



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

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: special measures**

**Powys Pupil Referral Unit
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Date of visit: June 2018

by

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Training in Wales**

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Outcome of monitoring

Powys PRU is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in February 2016.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the PRU from the list of PRUs requiring special measures.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Improve attendance

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

The PRU has appropriate systems in place to monitor pupils' attendance. This includes telephone calls to parents on the first day of absence and regular discussions with the education welfare service. In a few cases, the PRU has worked with the local authority to issue fixed penalty notices for non-attendance.

The PRU knows the reasons for pupil absence well. Where appropriate, staff meet with parents to discuss and agree actions to support the attendance of pupils and this has been effective.

Many pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of attendance and discuss reasons for absence with their key worker at weekly meetings. Staff display individual attendance targets clearly in individual education plans and pupil files. Members of the management committee receive regular reports of the overall attendance rates at the PRU.

Overall, for the academic year 2016-2017, attendance at the PRU improved to just over 70%. Currently, the rate of attendance across the PRU is at 71%. This is an improvement since the core inspection, when attendance was around 58%. Around half of the pupils have higher attendance rates than when they attended mainstream school.

Recommendation 2: Clarify the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders to ensure that they are held accountable for the performance of the PRU

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection in February 2016, there have been considerable changes in the strategic leadership at the PRU. In addition, the local authority has developed a new strategic vision for the PRU, as part of the additional learning needs (ALN) transformation programme. This vision is supported by suitable objectives and plans that identify appropriate targets, timescales and resources.

Since the last visit, local authority officers have supported leaders and staff at the PRU to gain a better understanding of the new strategic direction for the PRU.

The challenge adviser and leaders at the PRU provide useful information on the work of the PRU to the management committee. Reports include updates on pupil outcomes and the actions taken to implement the post inspection action plan. As a result, the management committee is suitably informed of developments.

The portfolio holder for education within the authority is the chair of the committee and articulates a clear view for PRU provision within the authority. Since the core inspection, the local authority has strengthened the membership and role of the management committee. The committee now has suitable representation from key strategic partners such as children's services and secondary schools. Members of the committee have started to make focused visits to quality assure the work of the PRU. However, it is too early to evaluate what impact these visits have on their ability to provide constructive challenge to support the leadership of the PRU to improve provision and outcomes.

Recommendation 3: Improve quality assurance procedures and ensure that the PRU's self-evaluation and improvement priorities are based on a sound understanding of the work of the PRU

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the PRU has developed a useful calendar of self-evaluation and quality assurance activities throughout the year. Leaders have integrated these successfully into the day-to-day working of the PRU and ensure that these activities have priority. Lesson observations, for example, are an established part of the quality assurance of the work of the PRU. In addition, there is a suitable process for the moderation of pupils' work.

Leaders use the information from these activities well to inform their understanding of the PRU's work and to identify important strengths and areas for improvement. This has helped leaders to improve the quality and range of information they provide to the management committee. As a result, the management committee is now better informed of the PRU's priorities for development than they were at the time of the core inspection.

Senior leaders meet regularly to review the PRU's provision and pupil outcomes. They have implemented a consistent tracking system across the PRU that has strengthened the quality of information about pupils' progress during their time at the PRU. As a result, staff and pupils are able to see the progress made from pupils' individual starting points.

As a result of the beneficial changes made to the PRU's quality assurance procedures, senior leaders at all levels know the PRU's strengths and areas for development well. Generally, priorities for development identified as a result of self-evaluation activities link well to the PRU's improvement planning.

Recommendation 4: Ensure that teaching is consistently good across the PRU and that there is a sufficient focus on improving pupils' outcomes.

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the PRU has maintained a close focus on improving the quality of teaching across all centres. For example, teaching staff benefit from relevant training on effective teaching and learning strategies. Staff at the PRU have benefited from worthwhile opportunities to work with mainstream colleagues to develop schemes of work for the revised GCSE qualifications and the digital competence framework (DCF).

The PRU now has a detailed and comprehensive process for tracking pupil progress. Individual pupil progress folders provide useful information and are an effective tool for both pupils and teachers. They form the basis of weekly progress meetings for pupils with members of staff.

Most teachers have very strong relationships with pupils. They understand them well and have a detailed knowledge of the particular needs of each pupil. This facilitates a suitable level of engagement both in and out of lessons. Most teaching is appropriate to the needs of the pupils.

Verbal feedback from nearly all teachers helps pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. The majority of teachers analyse the outcomes of pupils' assessment appropriately to inform their future planning and shape the next steps in pupils' learning. Written feedback provides a useful steer on what pupils need to do to improve. However, teachers' comments are at times overly generous.

A minority of teachers provide valuable and regular opportunities for pupils to assess their own performance and that of other pupils where appropriate.

Generally, pupils display positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils are interested and remain focused and on task in lessons. A particularly good feature in many lessons is teacher questioning that encourages pupils to reflect and deduce for themselves.

As a result of these developments, there were improved outcomes for Year 11 pupils in 2017. Many pupils achieve qualifications that are in line with their agreed learning targets.

However, in a few lessons there is insufficient challenge for pupils.

Recommendation 5: Address the shortcomings in relation to safeguarding

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The PRU has put in place a series of appropriate measures to monitor pupil departures and arrivals. These include CCTV and a meet and greet system.

The PRU has taken suitable steps to improve facilities at the Newtown site to encourage pupils to remain on site. Planned improvements to the outside areas have begun. Pupils have been involved in discussions about what they want the new common room to look like and how they will use the space.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the PRU should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.