



Inspection Report on

Ysgol Hendrefelin

**Main Road
Bryncoch
Neath
SA10 7TY**

Date Inspection Completed

10/07/2019

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Description of the service

Ysgol Hendrefelin is a co-educational residential special school for young people with a range of disabilities and additional learning needs. It is operated by Neath port Talbot County Borough Council. The residential setting provides accommodation to young people who attend the school, between Monday evenings and Friday mornings, during term time. Places can be offered for up to twelve young people each night. At the time of the inspection, there were thirty two young people, overall, attending the residential provision throughout the week.

The Head Teacher of the school is Jonathon Roberts and the Residential Accommodation Leader is Nicholas Allinson.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Young people enjoy spending time at Ysgol Hendrefelin's residential provision. The environment is generally suited to their needs, and they are able to socialise with friends, enjoy a wide range of activities and experience a sense of achievement, as they develop new skills. They are encouraged to express their views and are offered some individual choice during their stay, though this is dependant, to some extent, on the needs of the wider group. However, formal consultation processes require further development.

Overall, the care and support that young people receive from staff promotes their well-being and development and maintains their safety, though improvements in record-keeping are required to fully evidence young people's safety and progress. Their well-being is promoted by staff who are generally well led and supported, though improvements are required in respect of staff supervision, learning and development. Quality assurance measures require improvement, to ensure that the service operates in accordance with its statement of purpose and national minimum standards and to drive forward service improvement.

2. Improvements

- A Residential Leader has been appointed to manage the residential accommodation and two fulltime staff have also been appointed.
- A key worker policy has been developed, though not yet fully in place.
- A "welcome" booklet for young people is being developed.
- An improved supervision format has been developed
- Meals are now cooked and eaten within the residence, providing a more homely experience for young people.
- Bathroom and shower facilities for boys have been upgraded.

3. Requirements and recommendations

Recommendations are made in respect of:

- the young people's guide
- consultation with young people
- care planning and implementation
- risk assessments
- staff supervision, appraisals and training
- record keeping
- fire drills
- quality assurance.

1. Well-being

Our findings

Young people are encouraged to express their wishes and feelings, and are listened to, by staff. They are offered some individual choice during their stay, though this is dependant, to some extent, on the needs of the wider group. Young people's involvement in formal consultation processes, however, is variable. We were shown a draft copy of a welcome guide for young people which was being developed. It contained a description of the accommodation, pictures of staff and a useful range of responses to "frequently answered questions" to help them prepare for their stay. We advised that it would benefit, however, from additional advice on what to do if young people had any worries, or wanted to complain. Meetings were held each term for each "night group" of young people staying in the residence, with the primary purpose of involving them in planning the term's activities, though it was recognised that, as activities were generally undertaken on a "whole group" basis, compromises were sometimes necessary. We observed that staff sought the views of the young people and offered choices, during their stay, e.g. deciding what they wanted to wear, choosing cinema snacks or choosing an activity within the home. Efforts were made by staff to accommodate their wishes and preferences, or to agree a satisfactory compromise. However, records did not evidence that young people had been involved in any discussions about what they wanted to achieve during their time in the residence.

Staff meeting minutes referred to two key workers being allocated to each evening group, and we saw pictures of key working staff on display, so that young people knew who to talk to about any worries or concerns (though it was recognised that young people may want to talk to a different member of staff). However, we could not see that the key worker role had yet extended beyond this responsibility, so did not yet accord with the recently developed key working policy.

Some young people had been consulted more formally about the activities they had attended, and feedback forms had been completed. Some of the young people had also made suggestions for residence improvements. However, additional opportunities to consult with young people and to involve them in day to day decision making within the residence could be created. We could not see to what extent young people had been formally consulted in relation to the quality of care being provided by the service, in order to inform service improvement. Young people have opportunities to express their wishes and feelings during their stay. Individual choices can be made, though choice is sometimes limited, depending on the needs of the wider group of young people. However, formal consultation processes require further development.

Young people experience good relationships with staff who know them well and show them that they are valued. Young people were cared for by a stable staff team, who were often already known to the young people prior to their introduction to the residence. In discussion,

the staff team were enthusiastic about their roles and committed to the young people with whom they were working. We observed staff speaking to young people with warmth and humour, praising their efforts and achievements, showing concern for their well-being and giving reassurance when needed. In discussion, staff demonstrated enthusiasm for their role, and a good understanding of the young people they cared for. Young people presented as relaxed and chatty in the company of staff and they told us that they liked staff and enjoyed spending time with them. Young people experience positive relationships with staff which promotes their sense of value and belonging.

