

Section 14 Education (Welfare) Act, 2000

**Assessment of Education
 in places other than Recognised Schools**

**Independent School
 Preliminary Assessment Report**



Name of School

PMVT Learning Centre – CMS

Address

Dublin 8

Telephone

+353 (0)1 823 0776

Name of Principal/Director

Sharon Hurley

Name of Assessor/s

Paul Sloan

Date of Assessment

24th June 2026

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Section 1 Background Information

1.1. School Hours

Opening Time:	9.30am		
Closing time:	14:30		
Main breaks during the day:	12.20	to	13.00
	10.45	to	11.00

Is school in operation for more than five years?

Yes

If no, please give date on which school commenced operation

1.2. Name(s) of principal and/or other teacher(s) interviewed

(Normally interview should take place with the principal)

Sarah Morrissey – Head of Service
Sharon Hurley – Centre Manager

1.3. Sources of evidence on which report is based

This assessment report is based on the following sources of evidence:

- A discussion with Sarah Morrissey, Head of Services and Centre Manager Sharon Hurley, and relevant staff members.
- Observation of the learning environment, facilities, educational resources, and learning spaces within the centre.
- Review of curriculum documentation, referral procedures, learner support documentation, and centre policies and procedures.
- Review of information relating to admissions, induction, placement, progression pathways, and learner supports.
- Discussion regarding the educational provision, curriculum delivery, QQI programmes, and learner progression opportunities available within the centre.
- Review of the PMVT Learning Centre CMS Quality Assurance Handbook.
- Information available through the Peter McVerry Trust website regarding the operation, ethos, educational philosophy, curriculum, and progression pathways of the Learning Centres.
- Documentation and information provided by the centre.

Section 2 General Information And School Context

PMVT Learning Centre CMS is located in Dublin 8 and operates under the patronage and governance of the Peter McVerry Trust. PMVT Learning Centre CMS is a specialised provision that seeks to support vulnerable young people in re-engaging with education through a flexible, supportive, and individualised programme of learning and care.

The centre provides an alternative educational setting for young people aged approximately 12 to 17 years who have experienced difficulties accessing, engaging with, or remaining in mainstream education due to a range of educational, emotional, social, and behavioural factors.

The centre follows a trauma-informed, strengths-based, and person-centred model of education. The ethos of the service is founded on principles of respect, dignity, empowerment, equality, and non-judgemental support. The educational provision seeks to meet the individual needs of each learner while supporting continued engagement in education, personal development, and positive future outcomes.

PMVT Learning Centre CMS aims to provide a high-quality educational programme that enables young people to recognise the positive impact education can have on their future development. The centre adopts a holistic approach to learning, education, and social care supports, recognising that many learners present with complex educational, social, emotional, and behavioural needs.

At the time of the assessment, the centre had capacity to accommodate approximately fifteen learners. Referrals are accepted from a variety of sources, including Educational Welfare Officers, schools, social workers, youth services, probation services, healthcare professionals, and parents or guardians. All referrals are subject to a structured referral, assessment, and induction process designed to ensure the centre can appropriately meet each young person's needs.

The centre provides Junior Cycle subjects alongside QQI-accredited programmes. The current QQI provision includes modules in Computer Literacy, Health and Fitness, Breakfast Cookery, and Interpersonal Skills, leading towards QQI certification and supporting progression to further education, training, employment, apprenticeships, or a return to mainstream education where appropriate.

Strong emphasis is placed on progression planning. Learners are supported throughout their placement to identify and pursue future educational, vocational, and training opportunities. The centre maintains links with mainstream schools, educational welfare services, further education providers, community organisations, and training centre to support positive learner outcomes.

Section 3 The Principal And Staff

PMVT Learning Centre CMS is managed by Sharon Hurley, Centre Manager, who has responsibility for the day-to-day leadership and management of the service. The Centre Manager works within the governance structures of Peter McVerry Trust and is supported by the organisation's Head of Service and wider management team.

The centre is staffed by a multi-disciplinary team comprising educational and social care professionals who work collaboratively to support the educational, social, emotional, and behavioural needs of the young people attending the service. Staffing includes tutors, a Social Care Leader, Social Care Workers, and access to counselling supports.

A key feature of the provision is the integrated approach adopted by the staff team. Educational and social care personnel work closely together to ensure that learners receive both academic support and individualised wellbeing interventions. Each learner is assigned a Social Care Worker and benefits from an Individual Student Support Plan and other personalised supports designed to promote engagement, attendance, and progression.

