



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

**A report on**

**Ty Coryton**

**Date of inspection: March 2023**

**by**

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education**

**and Training in Wales**

## About Ty Coryton

Ty Coryton provides a specialist integrated day and residential service for children and young people between the ages of eight and nineteen years who have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum condition (ASC) including challenging behaviour. In addition, many pupils have speech, communication and language difficulties and around half of pupils do not communicate using speech. The majority have severe learning difficulties.

There are currently 16 pupils on roll. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education, health and care plan (EHCP). Nearly all current pupils are placed by authorities in Wales. Just under half of the pupils are in the care of their local authority.

The school is accommodated in a large mansion house on the outskirts of Cardiff and is administered by Orbis Education and Care. Two pupils are resident in the Ty Coryton children's home that has separate purpose-built accommodation on-site.

The school was last inspected in January 2020. The school was fully compliant with all the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. Since then, there have been significant staff changes at the school. In addition, there has been a significant reduction in the number of pupils who attend the school from the on-site residential children's home. In response to the increase in day pupil numbers there has been a rise in the numbers of learning support staff directly employed and managed by the school. A very few pupils continue to have school support from the residential care staff during the school day.

In January 2022, the Welsh Government requested Estyn undertake a focused inspection of the school, with particular attention on the school's safeguarding procedures, effective deployment and training of residential care and learning support staff and the impact of this on the teaching and learning experiences for pupils. Inspectors assessed the school's compliance with relevant aspects of standards 1 and 3 of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. The school met both these standards at that time.

The acting headteacher has been in this role since February half term 2023. Prior to this she was the deputy head and was appointed in September 2022. A permanent headteacher will be joining the school at the start of the summer term 2023. She is an experienced headteacher from another of the Orbis schools in Wales.

## Main findings

### Strengths

The safeguarding culture and practice across the school is strong. Leaders monitor and review these robust procedures regularly. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities well to safeguard pupils. The school has a well-planned professional development schedule in place, which provides staff with regular safeguarding training.

There is a strong nurturing approach across the school. Staff have highly effective working relationships with pupils and build significant levels of trust and communication with them to support each pupil's needs well. They use appropriate strategies to de-escalate pupil behaviour well.

The recently appointed teaching and learning lead, completes useful lesson observations and learning walks on a half termly basis at the school. Outcomes from these are shared with staff and areas for development are incorporated into staff supervision sessions. Professional learning is tailored to meet staff needs where necessary. This is beginning to strengthen the consistency of quality of teaching and learning across the school. However, this is at the early stages of development.

The learning environment is improving. This is broadening opportunities for pupils to develop relevant independent and living skills through the introduction of learning areas such as the onsite school shop and living skills areas.

All staff receive a comprehensive range of training as part of their induction to the company, which is supplemented well by school specific training. Bespoke training is available to all staff, including support to complete formal teaching qualifications. All staff have access to e-learning through an organisational subscription to a digital platform.

In January 2022 there were a number of areas for improvement identified in addition to the recommendations from the core inspection. The school has made strong progress in addressing these areas. These include a robust traffic management system which is effectively in place. The company behaviour reporting system has been reviewed and now provides a succinct and accurate system for the effective reporting and monitoring of behaviour incidents across the school.

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

### Areas for development

The school is undergoing a company -wide change to the curriculum model, which includes changes to the monitoring and tracking processes. This is at the early stage of implementation at the school, and it is too early to assess its impact on pupils.

The curriculum offer for older secondary aged pupils to gain recognised qualifications is too narrow.

Across the school there have continued to be changes in the teaching and support staff including the leadership team. As a result, these changes impact the

consistency in the quality of teaching across the school. This includes reducing lost opportunities for learning within the school environment including access to outdoor learning.

## Recommendations

### The school should:

- R1 Fully implement the revised curriculum model across the school
- R2 Ensure that external qualification pathways are strengthened to meet pupil need and are mapped across the curriculum model
- R3 Strengthen the consistency in the quality of teaching across the school

## Progress in addressing recommendations from previous visit or inspection report

### **R1. Ensure that teacher's planning meets the communication needs of all pupils**

There has been appropriate progress towards meeting this recommendation. In depth daily planning for each pupil is in place. Timings align to activities to provide a clear plan for all staff and expectations for pupils during the school day. The communication needs of pupils are clearly identified as part of teacher planning. This effectively supports pupils to access their learning through the most appropriate communication method.

### **R2. Review the role and responsibilities of care staff in education**

There has been strong progress towards meeting this recommendation. The Orbis model is undergoing a process of change. A very few pupils continue to have school support from the residential care staff during the school day. As a result, the school employ nearly all support staff. These staff have clear roles and responsibilities across the school and are appropriately supported with professional development opportunities.

### **R3. Further develop professional learning opportunities for all staff**

Since the last visit the school has taken meaningful steps towards enhancing the opportunities for professional learning for all staff. New staff receive detailed induction to support their role at the school. All staff access regular mandatory training which meets requirements. In addition, teaching staff have completed training linked to school improvement priorities. For example, in relation to the school's nurture provision, communication strategies, and pathways towards formal accreditation. The school is also supporting members of staff to achieve teaching qualifications.

#### **R4. Improve the acoustics in the building**

This recommendation has been met. There has been new flooring in areas of the school to improve the acoustics along with the addition of soundproof panels added to walls around the site. This has improved the learning environment for pupils across the school significantly.

### **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 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.

## 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:

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