Young people are supported by staff to take part in enjoyable social activities which broaden their experience and develop their skills. Activities were planned for the forthcoming term, with young people also able to contribute their ideas. As activities were generally undertaken on a "whole group" basis, efforts had been made by staff to plan a broad range of activities, which encompassed young people's interests, and also provided them with opportunities to take part in activities they may never have experienced, such as circus skills, photography and canoeing. Young people told us how much they enjoyed spending time at the residence, and one young person told us about the many positive changes they had made with the help of staff, during their time there. General activity objectives were identified during the planning stage, suited to the needs of each evening group. Young people were also able to learn and practise life skills during their residential stay, with progress and achievements recorded. Records showed that young people benefitted from spending time with their peers, and identified young people's achievements in relation to independence skills, behaviours, hygiene, health and well-being. Young people's participation in activities allow them to socialise with their peers, enjoy new experiences, develop new skills and experience a sense of achievement.

2. Care and Support

Our findings

Young people are well cared for and supported by staff. However, individual plans do not provide sufficient information to direct staff practice. Young people staying in the residential accommodation were all pupils at Ysgol Hendrefelin. As such, their overall needs were already well known to school staff, prior to a referral being made for residence. Additional information was provided by families following referral, together with written consent for the young person's stay. Young people's records therefore included a short "profile" which, if fully completed, included their likes and dislikes, what was going well and not so well for them and how staff could support them. Records also included healthcare information and consents. However, young people did not have written residential placement plans in place. Therefore, their individual needs, and how these should be met within the residence were not clearly laid out. Information in respect of residential goals was basic (e.g "personal care") and not outcome focused or measurable. Written guidance had not been provided to staff on how to work with the young person to help them achieve specific positive outcomes within the residence. Although it was positive to see that the service was providing progress reports for young people's annual education reviews, we could not see that their needs and progress had been regularly reviewed in the interim, to inform staff working practices. Young people are well cared for by staff on a day to day basis. However, improvements to record keeping would provide a clearer picture of any progress made by young people during their stay at the residence, and of staff's contribution to this progress.

Young people are supported to ensure that their health needs are met and are encouraged to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Young people's records included information regarding their health needs, to enable staff to effectively manage their health care including the management and administration of medication. Relevant medical consents had been obtained and contact details were available for involved health professionals. Information about young people's dietary needs were seen to have been provided by families and any specific dietary requirements were taken into account by staff when planning menus. Meals were seen to be generally "home-cooked", with occasional "treat" trips to "fast food" premises. Young people were also provided with lots of opportunities for outdoor, physical activities, to help them maintain good health. Young people's general health needs are met. They are supported by staff to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Overall, young people's safety is maintained whilst they are staying at the residence. Staffing levels were seen to be maintained at or above the minimum outlined in the residence's statement of purpose, and young people were cared for by both male and female staff during the day and night. The school's safeguarding policy was seen to include guidance for staff working beyond the school day, with "out of hours" on call advice available from senior management. Staff attended safeguarding training during their initial induction period, with refresher training subsequently arranged at regular intervals as part

of the “whole school” training programme. Safeguarding information was seen to have been referred in accordance with relevant procedures and liaison with families and involved professionals was evidenced. We were advised by the Residential Leader that relevant information would be passed on to residential staff within the school’s “daily briefing” meetings. Young people’s records included information about any risk taking behaviours, with risk management plans drawn up as required. On the basis of information recorded, however, we advised the Residential Leader and Head Teacher that a risk assessment should be put in place for one young person to provide guidance to staff in respect of a potential risk taking behaviour.

We saw that risk assessments had been completed for a range of young people’s activities. However, the day to day practice of staff, prior to undertaking an activity, was to complete an off site activity form, which simply referred by number to the associated risk assessment. We could not be sure, therefore, that risk assessments were being used as a dynamic tool, with risk management strategies specifically suited to the needs of the particular young people attending the activity.

Staff attended accredited training in respect of behaviour management, including physical interventions, to ensure that any restrictive practices were appropriately managed. We were advised by the Residential Leader that any unwanted behaviours had been managed within the residence without the need for physical interventions. Young people’s safety is maintained whilst they are living in the home. However, risk assessments should be reviewed to ensure that risk management strategies are specifically suited to the needs of young people attending the service.

