



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on
Landsker Education

Date of inspection: November 2012

by

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



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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.uk

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Context

Landsker Education offers an integrated residential education and care package to pupils who are 'looked after' and have challenges to their learning. The pupils generally have a high level of need with associated behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. A significant minority of the pupils have autistic spectrum disorders. It is not appropriate to compare the standards that pupils achieve at the school with national averages or to analyse the performance trends of groups over time because of the nature of the pupils' learning needs.

Pupils attend the school on a full-time, 52 weeks a year basis. There are 16 residential places spread across five separate care homes. Three of these homes are in rural Pembrokeshire. The two remaining homes are in the Neath Port Talbot area of South Wales.

At the time of the inspection there were 15 pupils on the roll of the school across key stage 3, key stage 4 and key stage 5. English is the predominant language of all pupils. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language at home. No pupils were receiving support for English as an additional language.

The company aims to provide a caring, structured and homely environment, specifically designed to meet the needs of each pupil. Pupils have an individual learning programme.

The school's overall objective is to create the ideal conditions for each pupil to succeed. It aims to help pupils achieve to the maximum of their potential and receive the preparation that they need to live as independently as possible.

The school was last inspected in 2006.

Summary

The school's current performance	Excellent
The school's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

Landsker Education is judged as excellent because:

- pupils achieve excellent standards in communication and wellbeing;
- teaching is very good and focuses well on the individual needs of the pupils;
- there is excellent provision for pupils' health and wellbeing, enhanced by a range of extra-curricular activities;
- the calm and nurturing environment and exceptional behaviour management are reflected in the excellent behaviour of all pupils;
- pupils receive excellent care, support and guidance; and
- the school has very strong partnerships with parents and carers and provides them with very detailed and informative monthly reports.

Prospects for improvement

Landsker Education has good prospects for improvement because:

- senior leaders provide strong and dynamic leadership;
- the leadership team has a very clear vision for the school, which is shared by all staff;
- staff performance is managed very carefully and new staff are very well supported;
- staff training is well focussed on school improvement; and
- the school manages its excellent resources well and provides value for money.

Compliance with the regulations for registration

Independent school inspections are governed by the Education Act 2002 and related regulations: the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. These regulations require an independent school to meet an appropriate standard in the following areas:

The quality of education provided by the school

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The suitability of proprietors and staff

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The provision of information

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that the self-evaluation report and linked school development plan focus more clearly on the measurable outcomes of pupils;
- R2 ensure that all marking of pupils' work reflects the best practice in the school;
- R3 give pupils more opportunities to develop and use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum; and
- R4 further strengthen the formal process of performance management by ensuring that all staff receive written feedback from the process.

What happens next?

Estyn advises the proprietor to amend its current development plan to show what action the school intends to take in response to the recommendations. It is also advisable to circulate this plan, or a summary of it, to all parents at the school. Estyn will invite the school to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Excellent

Standards: Excellent

All pupils attending the school have significant social emotional and behavioural needs and many of the pupils have additional learning needs. Most pupils have attended a number of previous placements and have missed out on considerable amounts of education.

In relation to their prior attainment, pupils' achievement is excellent.

The attendance of all pupils has improved significantly since their arrival at the school and, as a consequence, many pupils have greatly accelerated their learning and skills. All pupils engage very well with learning, show enthusiasm and make very good progress.

All pupils understand their learning targets well, know what they need to do to improve and take pride their progress.

Over the last three years, almost all pupils at key stage 4 have gained a range of qualifications including GCSEs, Essential Skills Wales level 1 and level 2, AQA and Asdan.

Most pupils make exceptional progress in developing their social and communication skills, often from a very low base. Over time, they develop the confidence and skills to communicate effectively with staff, peers, visitors and people in the community.

All pupils develop very positive relationships with staff and are supportive of each other. Recently all pupils worked together very well to plan and hold a successful coffee and cake morning, raising funds for a cancer support charity.

All pupils gain a good understanding of Welsh life and culture.

Nearly all pupils develop excellent thinking skills and, over time, extend their concentration skills. Most pupils are able to discuss a range of topics and express their opinions clearly. They learn to listen to others and respond to instructions appropriately.

Through very well planned opportunities all pupils significantly improve their literacy skills, most from a very low baseline. Many pupils develop excellent writing and reading skills that allow them to access the wider curriculum successfully. A few more able pupils read regularly for pleasure.

Most pupils achieve valuable experience of the world of work through supportive work-experience placements in the local community.

All pupils prepare well for transfer to the next phase of education or training.

Wellbeing: Excellent

Pupils have a very good understanding of how to become healthy by improving their diet and exercise. They engage in regular PE lessons and learn about diet and exercise in ASDAN Personal and Social Development lessons. Most pupils have the confidence to participate in activities in the local community. These activities include football, rugby, horse riding, dancing and ice-skating.

All pupils feel safe and well supported in school and they feel that the school deals well with bullying. However, a few pupils do not feel that they have someone to talk to if they are worried.

Attendance and punctuality are exceptional considering the educational histories of the pupils. Around half of pupils arrive early for lessons and all pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. All pupils are considerate and courteous to staff, peers and visitors.

