



Accreditation Award Panel Report
Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn
8th April 2014

Status awarded to Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn by the Accreditation Award Panel

Accredited

Service Strengths and Achievements

Good Practice

Strong Practice within the whole Accreditation membership

Family and Support Links

Supporting parents through a variety of strategies

Gerddi Glasfryn, the residential element of the school provides support not just for the pupils but also for the parents. Through discussion it is evident that the staff are skilled in liaison between home and the site, with home/residential diaries and regular phone contact. Gerddi follows up the strategies employed by the school and parents with regular discussion and monitoring of care plans and placement plans. The prospectus for Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn details the school's open door policy and the home/school agreement details the welcome and sharing parents can expect. Through discussion with parents it is evident that the school are achieving this to a high standard.

The school holds half termly Autism seminars for families that cover topics such as communication and behaviour and in discussion with the professionals who attended the meeting with the Review Team, it was detailed that they are multiagency meetings that have supported every area of the child's development and education.

The majority of parents are obviously very happy with the provision, as seen in the results of the questionnaires and in discussion with a group of parents the Review Team heard that the support is 'second to none', 'you don't have to pluck up the courage to pick up the phone', 'are supportive – like a family', and 'this is the first time my son has been happy in 16 years'.

Area of Strength

Strong practice within the service

Sensory issues and Behaviour Support

Access and develop specific sensory expertise using a reflective approach to behaviour management

The school has made every effort to provide pupils and students with opportunities to succeed in their everyday activities. This is reflected in the behaviour support policy and the school have employed a SaLT assistant with responsibility for positive behaviour support. Behaviour support plans are drawn up in conjunction with the class team, SaLT, and assistant heads with the advice from an external OT. Incidence of adverse behaviour is well recorded and the leadership team monitors this paperwork for those pupils who present challenge. This information is collated by the SaLT assistant and she produces well presented evidence for reviews, panel and parent support meetings.

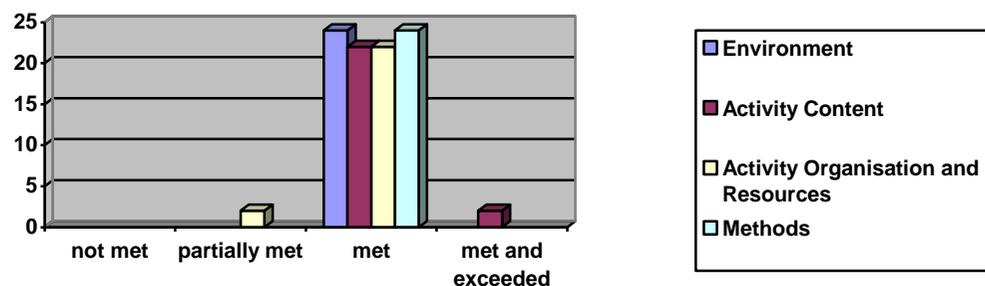
The Behaviour support plans are well written and contain reference to not only behaviour, but also to Th.Inc strategies for developing the pupils understanding of their own emotions and responses and sensory breaks that need to be built into the pupils school day. Through discussion it was felt that the sensory strategies (that are beginning to make difference to behaviours displayed and recorded across the school) could be monitored more robustly and a suggestion by the SLT was that this could happen at the same time as the ICPs are revisited.

The school has begun to roll out the use of behaviour logging sheets for pupils and students who are displaying behaviour that challenges. There is a transitional period where they are moving from one method to another based on their work with an occupational therapist. The lead SaLT assistant is working with staff from all sites to develop consistent application of sensory strategies for the pupils who have it written into their behaviour support plan. There are plans for more staff to attend training in Sensory Processing and then help to develop the support across all the school's sites and to all staff. The staff interviewed were passionate about this approach and the review team have no doubt that they will make this an intrinsic part of the pupil's school life.