Staff members engage in ongoing professional development in areas including child protection, trauma-informed practice, behaviour support, health and safety, motivational interviewing, and educational methodologies relevant to the learner cohort. Staff also participate in collaborative learning opportunities with colleagues across the Peter McVerry Trust Learning Centres.

The staff team are experienced and committed in providing the supports for educational and social care provision for the young people attending the service.

Section 4 Time Devoted To Education

PMVT Learning Centre CMS follows the post-primary school calendar and provides a structured educational programme throughout the academic year. The school day runs from 9.30am to 2.30pm, with a morning break from 10.45am to 11.00am and a lunch break from 12.20pm to 1.00pm.

The centre combines educational provision with social care supports, recognising that many learners require additional interventions to support engagement, attendance, and participation in learning. Educational activities are delivered through a combination of classroom-based instruction, practical learning opportunities, individual support sessions, project work, and QQI-accredited modules.

Students engage in Junior Cycle subject areas including English, Mathematics, Geography, History, Art, and Wood Technology. In addition, learners have opportunities to participate in QQI Level 3 modules, including Computer Literacy, Health and Fitness, Breakfast Cookery, and Interpersonal Skills. These programmes are designed to provide learners with practical skills, recognised qualifications, and progression opportunities.

The centre places a strong emphasis on maintaining engagement in education through individualised timetables, structured routines, key-working support, and personalised educational planning. Flexibility within the daily programme enables the centre to respond to the diverse educational, social, emotional, and behavioural needs of the young people attending.

Overall, sufficient time is devoted to education and learner support, ensuring that students are provided with meaningful opportunities to engage in learning, develop skills, work towards accredited qualifications, and prepare for future progression pathways.

Section 5 The Learning Environment

PMVT Learning Centre CMS provides a safe, welcoming, and supportive learning environment that is specifically designed to meet the needs of young people who have experienced challenges engaging with mainstream education. The centre adopts a trauma-informed and strengths-based approach, with an emphasis on creating an atmosphere where learners feel respected, valued, and supported in their educational journey.

The centre is well resourced and provides students with access to a range of learning facilities, including classrooms, information technology resources, recreational spaces, and practical learning areas. Educational resources are readily available and are used to support both Junior Cycle and QQI programmes. The learning environment is structured to facilitate both individual and small-group instruction, allowing for personalised educational support where required.

A notable feature of the provision is the integration of educational and social care supports within the daily operation of the centre. Small class sizes, low learner-to-staff ratios, and assigned Social Care Workers contribute to a highly supportive learning environment where students can access assistance and guidance when required.

The centre utilises information technology to support teaching and learning and provides learners with opportunities to engage in digital literacy activities as part of both the curriculum and QQI programmes.

The physical environment is organised and maintained to support student wellbeing, engagement, and participation in learning activities.

The centre also promotes student achievement and personal development through the display and celebration of learner successes, completed projects, creative work, and QQI achievements. Onsite gym, pool tables, art room, woodwork room and kitchen space are all well maintained.

Section 6 The Educational Activities

6.1. General information

PMVT Learning Centre CMS provides an alternative educational programme for young people who are unable to fully engage with mainstream post-primary education due to a range of educational, social, emotional, and behavioural factors. The centre aims to provide a high-quality, learner-centred educational experience that supports young people to re-engage positively with education and achieve successful learning outcomes.

The educational provision is underpinned by a trauma-informed, strengths-based, and person-centred approach. The centre seeks to meet learners at their individual stage of development while promoting educational engagement, personal growth, confidence, and progression. The programme is designed to support continued participation in education and to help learners develop the skills required for future educational, training, and employment opportunities.

Students attending the centre engage in a combination of Junior Cycle subjects and QQI-accredited programmes. The curriculum includes English, Mathematics, Geography, History, Wood Technology, and Art, together with QQI Level 3 modules. At the time of the assessment, learners had opportunities to work towards QQI certification in Computer Literacy, Health and Fitness, Breakfast Cookery, and Interpersonal Skills.

A key feature of the provision is the flexibility afforded to learners through small class groups, personalised learning programmes, and integrated social care supports. Each learner is supported through an individualised educational programme designed to respond to identified strengths, interests, goals, and support needs.

