



Inspection Report on

Ysgol Hendrefelin

**Main Road
Bryncoch
Neath
SA10 7TY**

Date Inspection Completed

23/02/2024

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About Ysgol Hendrefelin

Type of care provided	Residential Special School
Registered Provider	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Registered places	This is not a registered service.
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	10/7/2019
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

Summary

This is the first inspection of the short breaks service provided at Ysgol Hendrefelin since 2019. The inspection is carried out against the Welsh Government national minimum standards for residential special schools (NMS) in advance of the service requiring approval under RISCA (Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016).

Short breaks are provided on a Monday to Friday, termly basis. About ten children attend short breaks at any one time and a total of about forty children use the service.

Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates their well-being and the care and support they receive is good.

The service has an experienced staff and management team, and the premises are suitable for their purpose.

Feedback from children, their parents, staff, and managers indicate the leadership and management of the service is good. Notwithstanding, some systems, policies, and procedures have not been designed and implemented with reference to the requirements of the national minimum standards (NMS). These include systems for assessment, planning and reviewing children's needs and progress and systems for monitoring, reviewing, and improving the service. These are identified as areas for improvement.

Well-being

Children are seen to be happy, confident, and thriving when attending short breaks. Observations and feedback from them indicate they enjoy spending time with friends at the school and have positive relationships with staff members.

Feedback from parents is very positive. They told us they are entirely satisfied with the short breaks service and appreciative of the opportunities their children have when attending. They said they are confident in the managers and staff who look after their children and that communication with the school is good. When asked, they said there were no areas of improvement, they believed are necessary.

Children have a voice, and their rights are promoted. Observations and feedback indicate children have opportunities to make choices and to express themselves as individuals. They confirmed they are encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings and they are confident that staff and managers will listen to them and address any concerns they raise.

Children are able to make choices about the activities they take part in, the food they eat and who they share rooms with when attending short breaks. We confirmed that systems are in place to ensure their meal choices are provided for along with any particular dietary requirements.

Children have opportunities to have fun and to do things they enjoy. They told us they have lots of fun and they take part in a range of social and leisure activities. Community based activities are offered every evening and children are able to choose special activities during what managers describe as 'treat week' at the end of school terms.

We observed children while having lunch and their evening meal and when getting ready for a trip out. Engagement between children and between children and staff was seen to be relaxed and to demonstrate respect, emotional warmth, and affection.

Safeguarding training has been provided and staff confirm they are clear about their duty as social care workers to raise any concerns, with managers, within safeguarding procedures and or with CIW.

Care and Support

Observations indicate that children receive good care and support from staff, as well as positive reinforcement to promote their self-worth, confidence, and sense of security.

Most if not all staff employed at the short breaks service hold other positions at the school, such as learning support assistants and teachers. Children have access to speech and language therapy and a social worker they can go to see if they wish to discuss any concerns or queries. The social worker also provides a weekly after school club and coordinates support groups for children's parents, that include guest speakers on topics relevant to the children's support needs.

The children are verbal but nonverbal communication aids are used where appropriate.

Initial assessments are made to ensure children's needs can be met before attending short breaks and files are held for each child that include information about their needs and circumstances. Consultation with staff and managers indicate they know the children well and are familiar with their needs, their likes, and aspirations.

Feedback from children, their parents and staff members is very positive about the care and support provided at the school.

Consultation with managers indicates that children's needs and progress are subject to whole school assessment and planning processes but placement plans, that are specific to the short breaks service have not been implemented which meet the specific requirements of the NMS. These set out steps to ensure children, and their families are actively involved in assessing, planning, and reviewing children's needs and progress and ensure they receive targeted support to achieve agreed outcomes.

Written records, as well as discussions with staff indicate that the outcomes-based approach of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 has not been introduced and embedded to provide better insight into children's well-being, their experience of being at the school and how they benefit from the care and support they receive.

Environment

The premises and accommodation are suitable for their purpose and located within the school campus. Security measures are in place to ensure staff check the identification of visitors before entering.

The accommodation is suitably spacious and includes several areas for students to mix and mingle and to relax and play games.

Bedrooms have either three or four beds in each room, but children are able to sleep in rooms on their own if preferred. Children sleep in the same rooms each time they stay at the school.

Bathrooms are seen to be clean and suitably maintained.

There is a central kitchen and dining room where main meals are prepared and eaten, and a smaller kitchen is available for preparing snacks and drinks. Offices are located to provide easy access to managers.

Suitable arrangements are in place for the safe storage of medication.

Records show the fire risk assessment is up to date, that fire evacuations take place regularly and portable electrical appliances have been tested.

Leadership and Management

Evidence gathered at the inspection indicates the short breaks service is well established, well-resourced, and well developed. It is evident from observation and consultation that children are at the centre of this service and parents are appreciative of the support it provides for their children and themselves.

The statement of purpose contains a range of relevant information but has not been compiled with reference to the NMS. It does not make clear the trauma informed ethos for instance that managers told us underpins the approach employed at the school. This may be included in other information available from the school.

The manager and deputy manager are suitably qualified and experienced, and their duties include working alongside care staff when short breaks are provided.

Observations and feedback from children, their parents and staff members indicate the day-to-day management of the service is good.

There are fourteen care staff employed to provide care and support for children during short breaks. The manager told us that all staff working within the short breaks service have been required to register with Social Care Wales, that 5 currently hold relevant qualifications; four are working toward QCF (Qualifications and Credit Framework) level 3 and 2 are undertaking the necessary AWIF (All Wales Induction Framework).

Children told us that staff and managers are accessible, and they have confidence they would be available should they wish to speak with them and would listen to them if they wanted to raise any concerns. Parents told us that communication with managers is good and any suggestions they make are listened to. Staff told us they receive good support, guidance, and supervision from managers.

Managers told us that all staff have received safeguarding training and training in the model of behavioural support employed at the school. Records relating to staff training are not held which are separate for staff employed to provide short breaks. Managers told us whole school records are available. Staff recruitment records were not checked.

Records were not available to provide evidence that the monitoring intended to be carried out by the head teacher and or governing body, which includes consultation with parents and other stakeholders, checking of records and an internal review of compliance with the NMS has been carried out. It may be that self-evaluation and an improvement plan for the short breaks service is included within whole school processes.

Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people’s well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)

Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement

Regulation	Summary	Status
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N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
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