

St Mary's R.C. Primary School
Old Bullwalk Road
Bullwalk
Chepstow
Monmouthshire
NP16 5JE

17/10/2025

Dear leaders and staff

Interim visit: October 2025

A team of inspectors visited St. Mary's R.C. Primary 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 teachers plan effective challenge to all groups of pupils

- Following a period of change, school leaders are working to establish a consistent, whole-school approach to teaching and set clear expectations for pupils' learning.
- School leaders provide appropriate professional learning that focuses on key aspects of teaching, such as purposeful assessment and effective questioning to challenge all pupils. This work is at an early stage and is not impacting consistently on classroom practice.
- Leaders and staff collaborate well to improve provision for pupils with additional learning needs. As a result, teachers plan more carefully to ensure that pupils are both supported and challenged, and this is beginning to have a positive effect on their progress.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers adapt activities to provide an appropriate balance of support and challenge. A few teachers use regular 'pitstops' effectively to review progress and discuss next steps. In the best examples, teachers use clear, challenging success criteria to promote independence and extend learning.

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- Teachers frequently over-direct learning and use too many worksheets. This practice limits the level of challenge for pupils, the progressive development of their skills and their capacity to work and think independently

Improve feedback processes to ensure that they support pupils to develop their skills and provide opportunities for pupils to improve their work

- Leaders use evidence from self-evaluation and monitoring to strengthen the school's approach to feedback. They carry out a range of activities such as work scrutiny, lesson observations and discussions with pupils to identify inconsistencies and establish a clearer framework for how staff respond to pupils' work. This has improved practice in a few classes, but the overall impact on pupils' progress remains limited.
- Teachers generally apply the school's feedback guidance, but there is still variation in how and when pupils act on advice. Whilst leaders check that feedback is given, they do not evaluate well enough how it supports pupils to develop their skills.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers use clear routines that help pupils understand what they have achieved and what they need to do next. They question skilfully, model learning effectively and provide purposeful tasks that deepen thinking. However, this strong practice is not consistent.
- In many classes, teachers place too much emphasis on completing tasks rather than developing pupils' skills. They miss opportunities to revisit prior feedback or check whether pupils have acted on it. As a result, pupils have limited opportunities to reflect on their learning or improve the quality of their work.

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/6793326>

Yours sincerely



Liz Miles

Assistant Director