



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

A report on

Genus Education

Date of inspection: October 2018

by

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

About Genus Education

Genus Education is registered as an independent school to provide in-house education for children resident in the company's four children's homes who are not able to access mainstream education. Each home has its own classroom accommodation.

The school initially opened in February 2011 and operated only at the Ynys-y-Bwt site. The company set up a classroom at Knowle House in 2012, Station Cottage in 2013 and another at Skirrid View in 2016.

A head of education oversees the education across the four sites. The sites share common approaches that include school policies, self-evaluation processes and arrangements for the assessment, planning and delivery of lessons. Each classroom has a full-time teacher.

The school offers full-time education and follows local authority term times. The last full inspection by Estyn was in February 2016.

Main findings

Strengths

Most pupils across the school's four sites make good progress in their learning, attendance and behaviour during their time at the school. Pupils engage well in lessons, talk with confidence about their learning and demonstrate pride in their achievements.

The school provides a caring and nurturing environment, which builds pupils' self-esteem and encourages them to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning and wellbeing. There are strong working relationships between pupils and teachers. Teachers communicate well with residential staff to co-ordinate pupils' learning and assess their progress. These close working relationships are a strong feature of the school.

Teachers plan an interesting variety of activities that engage and motivate most pupils. This includes a suitable emphasis on developing pupils' independent living skills which helps to support their transition to adult life. For example, they learn to travel independently to complete their shopping, and to purchase ingredients to prepare healthy meals. Over time, this valuable focus helps pupils to become more confident and resilient.

The school has developed beneficial partnerships with local businesses and colleges to extend the learning opportunities available to pupils. This enables pupils to access work experience placements on a farm or in a care home for the elderly, for example, or to continue their learning in settings which support them to develop their social skills in more challenging contexts.

The school meets all of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003 inspected on this visit.

Areas for development

The school plans well to meet the needs of its pupils at each of its four sites. However, leaders do not use the outcomes of self-evaluation processes to plan for improvement across the whole school well enough. This means that there is too much variability in aspects of the provision across the school.

The school has a comprehensive range of policies in place that comply with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003 and support the work of the school. However, in a few cases, policies have not been reviewed recently and do not make reference to the most recent guidance.

Overall, the school has made slow progress against the recommendations from the previous monitoring visit.

Recommendations

The school should:

- R1 Ensure that self-evaluation and improvement planning processes consider the work of the school as a whole**
- R2 Ensure that policies are up-to-date and accurately reflect the school's practices**

Progress in addressing recommendations from previous note of visit or inspection report

Recommendation 1: Continue to embed self-evaluation procedures and share best practice effectively across sites

The school has suitable processes to collect relevant evidence to support the evaluation of its work at each of its four sites. Regular quality assurance meetings ensure that the school maintains a consistent focus on the standards of pupils' work, the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make over time. Teachers work together well to assess their work, identify good practice and contribute to self-evaluation activities.

Leaders have started to draw together an overview of the school's strengths and areas for development. The head of education has a sound understanding of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve. However, the school does not use the evidence from its quality assurance activities well enough to provide judgements on the quality of work, pupil progress and standards of teaching across the school as a whole. This means that it is unable to track its progress in these areas or plan systematically to improve these over time.

Recommendation 2: Broaden the range and level of qualifications available

The school provides each pupil with appropriate individual learning pathways in line with their needs, interests and abilities. This ensures that pupils have worthwhile opportunities to achieve a suitable range of qualifications at entry level in subjects such as English, mathematics, science and personal and social development. A few pupils achieve GCSE qualifications in English and mathematics.

A few pupils access part of their education at a further education college and a pupil referral unit. This provides these pupils with access to a wider range of learning experiences and qualifications. However, opportunities for all pupils to achieve a broader and higher level of qualifications across the school remain at an early stage of development.

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 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 the basis of 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

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 7.

Recommendation regarding 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:

Publication 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: www.estyn.gov.wales

© Crown Copyright 2018: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 27/12/2018