The centre places significant emphasis on helping young people to recognise the value of education and to identify positive progression pathways. Educational experiences are designed to build confidence, encourage participation, develop practical and academic skills, and support successful

transitions to further education, training, employment, apprenticeships, or a return to mainstream schooling where appropriate.

6.2. Language and literacy skills

Language and literacy development are an integral part of the educational provision within PMVT Learning Centre CMS. Students engage in literacy-rich learning experiences through the Junior Cycle English curriculum, QQI programmes, project work, written assignments, portfolio development, oral communication activities, and everyday interactions within the centre.

The centre recognises that many learners enter the programme having experienced disruption to their education and often present with varying literacy abilities and levels of educational attainment. Educational programmes are therefore tailored to the individual needs of learners, with literacy development supported through small class groups, differentiated instruction, one-to-one support, and individualised educational planning.

Opportunities are provided for learners to develop reading, writing, listening, speaking, and communication skills across a range of subject areas. QQI programmes require learners to complete written assignments, portfolios of work, self-reflection activities, and practical assessments, all of which contribute to the development of literacy competencies and confidence in communication.

A key strength of the provision is the emphasis placed on learner voice and self-expression. Learners are encouraged to reflect on their educational experiences, provide feedback on programmes, participate in discussions regarding their learning, and contribute to the development of individual learning goals and support plans. These opportunities promote confidence, communication skills, and active engagement in learning.

The small group setting and close working relationships between learners, tutors, and social care staff allow for ongoing support and targeted interventions where literacy difficulties are identified. The centre's person-centred approach enables staff to respond flexibly to individual learning needs while promoting positive engagement with literacy activities.

Overall, the centre provides an appropriate and supportive literacy programme that seeks to develop learners' communication, reading, writing, and self-expression skills while supporting educational engagement and progression.

6.3. Numeracy

Numeracy development is supported through a combination of Junior Cycle Mathematics and QQI-accredited learning programmes. The centre recognises that learners often enter the provision with varying levels of confidence and attainment in Mathematics and seeks to provide personalised support that enables young people to experience success and progression in numeracy.

Assessment information gathered during the referral and induction process assists staff in identifying each learner's strengths, support needs, and educational targets. This information informs individual planning and allows educational programmes to be tailored to the specific needs of the learner.

Mathematics is delivered through the Junior Cycle curriculum and is supported by small class sizes and an individualised approach to teaching and learning. Learners are encouraged to develop competence in core mathematical concepts, problem-solving, measurement, data handling, and practical numeracy skills relevant to everyday life.

Numeracy skills are also reinforced through practical and vocational learning activities. Opportunities exist for learners to apply mathematical concepts through projects, QQI modules, technology-based learning, and everyday practical tasks. The centre's person-centred approach allows staff to adapt teaching methods and learning activities to suit the abilities and learning styles of individual students.

The favourable learner-to-staff ratio enables tutors to provide targeted support and regular feedback, helping learners to build confidence and develop positive attitudes towards Mathematics. Progress is monitored through ongoing assessment, portfolio work, and participation in educational activities across the curriculum.

Overall, the centre provides an appropriate numeracy programme that seeks to develop mathematical understanding, practical numeracy skills, confidence, and engagement in learning while supporting students in achieving their individual educational goals.

6.4. Irish

Irish is not currently provided as part of the formal curriculum within the CMS centre.

Children attending an Independent School should be afforded opportunity for the study of Irish, however the study of Irish is not a requirement for registration under Section 14 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. Where Irish is included in the provision, an Independent School may identify students attending that they consider would qualify for an exemption from the study of Irish. Independent Schools can make decisions in consultation with parents regarding arrangements for these children. Any arrangements made in relation to the study of Irish does not entitle students to an exemption from the study of Irish in the event of a subsequent enrolment at a Department of Education recognised school.

Parents of children attending an Independent School should be informed of and acquaint themselves with implications of not taking Irish and/or having a second language. Parents seeking information should consult with the Department of Education www.education.ie and/or the State Examinations Commission www.examinations.ie with regard to the requirement for Irish and/or an additional language..

6.5. Other areas of learning

PMVT Learning Centre CMS provides a broad and varied programme of learning experiences designed to meet the interests, strengths, and individual needs of the young people attending the centre. The curriculum combines academic learning with practical, vocational, creative, and wellbeing-focused activities that support learner engagement and personal development.

