

A report on

St David's RC Primary School

**Park Crescent
Newport
NP20 3AQ**

Date of inspection: March 2025

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About St David's RC Primary School

Name of provider	St David's RC Primary School
Local authority	Newport City Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	None
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Roman Catholic
Number of pupils on roll	212
Pupils of statutory school age	184
Number in nursery classes	None
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 22.9%)	7.6%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 11.1%)	20.7%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	9.2%
Date of headteacher appointment	04/09/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	12/06/2017
Start date of inspection	03/03/2025

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:
mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Summary

The headteacher has high expectations of staff and pupils and leads by example. Leaders have a clear vision that is shared by staff, pupils and governors that focusses on the well-being and progress of all pupils. Staff foster a nurturing, inclusive environment where all pupils feel safe and valued. They maintain strong relationships with pupils and their families, ensuring a supportive community that contributes successfully to pupils' confidence and eagerness to learn. Most pupils make good progress from their individual starting points, including those pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and pupils living in poverty.

Most pupils are respectful, behave well, show enjoyment in their learning and attend school regularly and on time. They know how to keep themselves safe and healthy, and nearly all benefit from the effective learning support they receive.

The school has developed a curriculum that engages pupils and provides a range of meaningful learning experiences. Teaching moves at a good pace and offers appropriate challenge for most pupils. Within the classroom environment, the staff create a warm and friendly environment where most pupils engage well in their activities and complete them successfully. Teachers provide effective systematic support for the development of pupils' reading, number, digital and spoken Welsh skills. However, opportunities for pupils to choose how and what they learn are limited.

Governors are well informed about the school's strengths and areas for development and offer suitable challenge. Across the school, there is a culture of improving teaching and learning. Senior leaders work effectively to promote this culture and to provide professional learning for all staff which links appropriately to school improvement priorities and has a positive impact on pupil progress and well-being.

Recommendations

We have made one recommendation to help the school continue to improve:

- R1. Enable all pupils to make choices in how and what they learn to further develop their skills as independent learners

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Main evaluation

The headteacher has a clear vision that is shared by staff, pupils and governors that focusses on the well-being and progress of all pupils. It ensures that St David's Roman Catholic Primary School is a happy, inclusive place at the heart of its community.

Pupils thrive in the school's nurturing and caring environment and staff feel respected and supported by leaders. The school successfully fosters a culture of respect, and pupils feel valued and listened to. There is a strong 'family' feeling at the school and pupils appreciate the well-being support provided by staff, readily sharing any worries or concerns. Nearly all pupils feel safe and cared for in school. The school has effective systems for promoting good behaviour and most pupils behave well in and around the school.

Many pupils benefit from opportunities to enhance their leadership skills and take on responsibilities through the school's pupil leadership groups. Pupils have a clear vision of their roles and lead new initiatives with pride. For example, the Criw Cymraeg plan games and challenges for playtimes that encourage pupils to use the Welsh language.

Across the school, teachers and support staff know their pupils well. They use this knowledge to make thoughtful adjustments to provision, which enables pupils to achieve well. Most pupils make good progress from their individual starting points, including those pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and pupils from low income backgrounds. However, although pupils often suggest ideas at the start of a new topic, they do not have sufficient opportunities to further develop their independent learning skills by influencing what and how they learn.

Teaching moves at a good pace and offers appropriate challenge for most pupils. Staff create a warm and friendly learning environment where most pupils engage well with their activities and complete them successfully. Most teachers make effective use of strategies such as modelling, success criteria and questioning to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work. In the most effective lessons, teachers maintain momentum by building on pupils' previous knowledge, providing a mix of interactive activities and pausing to review learning. Feedback is particularly effective when teachers engage pupils through questions and dialogue, for example using 'pitstops' during lessons.

The school has developed its broad, balanced and exciting curriculum to align with the principles and purposes of Curriculum for Wales. Learning builds on pupils' prior knowledge, skills and understanding systematically and a strong emphasis on authentic learning experiences ensures that nearly all pupils approach their learning with enthusiasm and develop their knowledge and understanding to a high level. Teachers enhance learning well with high quality resources and trips and visitors to school linked to their themes. Younger pupils access a range of learning activities, indoors and outdoors, that generally ignite their curiosity and support their development well. The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and its values are embedded, and evident in the actions of pupils and staff. For instance, in assembly pupils discuss the importance of showing empathy and being kind to one another. They reflect how this improves their own well-being, and makes others feel good about themselves. The curriculum is well planned to help pupils learn about their locality, Wales and the wider world but opportunities for pupils to learn about LGBTQ+ are at an early stage of development.

There has been a strong focus on reading development and by Year 6, most pupils are fluent, enthusiastic readers who express opinions about different genres and read with good pace and expression. Nearly all pupils develop their writing skills well. Younger pupils develop their early writing skills when mark-making and the oldest pupils organise their writing into highly effective, lively, interesting paragraphs, selecting words to best suit the genre in their work across the curriculum. Teachers ensure that pupils develop as confident and skilful mathematicians who apply their numeracy skills effectively across the curriculum.

Most pupils confidently use digital devices for a variety of purposes. For example, the youngest pupils use tablets and apps effectively to support their learning and, as they move through the school, pupils use a range of suitable programs to present information and data. Across the school, pupils have a sound awareness of how to keep themselves safe while online.

Leaders have effective and clearly defined roles and responsibilities. They use a suitable range of evaluation and monitoring processes, including listening to pupils' views and looking at their work to make decisions about the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

Leaders invest in staff development effectively, resulting in a passionate team of professionals who provide pupils with a supportive learning environment in which everyone feels safe and valued. Senior leaders are developing worthwhile opportunities for staff to develop their leadership skills successfully. They often create purposeful professional learning opportunities by sharing the expertise that already exists in the

school. There is a strong team ethos amongst staff and a careful focus on the quality of teaching and learning ensures that staff work collaboratively to improve consistency and build on their strengths.

Leaders employ a robust cycle of monitoring and school improvement that accurately identifies and addresses key areas for development. They have successfully addressed national priorities, including ALN reform, attendance and promoting the development of the Welsh language. They make effective use of grant funding, including the pupil development grant to support learning and well-being. The provision for pupils with ALN is effective in ensuring that nearly all pupils make good progress linked to their targets. Skilled support staff provide worthwhile targeted interventions that are responsive to pupils' needs, and this ensures that pupils achieve their full potential.

Leaders and staff develop strong links with families and offer opportunities for parents to be purposefully involved in the life of the school. Parents have valuable opportunities to attend workshops and events that help them to understand how they can support their children's learning.

The governing body brings together people from a broad range of backgrounds with a wide skill set that leaders utilise effectively to inform the work of the school. Governors work well with the headteacher and staff, providing effective support. They engage in the first-hand gathering of evidence through, for example, taking part in link visits and learning walks. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the impact of improvements on pupils' outcomes.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern

The school's arrangements for site management do not give any cause for concern

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carers and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

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 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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