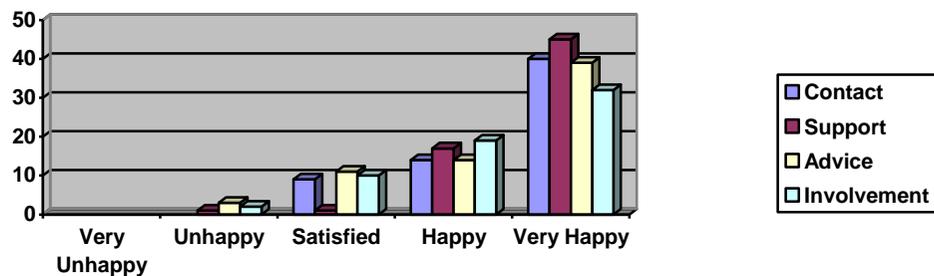
The school have already begun to offer outreach, not only to parents but to other schools in the region. Discussion with a range of professionals highlighted this as a school led collaborative approach that is having an impact on the lives of children not only at Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn but also in mainstream schools in the locality. The school also offer sensory equipment for loan and are in the process of developing 2 rooms dedicated to providing sensory spaces. One will be a sensory Integration space and the other a more relaxing space for Tacpac and other calming

activities. It is evident through discussion and action plans that there is a clear direction the school are taking to address the issues they have identified.

Observations



Parent questionnaires



Action Plan for Service

Areas for Development

An area for development is not an area of great concern, but should be seen as a goal to further improve practice within the service and allow progression on the service's Accreditation journey.

Communication

Increasing the use of ICT to support individual teaching and learning opportunities

The school has made significant progress in the development of ICT to support teaching and learning led at a strategic level by the SLT and supported by the Governing Body. The investment of a substantial amount of money has equipped the school with short throw projectors for each classroom, enabled the purchase of 32 iPads for use across the school and the provided mini-iPads to support teachers' practice. The school has employed an IT Manager who oversees the service within school and liaises with teachers and Senior Leaders in order to provide high quality learning resources for pupils.

The impact of this investment is beneficial for some pupils. Some pupils have ready access to personalised iPads which enables them to effectively communicate whereas previously their communication efforts were largely ineffective. This has led to a reduction in challenging behaviour and an increasing confidence in their interactions with others. The improvement in the IT service means that pupils are more confident in their use of ICT and will engage with learning across all subjects because of the intrinsically motivating nature of the use of ICT. Pupils are able to access a broader range of learning materials both within school and via portals on the school website when at home.

The school is very sensibly developing its ICT provision incrementally and carefully considering each stage of investment following evaluation of the effectiveness of each initiative in this area.

Organisation and resources

To develop consistency in the planning of lesson objectives

During some of the observations it was felt that there are some shortfalls in practice related to this Standard. Whilst the vast majority of lessons are well organised, in some of the less effective lessons, it was observed to be a lack of coherence between the lesson's learning objectives, the previous learning and the specific needs of pupils. The Review team conclude that this impacted on teaching and as a result learning was less effective as pupils did not clearly understand the learning objective or became distracted from achieving it. As an area the school could work on the less experienced teachers may benefit from mentoring or buddy systems in which planning and organisation are reviewed in order to achieve this coherence. This will ensure that the typically high standard of lesson organisation is applied consistently across the school.

Recommendations

A recommendation is an area that has been upgraded from an Area for Development. Action to address recommendations should be prioritised by the service as the area is of a concern to the panel.

None identified by this award panel

Practise that Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn should celebrate:

- Consistency of service delivery across the school and residential provision.
- The positive impact of behaviour analysis and linking of this with sensory strategies.

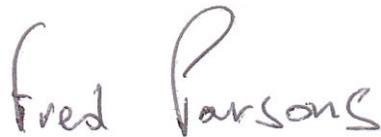
Summary

The award panel congratulate Ygol Plas Brondyffryn School on achieving the high standards required of Autism Accreditation.

The panel had the distinct impression that the school was continuing to update and develop its autism practise in pursuance of consistent excellence throughout.

The panel endorse the findings of the review team report and reinforce the two identified areas of development the school should work upon.

Signed



*Mr Fred Parsons
Award Panel Chair*