Wood Technology forms a significant part of the educational provision. Students engage in practical projects which support the development of technical skills, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and confidence. Art also forms an important component of the curriculum, providing opportunities for self-expression, creativity, and the celebration of student achievement through displays of completed work within the centre.

Students participate in Geography and History as part of their Junior Cycle programme and have opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of the wider world through curriculum activities, discussions, research, and educational visits.

The centre provides a range of QQI-accredited modules, including Computer Literacy, Health and Fitness, Breakfast Cookery, and Interpersonal Skills. These programmes support the development of practical life skills, communication skills, digital competence, personal effectiveness, health awareness, and preparation for future progression pathways.

Wellbeing is embedded throughout the provision. Students benefit from social care supports, counselling access, physical activity opportunities, key-working sessions, and programmes that promote resilience, confidence, and positive decision-making. From time to time some community-based initiatives also provide valuable opportunities for creative engagement and participation locally. The centre maintains strong links with community organisations, education providers, and support services, enabling learners to participate in educational visits, progression-related activities, vocational exploration, and community-based learning experiences. These opportunities contribute positively to learner engagement, aspiration, and preparation for future educational and employment opportunities.

6.6. Special educational needs

PMVT Learning Centre CMS provides a highly individualised and responsive approach to supporting young people with additional educational, social, emotional, and behavioural needs. The centre recognises that many learners attending the service have experienced challenges within mainstream education and therefore require a personalised programme of educational and social care supports.

A comprehensive referral, assessment, and induction process is in place to identify the individual strengths, interests, support needs, and educational goals of each learner. Prior to enrolment, information is gathered from schools, Educational Welfare Officers, parents or guardians, and other relevant agencies. Pre-placement assessments and student profiling processes inform the development of individual programmes and supports.

Each learner is assigned a Social Care Worker and has an Individual Student Support Plan in place. Learners also have access to Individual Crisis Support Plans where required. These plans are developed collaboratively with the learner and are reviewed regularly to ensure that supports remain responsive to individual needs and circumstances.

The centre adopts a trauma-informed and strengths-based approach to supporting learners. Educational and social care staff work collaboratively to provide targeted supports, promote engagement in education, and assist learners in developing positive coping strategies, resilience, and personal confidence. Regular key-working sessions, counselling supports, and individual interventions are available where required.

Small class sizes and favourable staff-to-learner ratios enable the provision of individualised support and differentiated learning experiences. Educational programmes are adapted to meet learners' needs and staff seek to minimise barriers to participation through personalised planning, flexibility, and ongoing monitoring of progress.

Section 7 The Voice Of The Child

The voice of the young person is a central feature of the educational provision within PMVT Learning Centre CMS. The centre promotes a learner-centred approach in which students are encouraged to actively participate in decisions relating to their education, support plans, progression pathways, and day-to-day experiences within the service.

Young people are provided with regular opportunities to express their views through informal discussions, key-working sessions, learner feedback exercises, end-of-module surveys, and ongoing engagement with tutors and social care staff. Feedback gathered from learners is used to inform programme development, support planning, and the ongoing improvement of educational provision.

Each learner participates in the development and review of their Individual Student Support Plan and is encouraged to identify personal goals, educational targets, and future aspirations. This approach promotes learner ownership, participation, and engagement in the educational process.

The centre maintains close and positive relationships with learners, creating an environment where students feel comfortable discussing concerns, sharing feedback, and seeking support when required. The centre manager reported that ongoing dialogue with learners forms an important part of the centre's strengths-based and trauma-informed approach to education and care. Learners who complete their programmes are encouraged to reflect on their experiences within the service and provide written feedback on their time with the centre.

Section 8 Assessment And Record Keeping

PMVT Learning Centre CMS has established systems for assessment, monitoring, and record keeping that support both educational provision and learner wellbeing. Assessment and record-keeping practices form an integral part of the centre's referral, induction, educational planning, learner support, and progression processes.

A structured referral and induction process enables the centre to gather information from learners, parents or guardians, schools, Educational Welfare Officers, and other relevant agencies. Information collected includes educational history, assessment reports, support needs, attendance information, and learner aspirations. This information is used to inform educational planning and support provision.

