

A report on

Bevan College

**Cowbridge Road
Bridgend
CF31 3DF**

Date of inspection: May 2025

by

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

About Bevan College

Founded in 2024, Bevan College is an independent specialist post-16 institution (ISPI) and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Bridgend College Group (BCG). Prior to becoming Bevan College, the provision was known as Weston House, which had provided residential care and support since 1978.

The college is located on the Cowbridge Road campus of Bridgend College in Bridgend and offers day and residential placements during weekdays only for young people aged 16 to 25 with a wide range of learning difficulties and disabilities, including autism, sensory impairments, cerebral palsy and severe learning difficulties. There are currently eighteen learners on roll, twelve young men and six young women, all of whom are over the age of 18. Eight learners are day placements, and ten are residential. Learners attend from a range of local authorities in Wales, including Cardiff, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Rhondda Cynon Taff, and Newport.

The College's leadership team includes the Principal of BCG and the Deputy Principal who has responsibility for both education and care at the college. Since January 2024, the Deputy Principal has been assisted by a Head of Education who leads a team of four teachers and seventeen learning support assistants. The College has a Board of Directors, made up of three independent directors, a principal director and two governor directors who also sit on the Governing Body of BCG.

This is Bevan College's first inspection since its foundation.

Inspectors' judgements on this limited inspection should not prejudice the findings of a future full Section 77 inspection.

Main findings

Strengths

Leaders have developed a clear vision and values for the college in collaboration with the wider staff team. As a result, staff form a committed, energetic team who work highly effectively towards the college's vision of 'enabling active and meaningful participation and inclusion in life and work'.

Since the establishment of the college in July 2024, leaders have rapidly developed and implemented a bespoke self-evaluation framework covering all aspects of provision. As a result, leaders and staff have a strong understanding of the college's strengths and areas for development and have determined meaningful improvement targets.

Nearly all staff develop highly positive relationships with learners based on a clear understanding of their individual needs and interests. They demonstrate patience and persistence when supporting them in their learning, promoting positive progress in independence throughout the day.

The college has put in place robust arrangements to gather feedback on learners' experiences. For example, in college-wide learner voice sessions, learners benefit from well-planned opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings and plan for improvement. As a result, learners feel listened to and trust that staff take their voice into account.

Nearly all learners demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively, follow instructions and interact positively with their peers. For example, in cookery sessions learners offer to support their peers and in sessions they compete with their classmates in an online quiz. As a result, most learners develop and demonstrate useful social skills.

Spotlight - Evidence-informed Leadership and Bespoke College Improvement

Bevan College benefits from highly effective links with the wider Bridgend College Group (BCG) leadership structure, and this provides an important source of knowledge and support for improvement work.

BCG's extensive, well-established quality-assurance processes have been adapted by leaders, with care and skill, to ensure their suitability for Bevan College. They have successfully made the specific needs and contexts of their learners the focus of improvement work and have ensured that all aspects of the work reflect the unique nature and requirements of ALN specialist education. For example, leaders have developed processes for listening to learners' views which ensure that all learners, including those who face difficulties with communication, are able to contribute to college improvement.

As a result of successful implementation of robust, bespoke self-evaluation processes, leaders have an accurate, detailed picture of the college's educational strengths and areas for development. They have used this information to identify priority actions with clear links to improved learner outcomes.

Areas for development

The college has begun to put in place systems for setting, tracking and monitoring individualised learning targets. However, this work is in the very early stages of implementation and targets do not consistently support learners to understand the small steps they need to take to progress.

The college benefits from the support of a speech and language therapist and communication support lead to support the development of learners' communication and social skills. Staff use a range of communication systems to support learning. However, these systems, including signing, are used inconsistently across the college.

Recommendations

The college should:

- R1. Build on current best practice to ensure that learner targets are consistently clear and specific about the small steps learners need to take to progress
- R2. Strengthen the consistent use of communication methods, including signing, across the college

Copies of the report

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The report was produced in accordance with Section 77 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

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