3. Environment

Our findings

Young people stay in comfortable accommodation which, in general, suits their needs. Within design, layout and financial constraints, efforts had been made to provide a welcoming environment, suited to the needs of the young people staying there. The accommodation consisted of separate bedroom and shower/bathroom areas for boys and girls, with communal lounge, kitchen and dining areas. At capacity, bedrooms would need to be shared; however, as there were usually fewer young people staying, they were able to have a bedroom to themselves. Bedrooms were appropriately furnished and young people were able to keep their own bedding and toys in the accommodation (though staff had suggested that bedrooms would benefit from some additional items to make them feel more homely). However, although the boys' bathroom / shower areas had been renovated, the girls' bathroom / shower areas still required refurbishment; they would also benefit from additional facilities. Young people were able to watch dvd's, play games or chat to each other and staff within the lounge. An additional lounge / activity area had also been made available for the girls, next to their shower room, which provided additional space for individual activities. Music and arts and crafts activity space was also available. The open plan kitchen / dining room had been personalised, with pictures on display of young people and staff taking part in a variety of activities, young people's birthdays written on the "birthday board" to make sure everyone had a birthday celebration as close to their birthday as possible. Changes had been made to the catering arrangements, with meals now cooked and eaten in the kitchen area. This enabled young people to have some input into menu choices and also provided them with more opportunities to develop their independence. Some young people had helped to prepare and cook food, and they took turns to wash up and clear away. Recycling information was also on display, helping young people to take care of the environment. Guidance on daily and personal care routines were displayed in picture format to aid young people's understanding, together with pictures of staff and information about who to talk to, if they had any worries or would like to make a complaint. Overall, young people's accommodation meets their needs, though some refurbishment is required.

Young people are cared for in an environment which has systems in place to maintain young people's safety. Contracts were held with the local authority's building services department, with essential repairs undertaken as required, alongside a planned maintenance schedule. A school caretaker was also on site. The inspection and servicing of heating, electrical and fire systems had been undertaken, with additional health and safety checks undertaken by the school caretaker. Fire warden training had been completed by the school caretaker, head of residential care and an additional staff member. We were advised that staff talk through fire exits and procedures with young people when they first come to stay. We saw that fire drills had been carried out over the previous two months; however, we advised that a record should be kept of all participants to ensure that all young

people and staff had the opportunity to practice the evacuation procedure. Young people's well-being and safety is maintained by the arrangements in place to monitor and address health and safety matters.

4. Leadership and Management

Our findings

In general, the Statement of Purpose for Ysgol Hendrefelin's residential accommodation provides clear information about the service it provides, or intends to provide. However, the residence does not fully operate in accordance with its statement of purpose and national minimum standards. We saw that the residence's Statement of Purpose outlined the aim and objectives of the service, and provided information regarding service delivery. Information about the residential facilities, including the admissions criteria and process was available to families and interested parties on the school's website and within its Statement of Purpose. Information was clearly laid out, and demonstrated the range of benefits that attending the residence might have for young people attending the school. This included gaining self-help and independence skills, learning to better manage their emotions and behaviour, spending time with friends and developing their social skills and being able to participate in a range of enjoyable activities, some of which they may not otherwise be able to access. We were advised by the Residential Leader that a written referral form was not completed, to encourage a broad based referral path. As such, initial interest could be expressed by young people, their families, staff or involved professionals, though young people, their families and staff all had to be in agreement, for the referral to proceed.

It was evident from our inspection that the experience of young people attending the residence setting was broadly as described in the statement of purpose. However, from our observations at inspection and from records viewed, the statement of purpose did not provide a wholly accurate picture of the day to day operation of the home. We found, then, that young people's plans, keyworking arrangements, staff learning and development records and quality assurance measures did not accord with the statement of purpose. Young people's day to day care is generally provided as described in the service's Statement of Purpose, and therefore promotes their wellbeing. However, action is required to ensure that working practices within the home fully accord with the statement of purpose and comply with national minimum standards.

