

**Report summary for parents
and carers on St. Mary's
Catholic Primary School**
Date of inspection: March 2025

Summary

St Mary's fosters a nurturing and inclusive school community where pupils feel safe, protected, and valued. The headteacher provides considerate and compassionate leadership, supported by a strong team ethos among staff who maintain positive relationships with pupils and parents. This contributes to an inclusive culture where pupils are generally sociable and polite, and benefit from a strong anti-bullying culture.

Leaders demonstrate a suitable understanding of the school's strengths and development areas through regular self-evaluation. Governors offer robust support and challenge to the school. Where planning for improvement is effective, such as in Welsh, most pupils make good progress. Leaders are dedicated to fostering Welsh culture and language among both staff and pupils. They place importance on relevant professional development, which improves the teaching and learning of Welsh. However, the development of the curriculum and improving teaching has not received sufficient attention and a minority of pupils do not engage in their learning or make the progress they are capable of.

Staff generally develop positive and respectful relationships with pupils, creating calm and purposeful learning environments. Many pupils display positive attitudes towards their learning and generally behave well. However, in all classes a small number of pupils display low-level disruptive behaviour that impacts negatively on their learning and that of others.

Many pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make suitable progress with their oracy, reading, writing, mathematical, and digital skills. Staff interact with pupils frequently during lessons and often provide helpful prompts and feedback that assist them to correct errors and take the next steps in their learning. Generally, the impact of feedback is inconsistent and too often does not support pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. The school is in the early stages of developing a curriculum. Leaders and staff continue to review and refine this aspect of the school's work. Despite this, recent developments have not led to a consistent approach that supports reliably strong pupil engagement and progress across the school.

While leaders have put in place whole-school procedures to improve attendance, they have not had sufficient impact on how regularly pupils come to school and their punctuality.

Recommendations and next steps

We have made four recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Improve the accuracy and effectiveness of self-evaluation and school improvement activities
- R2 Improve attendance and punctuality
- R3 Develop an authentic and engaging curriculum that ensures the progressive development of pupils' skills and secures positive attitudes towards learning
- R4 Improve the impact of feedback on pupil progress

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. A small team of Estyn inspectors will visit the school to monitor progress about 12-18 months after the publication of the inspection report.

Full Report

If you would like to read more about Estyn's evaluation of the school, please follow this link to the [full report](#)

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