



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

Annual monitoring inspection report on

**Aran Hall School
Rhydymain
Dolgellau
Gwynedd
LL40 2AR**

Date of inspection: April 2018

by

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

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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court

Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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Context

Aran Hall is an independent special school situated close to Dolgellau in Gwynedd. The school is one of five specialist schools operated across England and Wales by the SENAD group.

The school provides education, care and therapy for pupils aged 11 to 19 who have a range of learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorders and associated challenging behaviours.

The school currently has 11 pupils on roll, all of whom are boys who live in the children's home, which shares the school's site. All pupils have an education and health care plan (EHCP) and are looked after by local authorities in England.

Nearly all of the pupils are from English-speaking backgrounds.

The headteacher has been in post since 2003. Since the last visit, the school has appointed new teaching staff to extend the range of curriculum opportunities.

Main findings

Strengths

The school has responded effectively to the recommendations of the last visit. A well-considered action plan has led to a number of improvements related to the recommendations.

Staff undertake rigorous assessments and provide consistent, effective behaviour management. Because of this, during their time at the school, pupils learn to regulate their behaviour very successfully. They develop self-confidence and improve their self-esteem. Pupils take pride in their achievements and are eager to share their successes.

Staff at the school have a sound understanding of the needs of all pupils. The rapport between staff and pupils is particularly warm and respectful. There is a positive ethos at the school with an appropriate focus on improving pupils' wellbeing and learning.

Classroom environments are attractive. Interesting learning experiences and ample resources support the curriculum. Well-planned learning activities allow the pupils to monitor their own progress and take responsibility for their own learning.

Where necessary, the school engages expert advice to enhance its provision for therapy and behaviour management. It also employs additional teaching staff to deliver aspects of the curriculum such as GCSE mathematics and physics.

Areas for development

Staff at the school have made useful visits to a small number of other providers to see good practice. However, they do not yet have a strong network of support that enables them to maintain a good awareness of new curriculum developments in Wales.

Recommendations

R1 Ensure that staff make links with appropriate other providers to support their ongoing professional practice in relation to the curriculum

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

Recommendation 1: Increase opportunities for pupils to develop work-related skills

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

A comprehensive approach ensures all pupils have enough opportunities to develop work-related skills in line with their needs. Pupils gain interesting and worthwhile experiences to support their work-related skills. These provide helpful foundations for their future learning. For example, pupils work in the school library and undertake ground maintenance, and where appropriate the school engages with external partners to enable pupils to experience café work.

The school has developed accredited curriculum opportunities for pupils to learn about horticulture. Where appropriate, pupils enrol onto part-time training courses at the local college of further education, where they continue to develop their skills. Comprehensive risk assessments help to ensure the safety of pupils undertaking work experience.

Recommendation 2: Improve the consistency and accuracy of teacher assessment

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Since the last visit, the school has consolidated assessment and tracking procedures to ensure consistency across all staff. All new pupils have suitable baseline assessments, undertaken promptly. This helps staff to understand pupil needs and to develop appropriate learning and behaviour targets. As a result, pupils nearly always make good progress in achieving their targets.

Regular monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress in learning ensure that teachers now quickly identify areas requiring intervention. They put in place effective strategies to address these.

The school undertakes accurate assessments and effective management of pupils' behaviour. This supports staff planning and the delivery of lessons that engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm successfully.

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, social 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 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 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 registration

When considering this school's registration the National Assembly for Wales 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 annual monitoring inspection should not prejudice the findings of a future full Section 163 inspection.

School information

School	Aran Hall School
School number	6616022
Purpose of visit	Annual monitoring inspection
Date of visit	25/04/2018
Proprietor	The SENAD Group Limited
Staff	Five full-time teachers, Three part-time teachers, Three instructors, One therapist, Four classroom assistants, 71 residential support staff
Number of pupils	11
Provision	52 week residential
Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school	Learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder and associated challenging behaviour
Last Section 163 inspection	06/02/2017
Last annual monitoring inspection	08/07/2015
Last CSSIW inspection	03/04/2017