



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

A report on
Coleg Elidyr Camphill Communities
Date of inspection: October 2018

by

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

About Coleg Elidyr Camphill Communities

Coleg Elidyr is a residential independent specialist college for young people with moderate to severe learning difficulties aged 18 to 30 years.

Estyn inspects the provision for learners funded for education. There are currently fifteen of these learners at the college, all of whom live on site in one of the six residential houses. The majority of these learners come from Wales. The others come from England. Thirteen learners are male and two are female. All are aged between 19 and 22.

The college's work is influenced by the Camphill philosophy, which emphasises experiential, practical learning. The curriculum includes land-based, vocational and craft subjects designed to help learners develop the skills that they need for a more independent life. The college estate includes a working farm, kitchen garden and woodlands.

A leadership team, responsible to a board of trustees, leads the college.

Main findings

Strengths

The college has reviewed successfully its processes and practice to address the recommendations from the last visit.

There is a warm, positive ethos at the college. Staff understand the needs of learners and support them sensitively. They plan interesting sessions that link well to carefully considered schemes of work. They provide learners with a broad range of stimulating activities that address their needs well.

Nearly all learners engage well in purposeful tasks that help them develop greater independence. For example, they work in the college shop serving customers and replenishing stock.

Staff communicate with learners clearly and effectively, supplementing verbal language with signs, symbols and visual resources wherever necessary. Many learners use signs and symbols highly effectively to support their communication. Over time, learners with difficult behaviours learn to self-regulate and manage their emotions.

Leaders and managers provide valuable support to staff to enable them to develop their skills and expertise. For example, all staff are involved in working groups to research and implement improved practice. New staffing arrangements enable learners to work with the same cohort of staff in college and residential settings. Early signs suggest that this consistent model of support is effective. This is because it provides learners with continuity to develop their skills across the various settings of the college.

Senior leaders and managers have a clear focus on improvement. They have explicit plans, supported by stakeholders, to move the college forward, including the building of a new education hub and wellbeing centre. Staff involvement in self-evaluation and improvement planning processes supports their capacity to bring about change.

As a result of the progress learners make and the quality of care provided, many learners stay on to become trainees on the college's 'inclusive lives programme' in preparation for adult living or its residential placement provision.

Areas for development

Senior leaders are beginning to develop useful professional networks with other specialist colleges and further education colleges, for example through its collaboration on the Welsh Government's Creative Solutions project. However, the links between the college and schools is underdeveloped. As a result, staff at the college are not able to benefit from the best practice from the sector.

The new model of staff support is embedding well. Evaluating the impact of the changes on learner outcomes is at a very early stage.

Recommendations

The school should:

R1 Evaluate the impact on learners of the changes made in the approach to support, communication and assessment

R2 Increase opportunities to support professional practice by engaging further with colleagues from the school sector

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

Recommendation 1: Make effective use of standardised and externally verified assessment data to evaluate and demonstrate the progress of learners

Since the last visit, the college has made important improvements to its assessment and tracking processes. In doing so, it has worked well with representatives of Welsh Government and other providers to address inconsistencies across the sector.

The new processes incorporate effectively the college's previous methodology for recognising and recording learner achievement, external toolkits, entry and exit criteria and the integration of accredited and non-accredited learning outcomes into individual learner plans.

As a result of these improvements, the college evaluates data on learner progress effectively. Staff access and update learner information easily on the college's electronic system and share this with learners, parents, carers and other stakeholders. Appropriate systems and training are now in place, but implementation of these new procedures is in its early stages.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that the college's self-assessment report and quality improvement plan have an appropriate focus on outcomes

The college has successfully moved away from narrative reporting to self-evaluation that has a clear focus on improving learner outcomes. There are well-linked processes for self-evaluation and improvement planning which identify accurately strengths and areas for improvement. The college has developed a helpful template for evaluating its work and planning improvements based on the common inspection framework.

Staff are involved in self-evaluation and planning improvements through regular staff meetings and professional learning groups. Weekly tutor and team meetings focus on individual learner progress and strategies to support learning. Information from these meetings feeds directly into self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. Comprehensive individual learning plans, based on a person-centred approach, are evaluated and updated regularly. An effective data system enables staff to record progress, plan carefully, and track next steps for individual learners.

A detailed workforce development plan provides leaders with useful information to help plan staff training and professional development activities to enhance staff's skills in supporting learner outcomes.

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 77 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000

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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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