Staff are provided with training, direction and support from the home's Residential Leader and senior staff team, though record keeping does not fully evidence that staff learning and development needs are identified and met. The Residential Leader was seen to be a suitably qualified, experienced individual, to undertake their role and associated responsibilities. The addition of two full-time staff members was also having a positive impact in relation to the day to day organisation of the service. New staff attended core training, including safeguarding and behaviour management during their induction and regularly participated in whole school training. However, we did not see that individual learning and development plans had been drawn up for residential staff. Staff working at the home were not seen to possess a relevant qualification, though we were advised by the

Residential Leader that recently appointed full time staff would be pursuing relevant qualifications. We were able to see that staff were provided with day to day advice and guidance from the Residential Leader, though formal supervision arrangements did not accord with national minimum standards, as they were not held at the required frequency. The quality of supervision records was variable; we were pleased to see, therefore, that a new supervision template had been devised which would prompt discussion about young people and working practices, staff training and development, and which would clearly identify agreed actions. Young people's well being is promoted by staff who are, in general, appropriately trained, well led and supported. However, record keeping should better reflect people's individual learning and development, through supervision and training.

Monitoring arrangements in respect of service quality and improvement are not well evidenced. The residence's Statement of Purpose provided information regarding the arrangements in place to monitor the operation of the home, though it would benefit from additional detail with regard to the day to day monitoring arrangements and independent monitoring undertaken on behalf of the governing body and local authority. It was evident from our discussions with the Head Teacher and Residential Leader that they were committed to providing good quality care for young people. However, monitoring arrangements did not accord with the residence statement of purpose or comply with national minimum standards. It was clear that the Residential Leader had oversight of the day to day operation of the provision. However, formal monitoring of the quality of the service was not well evidenced. We were not provided with a self-evaluation report in respect of the service (this should be completed on an annual basis) and we did not see evidence of half termly visits and reports having been completed on behalf of the governing body / local authority carrying on the school. Young people cannot be confident that the service's quality assurance measures are effective, comply with national minimum standards and drive forward improvement.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Recommendations for improvement

- Young people's "welcome" guide to be finalised, with the addition of advice on what to do if young people had any worries, or wanted to complain, and made available to young people coming to stay.
- Consultation arrangements to be reviewed to ensure that young people are involved as far as possible, in discussions about their individual plans and goals, day to day decision making within the residence and with regard to the quality of care being provided by the service.
- Outcome focused residential placement plans for young people to be established and regularly reviewed for all young people attending the residence.
- A risk assessment to be put in place for one young person to provide guidance to staff in respect of a potential risk taking behaviour.
- Working practices in respect of activity based risk assessments to be reviewed to ensure that they are being used as a dynamic tool. Risk management strategies should be suited to the needs of the particular young people attending the service. Risk assessments should be signed by staff prior to the activity taking place, to evidence that they have been read and understood.
- Key working arrangements to be put in place, in line with the residence's key working policy.
- A record to be kept of everyone who participates in a fire drill to ensure that all young people and staff had the opportunity to practice the evacuation procedure.
- Staff to receive formal supervision, at the frequency stated within national minimum standards.
- Annual performance appraisals to be completed for all staff. Staff learning and development records to be established for all staff, which identify individual training needs in accordance with national minimum standards, and how these needs will be met.
- Quality assurance arrangements to accord with the residence Statement of Purpose and comply with national minimum standards.
- Consideration to be given to the refurbishment of the girls' bathroom / shower areas. Additional bathroom / shower facilities would also be beneficial.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full scheduled inspection undertaken as part of our inspection programme. An unannounced visit was made to the home on 5 July 2019 between 9.40am and 2.20pm and further announced visits were undertaken on 10 July 2019 between 9.45am and 3.00pm and between 7.30pm and 9.25pm.

The methodology used to conduct the inspection included:

- Discussions with five young people.
- Discussions with staff on duty.
- Discussions with the Head Teacher and Residential Leader.
- Observation of interactions between staff and young people.
- Tour of the premises.

We looked at a range of records, including

- Residence Statement of Purpose and draft Young People's guide.
- A sample of records relating to six young people, including individual profiles, health information safeguarding and risk assessments, session records and annual review reports.
- Activity planning / associated records
- Daily records / reports
- Staff records
- Staff meeting minutes,
- Quality assurance documentation, including young people's feedback
- Policies and procedures

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:

www.careinspectorate.wales

About the service

Type of care provided	Residential Special School
Registered Person	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council - Education, Leisure & Life Long Learning Arts Centre
Residential Leader	Nicholas Allinson
Registered maximum number of places	25
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	20/10/2015 and 18/11/2015
Dates of this Inspection visit(s)	05/07/2019 and 10/07/2019
Operating Language of the service	English
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language.
Additional Information:	

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