

A report on

St David's Catholic Primary School

**West Cross Avenue
West Cross
SA3 5TS**

Date of inspection: January 2026

by

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

About St David's Catholic Primary School

Name of provider	St David's Catholic Primary School
Local authority	City and County of Swansea
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Estyn does not inspect denominational religious education or the religious content of collective worship when it is a school with a religious character. Instead, the governing body is required by law to arrange for denominational religious education and collective worship to be inspected separately.
Number of pupils on roll	197
Pupils of statutory school age	171
Number in nursery classes	10
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 21.7%)	4.8%
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 9.2%)	*
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*

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Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	60.2%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	06/12/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/10/2017
Start date of inspection	26/01/2026

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

St David's Catholic School is a welcoming and caring school where every individual is valued. The headteacher has established a clear vision and recently managed significant change skilfully to ensure the school is inclusive. The school celebrates the diverse culture of its community with pride. This culture is evident throughout the school's daily routines and learning experiences that enable pupils to develop a strong sense of belonging. Staff provide a nurturing environment, build strong relationships and have clear expectations for behaviour and learning. These effective strategies ensure that most pupils remain engaged and develop confidence as learners. Most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those new to English, make good progress across the curriculum from their individual starting points.

Most teaching is effective, with appropriate challenge and support provided. Teachers use purposeful planning, effective questioning and consistent approaches to assessment to help pupils understand how to improve their work and to foster positive attitudes to learning. They use the environment well to develop pupils' independence, although outdoor learning and play-based approaches are at an early stage of development.

The school's provision for literacy is a strength. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills and to apply them in their work across the curriculum. Pupils make good progress in developing their Welsh language skills and benefit from learning to speak a few international languages and to embrace a diverse range of home languages.

Mathematics is taught well with flexible approaches enabling most pupils to make good progress in developing their understanding over time. Pupils have regular opportunities to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum, supporting purposeful learning, but opportunities for independent problem-solving are at an early stage of development.

Most pupils' well-being and behaviour are good. Staff display nurturing and respectful attitudes towards pupils to ensure pupils feel safe, happy and ready to learn. Leadership is highly effective and leaders have a clear vision for the school. Staff work well as a team and the robust systems in place to secure continuous improvement result in positive outcomes for pupils.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Provide meaningful outdoor learning opportunities for older pupils and further develop play-based learning for younger pupils.

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Spotlight: Managing change effectively to meet the needs of all.

St David's Catholic Primary School is a caring and inclusive community that adapts well to the individual needs of its pupils. The headteacher, staff and governors have created and implemented a vision that embraces the diversity nature of their local community. A strong focus on core values and culture permeates daily routines and learning experiences. Nearly all pupils feel a strong sense of belonging, are valued and included, and contribute positively to the life of the school and the wider community. The school's curriculum reflects this vision through engaging topics and practical activities that motivate most learners and help them become ambitious and creative.

Staff create a nurturing learning environment where positive relationships are prioritised, clear expectations for learning and behaviour are established. They provide a range of meaningful and engaging learning experiences. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning, respond well in lessons, remain on task and develop confidence as learners. During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), and those new to English, make good progress in developing their literacy skills and mathematical understanding.

Most teachers provide appropriate levels of challenge and support, that allows pupils to access learning successfully. Purposeful planning and meaningful questioning help pupils understand what they do well and what they need to improve. Teachers and teaching assistants regularly share learning objectives and success criteria with pupils, and assessment approaches are consistent and effective across the school.

Teachers use the classroom environment well to support learning. Most pupils know where to find information and resources, which encourages them to develop as independent learners. Play-based learning for the youngest pupils is at an early stage of development and provision for older pupils to learn outdoors is limited. This inhibits pupils' opportunities to problem solve, team build and collaborate through real life situations and to make sense of the world through practical first-hand experiences.

The school's approach to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills is a strength. Staff provide frequent opportunities for pupils to talk about their learning, and as pupils move through the school, most communicate with increasing confidence, enthusiasm and clarity. Pupils have access to a wide range of reading materials that reflect the school's diverse community, promote inclusion and support pupils' enjoyment of reading. Younger pupils read with growing confidence, expression and tone and by the time pupils leave the school, most read fluently, confidently and with enthusiasm.

Teachers give pupils worthwhile opportunities to apply their skills across the curriculum. Most pupils, including those with English as an additional language make good progress in developing their writing skills by the end of their time at the school. Teachers act as positive role models for the Welsh language by using incidental Welsh regularly. A whole school focus on Welsh sentence patterns and questioning, supports pupils' spoken language development well. Older pupils use a range of vocabulary to enrich their conversations in Welsh effectively.

Spotlight: A love of languages

The school delivers outstanding international languages provision. Teachers integrate English, Welsh and Spanish across the curriculum well. Pupils transfer their language skills, build confidence and achieve high language proficiency. The school celebrates pupils' ability to speak a variety of different languages, providing meaningful opportunities to share their skills. This encourages pride in linguistic identity, strengthens pupils' sense of belonging and sharpens pupils' curiosity of the wider world.

The school's curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural understanding, helping them become empathetic, respectful and considerate of others. Diversity, including the history of Black, Asian and minority ethnic people and the heritage of Wales, is embedded sensitively and effectively into the curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to learn about the world of work, are less well developed.

Teachers plan to develop pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding progressively. They use a variety of approaches that enable most pupils to make good progress in developing their skills over time. Teachers plan purposeful opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in their work across the curriculum and are beginning to consider how these experiences support pupils to problem-solve independently.

The school's provision for developing pupils' expressive arts is strong, with pupils producing creative artwork inspired by local artists. Nearly all pupils sing enthusiastically, many learn musical instruments, and participation in events and concerts adds enjoyment and purpose.

Clear and agreed approaches to behaviour and well-being ensure that most pupils enjoy school, behave well and attend regularly and to develop positive attitudes to learning. Strong support for transitions helps younger pupils settle quickly and older pupils move confidently to their chosen secondary school. Nearly all pupils feel safe, and happy and are confident that concerns are addressed effectively.

Pupils are encouraged to voice their thoughts and opinions, take on leadership roles and inspire others through assemblies and pupil leadership groups. Weekly 'Virtue Voyage'

sessions in older classes promote collaboration, independence and problem-solving using live data. Lunchtime and after-school clubs, including gardening, sport and Welsh, promote healthy lifestyles and engagement, while pupils demonstrate a good understanding of healthy choices.

Leadership is a strength of the school. The headteacher has established a clear and ambitious vision that values diversity, celebrates difference and places pupils' progress and well-being at the centre of school life. With strong support from senior leaders and governors, this vision guides effective decision-making and creates a safe, caring environment where pupils thrive. Leaders promote a strong team ethos, value staff contributions and provide high-quality professional learning aligned to improvement priorities. Robust monitoring and effective use of resources ensure the school secures continuous improvement and positive outcomes for pupils.

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/carer 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.

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