Each learner has an individual file which contains educational records, support plans, assessment information, attendance records, communication records, and relevant reports. Learner information is maintained through both hard-copy and electronic recording systems and is reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Assessment practices include teacher observation, review of learner work, portfolio-based assessment, QQI assessment procedures, monitoring of learner engagement, and regular review of individual educational targets. The centre operates established QQI quality assurance procedures, including internal verification, external authentication, assessment review, and learner feedback processes. Each learner has an Individual Student Support Plan which is developed collaboratively and reviewed regularly. Individual Crisis Support Plans are also developed where required. These plans support the monitoring of learner progress, educational engagement, wellbeing, attendance, and progression goals. The centre utilises learner feedback, family feedback, individual support planning, and ongoing review processes to inform programme development and service improvement. Records are maintained securely and in line with quality assurance, confidentiality, and data protection requirements.

Section 9 Other Relevant Information

The centre has established a strong commitment to supporting students beyond their time in the service. Progression outcomes indicate that students successfully transition to a variety of pathways including mainstream post-primary schools, Youthreach, further education settings, apprenticeships, and employment.

A Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) is in place along with child safeguarding procedures as identified on the CSS.

The principal declared on the R2 Information Form submitted that all staff have been trained in the implementation of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and in Children First Guidelines 2017.

Section 10 Evaluation Of The Education Provision And Recommendations

In my opinion, the education being provided at PMVT Learning Centre CMS meets the requirements under Section 14 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

The centre provides an important alternative educational setting for young people who have experienced difficulties engaging with mainstream education. A learner-centred, trauma-informed, and strengths-based approach is evident throughout the provision, with a strong emphasis placed on supporting the educational, social, emotional, and behavioural needs of each learner.

A number of strengths were evident during the assessment, including:

- A clear commitment to supporting vulnerable young people to re-engage positively with education and learning.
- A highly supportive and inclusive learning environment where positive relationships between learners and staff are promoted.
- Strong multidisciplinary supports, including educational, social care, counselling, and key-working interventions.
- The use of Individual Student Support Plans and Individual Crisis Support Plans to support personalised educational provision.
- Access to a broad and flexible curriculum that combines Junior Cycle subjects with QQI-accredited programmes and practical learning opportunities.
- Well-established referral, induction, assessment, and progression processes designed to support learner engagement and successful outcomes.
- Strong links with families, schools, Educational Welfare Services, community organisations, and further education providers which support progression opportunities for learners.

The centre demonstrates a strong commitment to quality assurance, continuous improvement, and the delivery of an educational programme that seeks to meet the diverse needs of the young people attending.

Recommendation regarding Registration

In my opinion, the education being provided at PMVT Learning Centre CMS can be characterised as a certain minimum education, moral, intellectual and social.

I recommend that Tusla – Child and Family Agency register children attending PMVT Learning Centre CMS on the Register of Children Receiving an Education in a Place Other Than a Recognised School, subject to the ongoing review processes of the Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service (AEARS).

The findings of the assessment were discussed with the participants on the date of the assessment. The participants were advised that the decision regarding registration would be made by Tusla – the Child and Family Agency: Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service (AEARS).

Following the assessment, a draft report is provided to the principal, along with a Factual Accuracy and Feedback Form, which may be submitted within a specified timeframe, in response to the content of the draft report. The report, along with any information provided on the feedback form for consideration, is brought to the AEARS Registration Panel. The Registration Panel make decisions regarding registration of children in receipt of the education at the Independent School.

Section 11 Discussion Of Finding Of Report With Principal

The findings of the preliminary assessment were discussed with the Centre Manager. The positive and supportive ethos evident throughout the centre was acknowledged, together with the strong commitment demonstrated by management and staff in supporting young people who have experienced difficulties engaging with mainstream education. The strengths identified included the quality of relationships between staff and students, the highly supportive learning environment, the broad range of educational and wellbeing supports available, and the centre's strong links with families, community organisations, and educational providers. The Centre Manager was advised that the final decision regarding registration rests with the Tusla Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service (AEARS) Registration Panel following consideration of the completed assessment report and any additional information submitted.

Section 12 Outcome

Outcome Of Tusla Alternative Education Assessment And Registration Service Panel Regarding Requirements For Section 14 Registration Of Children Attending The School

The assessment report was brought to Tusla Registration Panel for a decision regarding registration. The Registration Panel decided that children attending PMVT Learning Centre CMS will be registered on the register of children receiving an education in a place other than a recognised school as required by Section 14 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.

Registration is subject to a periodic review by the Child and Family Agency