



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

A report on
Alternative Learning Company
Date of inspection: November 2019

by

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

About Alternative Learning Company

The Alternative Learning Company is an independent company that grew out of the Centre for Building Social Action (CBSA). CBSA has been operating in the Llanelli area for 30 years. It started as a youth project helping young people leaving secondary school to find suitable training and employment.

The company developed as an enterprise and community organisation supporting social enterprise projects in and around Llanelli. The company currently delivers projects to tackle poverty and for people who are not in employment, education or training, and provides alternative curriculum arrangements to support pupils in secondary schools who are vulnerable to exclusion.

The school, working in partnership with local companies, aims to prepare pupils for employment by developing relevant vocational skills through a curriculum that focuses on work-related education and accredited qualifications.

The school provides full-time education for up to 33 pupils aged 14 to 16 who are dual registered with their secondary school. Currently, there are 29 pupils registered. Nine secondary schools in the Carmarthenshire local authority have service level agreements with the school.

Pupils at the school have a range of needs including, moderate and general learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder, physical and medical difficulties, behavioural, social and emotional difficulties and speech language and communication difficulties. A very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs and there are no looked after children attending presently. The main home language for all pupils is English.

Representatives from local schools, the local authority, and Careers Wales are part of a project development group advising on the development of the curriculum.

A curriculum manager, who reports to a board of trustees, provides day-to-day leadership for the school, supported by a project co-ordinator and a small team of tutors and support officers.

Main findings

Strengths

The school complies fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

During lessons, many pupils are respectful to staff and each other. They settle quickly to activities and contribute purposefully to whole-class discussions. All staff manage pupil behaviour skilfully. They establish clear rules and routines and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. This structure supports pupils' personal and social development successfully.

Since the last visit, the school has taken decisive steps to implement a robust and effective admissions policy and system. This system now provides the school with relevant information to make well-informed placement decisions.

The school now delivers a well-planned and co-ordinated curriculum. This provides nearly all pupils with positive opportunities to make appropriate progress and build suitably on learning experiences that are matched well to their needs and abilities. Overall, this approach promotes successfully the development of pupils' positive attitudes to learning. As a result, many pupils improve their attendance and behaviour during their time at the school.

All pupils have opportunities to experience a wide range of off-site activities. These include ice skating, a local rugby club and visits to an information technology company. As a result, pupils improve their social skills, aspirations for future employment and develop an appreciation of activities available in the wider community.

Recommended areas for action

Since the last visit, the school has implemented more rigorous arrangements for the monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress. However, it is too early to evaluate the impact of this.

The school provides a wide range of suitable staff training and development opportunities. However, it does not have a strategic approach to this aspect of its planning.

Compliance with the standards for registration

Standard 1: The quality of education provided by the school

Based on 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

Based on 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

Based on 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

Based on 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

Based on this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Standard 7: The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Based on this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

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

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