated with autistic spectrum condition (ASC) and attention deficit disorder (ADD). In addition, the school provides education for pupils who have no specific learning need but whose parents wish to enrol their child as an alternative to local state schools.

There are currently 28 pupils on roll. Nearly all pupils have statements of special educational needs or an individual development plan (IDP). Nearly all pupils are placed by a local authority. The school is registered to admit 35 pupils.

At the time of the inspection in January 2024 the school did not meet the requirements for the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations. The Welsh Government asked the school to produce a post-inspection action plan to address the areas of non-

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

### **Standard 1 – The Quality of Education**

The proprietor should ensure that:

- a written policy on the independent school's curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively, [2(1)(a)]
- the curriculum policy enables pupils to acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy [2(2)(b)]
- when pupils have a statement, fulfil its educational requirements [2003 standard]
- the curriculum provides the opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress [2(2)(h)]

The proprietor should ensure that teaching:

- involves well-planned lessons, effective teaching methods, suitable activities and wise management of learning time [2(3)(c)]
- ensure that teachers demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught [2(3)(e)]
- demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and uses information from those assessments to plan teaching so that pupils can progress [2(3)(g)]

### **Standard 3 – The welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the independent school, a written policy to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils is drawn up and effectively implemented, and those arrangements and that policy have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers [6]

### **Standard 4 – The suitability of the proprietor and staff**

- prior to the appointment of any member of staff to work at the school, where the prospective member of staff is an individual in respect of whom the Secretary of State must issue a disclosure and barring certificate under section 113A of the Police Act 1997, the proprietor ensures that: the individual has applied for an appropriate disclosure and barring certificate; and the individual makes the certificate available to the proprietor [20(2)(e) & 20(3)]
- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff, carry out appropriate checks to confirm their identity, medical fitness, previous employment history,

character references and where appropriate qualifications and professional references and take into account information in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed [20(2)(d) & 20(3)]

A team of HMI visited the school in October 2024 and January 2025 to discuss the school's progress against their action plan. Subsequently, HMI visited the school in May 2025 to evaluate the school's compliance with the previously non-compliant Standards.

## Main findings

Leaders have taken appropriate steps and have improved sufficiently teaching and learning and curriculum provision at the school.

The recent appointment of the head of teaching and learning has improved the school's strategic approach to ensuring effective teaching and learning. Subject teaching expertise has been strengthened in important areas of the curriculum such as mathematics, literacy and science. These appointments and new processes are embedding and further time and work are needed to ensure consistency and quality in progressive planning and learning activities.

Working relationships between teaching staff and pupils are positive and supportive. Overall, lessons are planned appropriately, and teaching staff make suitable use of teaching and learning activities and resources. As a result, many pupils engage appropriately with their learning and make suitable progress from their initial starting points.

Leaders have introduced a valuable assessment framework, which allows staff to track and monitor pupils' progress in all areas of learning areas of learning. Teachers use pupils' IDPs to develop individual short-term learning targets, which are evaluated on a weekly basis. As a result, leaders can demonstrate pupils' progress effectively over time. This approach is newly established.

The school provides pupils with a bespoke curriculum, which reflects their needs and interests suitably. Leaders have prioritised the improvement of progressive schemes of work in subjects such as literacy and numeracy. However, work to mirror this approach to schemes of work across the nine areas of learning experience is ongoing. Leaders have planned for this provision carefully over the next year within the school's strategic plan for the quality of education.

The school has drawn up and effectively implemented a coherent policy to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. The policy is underpinned by clear and well-understood processes to report concerns and contains a suitable range of information to support staff in safeguarding pupils and themselves.

Oversight and monitoring of safeguarding concerns have strengthened significantly since the core inspection. Leaders now have a clear and up-to-date understanding of live cases and can readily access and update information regarding the concern. Systems for staff to report concerns about pupils are robust and help to ensure that pupils receive timely support. The school collaborates suitably with external agencies, particularly the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and the local authority, and decisions regarding when to involve external agencies are coherent and evidenced appropriately. As a result, leaders have established a secure culture of safeguarding at the school.

Leaders have strengthened safer recruitment processes significantly since the core inspection. A clear and coherent approach is implemented once a successful candidate is identified and all required pre-employment checks are systematically undertaken. Furthermore, leaders have implemented a proactive approach the renewal of disclosure and barring (DBS) checks, identifying and renewing those approaching the three-year time limit sufficiently in advance. Employment files are well organised and contain all required copies of background and pre-employment checks. As a result, the school's approach to ensuring the suitability of persons working at the school is now secure.

## **Compliance with the standards for registration**

Independent school inspections are governed by the Education Act 2002 and related regulations: the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024. These regulations require an independent school to meet an appropriate standard in the following areas:

### **The quality of education provided by the school**

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

### **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

This standard was not considered on this visit.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

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

### **The suitability of proprietors and staff**

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

### **Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools**

This standard was not considered on this visit.

### **The provision of information**

This standard was not considered on this visit.

### **The manner in which complaints are to be handled**

This standard was not considered on this visit.

## **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 (Wales) 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:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

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