



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

A report on

United World College of the Atlantic Ltd

Date of inspection: May 2023

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About United World College of the Atlantic Ltd

UWC Atlantic College was established in 1962. The college is the founding member of the United World Colleges, a group of 18 independent international schools and colleges around the world. It is a residential co-educational college for pupils from across the world that is situated on the south coast of Wales at St Donat's Castle.

UWC Atlantic College was registered by the Welsh Government as an independent school in April 2014. It offers a range of academic and activity-based opportunities for pupils aged 16 to 19 years.

There are currently 350 pupils at the college. All the pupils are boarders. Pupils join the college from around 90 different nationalities and come from a diverse range of cultural, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Around 60% of pupils do not speak English as their first language. There is a wide range of around 60 different languages spoken by pupils. Only a very few pupils speak Welsh as their first language.

UWC Atlantic College has specific criteria for entry that consider a pupil's ability and attitude. Approximately half of the pupils are offered scholarship places that are awarded by the college or by international selection committees. Around 20% of pupils are on the college's special educational needs (SEN) register and receive support from the college. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

The school was last inspected in September 2016. The current principal was appointed in August 2021.

In January 2022, the Welsh Government requested that Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) undertake a focused inspection of the college, with a particular focus on standard 3 of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

HMI inspected the college on 18 and 19 January 2022. At this time, the college did not meet the requirements for this standard. The college submitted a post inspection action plan to the Welsh Government to indicate how it would address the shortcomings identified and this was accepted.

In October 2022, the Welsh Government requested Estyn and CIW undertake a follow up focused inspection, with a focus on the shortcomings identified in January 2022. At this time, the college met the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

In May 2023, the Welsh Government requested Estyn and CIW undertake a further focused inspection to consider whether the college continues to meet standard 3 of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, 'The welfare, health and safety of the pupils'.

HMI gathered evidence from the following range of activities:

- scrutiny of policies and questionnaire results
- meetings with the principal and staff
- meetings with the designated safeguarding person
- meetings with pupils

Main findings

Strengths

- The college is developing a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders have strengthened and embedded many of the improvements identified at the previous visit
- Leaders have raised the college's expectations of pupil behaviour. These changes have been clearly communicated and are both understood and increasingly displayed by pupils. As a consequence, incidences of inappropriate behaviour have significantly decreased
- Leaders have shifted the balance between providing opportunities for pupils to develop 'authentic responsibility' and the college ensuring a proportionate oversight of pupil activity and safety successfully. For example, staff responsibilities for supervising social events are clearly defined and well understood
- Leaders have continued to embed more robust safeguarding and information sharing systems, for example the use of a digital system for staff to report and share information about concerns. Staff are well informed about relevant issues and through middle leaders the management of concerns is becoming more distributed. Staff understand the mechanisms to report any concerns about staff, leaders and governors. As a result, staff have confidence in both leaders responsible for safeguarding and the college's safeguarding systems
- Nearly all pupils at the college feel safe. They respect each other and articulate the need for boundaries to keep themselves safe clearly. Pupils feel that they can approach anyone with their concerns, for example health centre staff, night staff, house tutors, teachers or leaders. Nearly all pupils are confident that any concerns they raise will be heard and responded to
- The college has strong written policies to promote good behaviour, well-being and safeguarding of pupils
- The college meets the requirements of standard 3 of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, 'The welfare, health and safety of the pupils'

Areas for development

- Evaluate the impact of curriculum approaches to promoting the personal, social and health education of pupils (PSHE)
- Distribute the management of pastoral concerns more widely to strengthen oversight and record keeping
- Strengthen relationships with external agencies to improve multi-agency working after the college makes a referral
- Strengthen communication between leaders and parents

Compliance with the standards for registration

Standard 1: The quality of education provided by the school

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 1.

Standard 2: The spiritual, moral, and cultural development of pupils

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 2.

Standard 3: Welfare, health and safety 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 4: The suitability of proprietors and staff

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 4.

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.

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:

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