

St Helen's Catholic Primary School
Tynewydd Road
Barry
CF62 8BB

29/09/2025

Dear leaders and staff

Interim visit: September 2025

A team of inspectors visited St. Helen's R.C Primary School recently to consider progress in relation to two recommendations from the previous core inspection. The inspection team took the opportunity to observe teaching and learning, talk with pupils and staff, consider documentation, and look at samples of pupils' work. Below is a summary of the findings from the visit.

Focus of visit

Ensure that self-evaluation and monitoring processes are manageable and focus tightly on improving pupils' outcomes

- Leaders are beginning to establish suitable self-evaluation processes and involve staff in monitoring activities. Curriculum leaders increasingly reflect on provision in their areas, and a growing culture of collaboration is evident as staff share good practice identified through monitoring.
- Leaders are beginning to align professional learning more closely with self-evaluation findings, ensuring that development opportunities reflect the school's priorities and inform classroom practice. As a result, staff are becoming more reflective, share effective approaches with colleagues and, in the best examples, adapt provision to meet pupils' needs.
- Whilst monitoring activities are proportionate and manageable, they lack rigour and do not focus sufficiently on the most important aspects of pupils' progress and school improvement. Leaders and teachers do not use the findings to identify and

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plan for pupils' next steps in learning effectively. The school's work to determine whether the impact of improvement planning and professional learning is securing sustained progress in pupils' learning is at an early stage.

Ensure that teaching challenges all pupils, especially the more able

- Senior leaders provide regular professional learning focussed on developing an understanding of pupils' learning needs. Staff meet regularly to review pupils' progress over time, and this supports the early identification of those who require additional help. These processes are not secure enough to enable teachers to pinpoint the specific skills all pupils need to develop how best to move learning forward.
- Many teachers are beginning to plan activities that extend pupils' learning. In the most effective lessons, teachers adapt activities and support pupils to make informed choices about the most suitable level of challenge. They do not always provide sufficient opportunities for pupils, particularly the more able, to deepen their learning, and apply their skills during lessons.
- Staff are beginning to create worthwhile opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning and to use the feedback they receive during lessons to help them improve their work. Senior leaders recognise the need to build on this work by strengthening a shared understanding of progression across all areas of learning, so that planning and assessment support the systematic development of pupils' skills more effectively.
- Senior leaders and staff are beginning to explore teaching approaches that encourage pupils to be more creative and to take greater ownership of their learning.

The school's/PRU's latest core inspection report and further information on the process and purpose of interim visits can be found on our website:

<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/6733373>

Yours sincerely



Liz Miles

Assistant Director