Behaviour in lessons is excellent and pupils concentrate well and remain on task for considerable periods of time. All pupils clearly understand and respond well to school rules and behaviour expectations. Nearly all pupils work well with each other to solve problems and often relate what they are learning to situations and experiences that they will face in life.

All pupils express their views well during regular meetings with teachers and they contribute fully to setting targets for their behavioural and educational development. There is no formal school council. However, pupils have very good opportunities to make decisions about the physical appearance of school buildings and the outdoor environment.

Nearly all pupils have an excellent understanding of social and life skills. They learn to become more independent and make choices which will prepare them well for their next stage of life.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

The school provides a wide variety of learning opportunities, which are well matched to the age and ability of the pupils. The school groups pupils carefully according to need so that they are able to learn effectively.

At key stage 4, all pupils are given the opportunity to obtain appropriate qualifications, for example Entry Level and ASDAN. The more able pupils take GCSEs. A well planned vocational programme enables all key stage 4 pupils to experience a range of subjects. These include hair and beauty, childcare and life skills. Many of these are accessed in external college and school placements.

All pupils with a particular interest in an activity or subject are helped to enrich their learning. Pupils with an interest in art, sport or outdoor activities attend sporting clubs in the local community with the full support of the school. The school operates

an extended curriculum allowing pupils to develop their skills both in and out of the classroom and in the wider community.

The school makes excellent provision for developing communication and thinking skills. Schemes of work and lesson plans clearly identify opportunities to develop these skills. However, in a few lessons, there are not enough opportunities given for pupils to fully develop and utilise their ICT skills.

Welsh themes are visible in displays of pupils work and educational visits to places such as St. David's Cathedral and the Brecon Beacons.

The school promotes education for sustainable development and global citizenship very well through practical activities such as recycling, maintaining a pond and environmental study.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is good or better in all lessons. All staff have very high expectations of pupils in terms of both work and behaviour. Lessons are well planned and take into account individual learners' needs.

Teachers use a wide range of approaches and strategies to make learning interesting and engage pupils effectively.

Staff provide positive language and role models and all pupils use appropriate language in class. Staff foster constructive working relationships between staff and pupils, know their pupils well and promote an atmosphere of achievement.

Teachers use an extensive range of appropriate assessment tools to judge the progress of pupils effectively.

Individual education plans are of very good quality and include appropriate and measurable targets. Pupils are actively involved in planning their own learning and judging their own progress. Pupils' individual targets are displayed clearly in all classrooms.

In the best lessons, pupils are given time and advice in assessing their own work and that of their fellow pupils. Work is marked regularly but marking does not always tell pupils what they need to do to improve.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school provides an outstanding level of care and has very high expectations of all pupils. This encourages an ethos where pupils take responsibility for managing their feelings and reactions. All staff act as role models for pupils and they offer very good guidance.

Pupils' spiritual and religious development is supported in religious education and humanities (Beliefs and Values) lessons. The spiritual development of the pupils is further enhanced through links with a local church and relevant literature.

The school encourages cultural development through art and PE lessons. All pupils also benefit from very strong links with local community groups. These links allow pupils exceptional opportunities to become involved in a range of activities such as rugby, football, dance and art.

All pupils receive ASDAN Personal and Social Development lessons and participate enthusiastically. This work encourages pupils to relate well to each other, take responsibility for their actions and develop a cohesive sense of community.

The school ensures that pupils have individual access to professional support from specialist services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). There are also strong links with educational psychologists.

Pupils learn about internet safety and this is supported through good links with the local police. The excellent links with social services provide continuity for pupils.

The school provides good guidance on careers through the delivery of ASDAN Employability and has good links with Careers Wales.

All pupils, including those with ALN, have specific individual education plans and individual behaviour plans, which engage them in setting and reviewing targets. Progress against targets is reviewed in one-to-one meetings with teachers and informs future planning.

Parents, carers and local authorities are regularly informed of social and academic progress through very detailed monthly and half-termly reports. These reports are at the forefront of practice in the sector and provide a very secure basis on which to plan the future provision for the pupils.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Excellent

The school has a fully inclusive ethos which respects diversity. The calm and nurturing environment is reflected in the excellent behaviour of all pupils both in and outside of class. Pupils are actively encouraged to explore their attitudes to themselves and others.

Despite the school being based on five different residential sites, all pupils are given equal access to the curriculum.

Many pupils have interests and hobbies that are not available on each of the school sites. In all cases, the school makes good use of outside agencies and clubs to enrich pupils' learning and life experiences.

Classrooms are very well maintained and of an appropriate size. Classroom equipment is of a very high standard and learning resources are well matched to the needs and requirements of pupils. All classes benefit from digital learning resources such as interactive whiteboards and up-to-date computers with internet access. All pupils respect their classrooms and their resources.

The school has a variety of different environments but all are welcoming, safe and secure. Pupils and staff are proud of their homes and enjoy sharing them with visitors and guests.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Excellent
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Leadership: Good

School and company leaders have established a very clear vision, which is shared by all staff. There are comprehensive plans and policies, which help the school to meet the needs of the pupils.

