



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

A report on

Sporting Chance

Date of inspection: March 2023

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About Sporting Chance

Sporting Chance Newport opened in summer 2021 as an independent special day school for pupils with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties.

The school is located close to the centre of the city of Newport and is administered by Sporting Chance Newport, a community interest company.

The school is registered for up to 16 pupils aged 11 to 16 years. There are currently 13 pupils on roll at the school, nearly all of whom have a statement of special educational needs. A few pupils are looked after by local authorities in Wales. The school has two classes on the main site, and two pupils are currently educated off site at the Hope Centre.

The headteacher has been in post since September 2021. She is supported by an additional class teacher, head of sport, head of well-being, and a team of teaching and learning assistants.

This is the school's first annual monitoring visit.

Main findings

Strengths

Pupils respond well to the nurturing and supportive environment at the school. As a result, they make strong progress in their social and emotional development. Staff know the pupils well and build trusting relationships with them. They support their social and emotional needs successfully and promote positive behaviour across the school. Staff are positive role models for pupils.

Staff respond quickly and robustly to pupil non-attendance. The school liaises regularly with other agencies and, in addition, communicates with parents and carers daily to improve attendance. Pupils appreciate the rewards they receive for good attendance. Pupils' attendance has increased over time and shows improvement from their previous school.

The school has introduced appropriate baseline assessments to establish pupils' skill levels. Teachers make suitable use of the outcomes of these assessments to target priority areas in subjects such as literacy and numeracy. In addition, the school is beginning to make suitable use of a recently introduced system to track the progress of pupils across skill areas.

The school provides a range of useful professional learning opportunities for staff. This provision has a strong focus on supporting pupils' well-being.

Areas for development

The strategic leadership of the school is underdeveloped. Quality assurance processes lack rigour. As a result, leaders do not always identify the most important priorities for school improvement accurately enough, in particular the need to focus on pupils' standards and the quality of teaching. In addition, professional learning opportunities to develop teaching are limited.

Activities do not challenge pupils consistently enough and therefore they do not always make the progress they are capable of. Teaching activities are frequently over-reliant on work sheets. This limits the pupils' ability to make independent decisions about how to present and develop their work.

The school has beneficial processes for identifying the academic, social and emotional needs of pupils. However, staff do not use this information well enough to set specific individual targets for pupils in important areas of their development. In addition, staff do not make sufficient use of these targets to inform their planning to ensure pupil progress.

The school has improved its curriculum and provision to meet the needs of the individual pupils appropriately. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in real life contexts are limited.

Recommendations

The school should:

- R1 Develop robust quality assurance processes to inform school improvement.
- R2 Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching.
- R3 Improve the quality of pupils' targets and ensure they inform the planning of teaching activities.
- R4 Ensure that curriculum planning provides worthwhile opportunities for pupils to learn in real life contexts.

Progress in addressing recommendations from previous visit or inspection report

R1 Comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003

The school has made appropriate progress in addressing this recommendation. There is no evidence to suggest that the school does not meet all the standards inspected during this visit.

R2 Improve curriculum planning and schemes of works to develop pupils' skills in all areas of learning across the curriculum and ensure their individual needs are met

Leaders have ensured that the school has made suitable progress in meeting this recommendation. They have improved curriculum planning and schemes of work to develop pupils' skills in all areas of learning and in line with pupils' needs and abilities.

Since the time of the last visit, the school has appointed an additional teacher. As a result, responsibilities for planning across the curriculum are now shared by teaching staff. In addition, they work together suitably to plan delivery of the curriculum and to ensure that individual needs are met.

R3 Enhance self-evaluation and improvement planning

Since the follow-up to registration visit in January 2022, leaders have focused their improvement activities on ensuring compliance with the Independent School Standards.

Leaders are beginning to evaluate the work of the school. However, activities are limited to book scrutiny and conversations between leaders and the proprietors. The range of quality assurance activities are too narrow to give leaders an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

The school action plan is a suitable document. It includes relevant actions to improve the school's provision, who is responsible for each action, resource allocation and how leaders intend to achieve these actions within appropriate timescales. However, it is not clear how the school has identified these priority areas.

Overall, self-evaluation and improvement planning processes do not take sufficient account of the views of pupils, teachers and other stakeholders and there is a lack of focus on important areas of the school's work, such as the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils.

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 this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 3.

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

Publications Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website:
<http://www.estyn.gov.wales>