Leaders and managers work very well across the school to support and challenge colleagues and communicate high expectations. They have created a school ethos where staff, pupils and others who work in the school feel valued.

All newly appointed staff receive very good support through a well-judged and very effective induction programme.

Senior leaders and middle managers work effectively across the whole school. The role of middle managers is developing well and this increasingly distributed leadership is moving the school forward and having a positive impact on pupil outcomes.

Proprietors play a dynamic role in developing the school's vision and are very supportive of the school. They monitor the school's performance very carefully, provide valuable feedback to both teachers and pupils, and set challenging targets for future improvements.

The developing and very effective intranet system allows staff to exchange information across all of the schools' sites. This is increasingly being used effectively as a management tool to further enhance the quality of provision and the outcomes for pupils.

Improving quality: Good

The process of self-evaluation is embedded in the school. Key stakeholders including parents, pupils and staff, contribute to self-evaluation, both informally and more formally, through questionnaires and training events.

As a result, leaders know the strengths and areas for improvement well. However, the resulting self-evaluation report and linked school development plan do not focus clearly enough on measurable outcomes for the pupils.

The school continues to develop well as a learning community. Senior managers and all teaching and support staff are encouraged to improve and share their professional knowledge.

The school is developing formal systems for managing performance. However as yet, not all teachers benefit from on-going observation and feedback with identified areas for development.

Results from performance management are used effectively to identify further areas for development and training for school staff.

The school has established effective networks of professional practice within the school and with other partners. Teachers take an active part in training initiatives in the organisation. An effective programme for learning support assistant training for the care-staff is delivered by senior members of the teaching staff.

The school has made good progress in addressing the recommendations of the last annual monitoring visit.

Partnership working: Excellent

The company works exceptionally well with a range of partners. These include parents and carers, colleges of further education, Careers Wales and the police liaison officer.

There are very good examples of partnership working with other agencies, such as local authority children's services and CAMHS, to address the social and personal needs of the pupils.

The partnership between the school and parents and carers is exemplary. The school successfully engages parents through a range of strategies such as the very detailed monthly reports and telephone calls. Parents greatly appreciate this regular communication and support.

Parents and carers are fully involved in decisions about their child's education. Staff listen carefully to what parents tell them about what their children can do well, their likes and dislikes, and their behaviour. This valuable information is used carefully by all staff to help them meet pupils' needs.

Resource management: Excellent

The company has an appropriate range of experienced, specialist teachers and other staff who are deployed well and who support pupils very effectively.

Staff receive many appropriate professional development opportunities as well as appropriate planning, preparation and assessment time. This ensures that staff are effective in providing pupils with a wide range of learning experiences.

School resources are of exceptional quality and are well matched to the interests and abilities of the pupils. All pupils have access to a very good range of books and technology to support their learning in well-maintained and stimulating learning environments.

The school's financial management is efficient and effective. Managers ensure that resources support and improve the learning of the pupils. There are well-developed procedures to ensure that expenditure is allocated effectively to meet identified priorities. The monitoring of expenditure is rigorous.

The school provides value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Parent questionnaire

Three parents completed questionnaires and are satisfied or very satisfied with the school and feel that it is well run. They agree that their child likes school, feels safe and was helped to settle in at the start. Parents feel that their children make good progress, that teaching is good and that staff expect the children to work hard. These parents agree that the school encourages children to take on responsibility, be healthy, take regular exercise and behave well in school. These parents feel that the school keeps them well informed about their child's progress. However, they were not sure how to use the school's complaints procedures if they had a concern.

Learner questionnaire

Ten pupils responded to the questionnaire and, overall, are very positive about their school. All pupils agree that they are doing well in the school. All pupils feel that the school deals well with bullying and almost all feel that they have someone to talk to if they are worried. Nearly all pupils agree that the school teaches them to be healthy. All pupils feel that they have enough books and equipment. However, a few of the pupils who responded feel that the poor behaviour of others sometimes stops them from getting on with their work.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Mike Munting	Reporting Inspector
Pauline Preston	Team Inspector
Alec Clarke	Team Inspector
Jeremy Evans	Peer Inspector
Paul Scudamore	Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003: 3 and 5
Lynne Ninnis	School Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

Year groups, the Foundation Phase and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

Glossary of terms

Core subject indicator (CSI)	This relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum.
Level 1	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade D to G.
Level 1 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade D to G.
Level 2	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade A* to C.
Level 2 threshold including English or Welsh first language and mathematics	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C including English or Welsh first language and mathematics
Level 2 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C.
Level 3	This represents the equivalent of an A level at grade A*-E.
Level 3 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to two A levels at grade A* to E.
Average wider points score	This includes all qualifications approved for use in Wales at the relevant age, for example at aged 16 or at aged 18.
Capped wider points score	This includes the best eight results from all qualifications approved for use in Wales at aged 16.
Proprietor	The term 'proprietor', as defined in the Education Act 1996, means the person or people responsible for managing an independent school and can include a sole proprietor, governing bodies, trustees or directors. The ways that independent schools are governed and owned varies a great deal. A proprietor or trust may own a school or the school may have a governing body that appoints a headteacher. Some schools have a combination of these.