

**Report following monitoring**

**Level of follow-up: Special measures**

**St Mellons C.I.W. Primary School**

**Bridge Road  
Old St Mellons  
Cardiff  
CF3 6UY**

**Date of visit: September 2026**

**by**

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

## Outcome of visit

St. Mellons CIW Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection. As a result, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring special measures.

## Progress since the last inspection

### **R1. Secure long term leadership arrangements and improve leadership capacity at all levels including that of the governing body**

Since the time of the inspection, the school has undergone a significant change in organisation and leadership. Following a period of collaboration, it is now formally federated with two other schools as part of the Saints Federation of Church in Wales schools. The executive headteacher role helps to ensure long-term leadership arrangements for the school. Changes to senior and middle leadership roles have strengthened leadership capacity by clarifying responsibilities and increasing accountability. Through regular and robust monitoring and evaluation, leaders know the strengths of the school and where improvement is needed. They work effectively with staff to improve provision and pupil outcomes, and staff engage well with this support.

Leaders benefit significantly from working with colleagues across the federation. They collaborate effectively to improve provision and pupil outcomes, and staff engage well with this support. Through regular and robust monitoring and evaluation, leaders know the strengths of the school and where improvement is needed. Leaders are now confident in their roles and work well with colleagues across the federation to share knowledge and expertise. This has resulted in significant improvements to the curriculum and the quality of teaching.

There have been notable changes to staffing across the school that have increased the consistency and effectiveness of teaching. Nearly all staff understand their roles as leaders of learning and demonstrate an increased awareness of their accountability in improving pupils' outcomes. Staff continue to work together and engage in purposeful professional learning. This has helped to strengthen teaching in nearly all classes and supports pupils to make progress in their learning

St. Mellons is now overseen by the Saints Federation governing body. The school benefits from this arrangement by drawing upon the experience of governors with a successful track record of holding leaders to account and bringing about improvement. Leaders ensure governors are well informed and this enables the governing body to act effectively as a critical friend.

## **R2. Improve the quality of teaching**

Leaders have worked closely with the other schools in the federation to develop a clear and useful strategy for learning and teaching. This sets high expectations for the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils should make. Professional learning has strengthened teachers understanding of effective classroom practice. This has led to notable improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. In most lessons, where teaching is effective, teachers plan interesting lessons, explain tasks clearly and use demonstrations and video clips to reinforce key teaching points. They have sound subject knowledge and high expectations of what pupils should achieve. They often support pupils by referring to previous learning and provide pupils with useful feedback that helps them to recognise errors and make improvements to their work. Staff develop warm and caring working relationships with pupils, and this has a positive impact on pupils' levels of engagement.

Nearly all teachers are now reflective practitioners and work well within the school and across the federation to improve their practice. They have embraced the knowledge, expertise and professional advice available to them. The recent focus on observing each other's practice across the three schools has been successful in expanding teachers' professional knowledge and confidence.

## **R3. Improve pupils' skills in Welsh, reading and writing**

Leaders have worked with staff to develop a curriculum that focuses strongly on the progressive development of reading, writing and Welsh language skills. Professional learning, effective monitoring of planning and teachers' tracking of pupils' progress help to ensure that most pupils now make at least expected progress, and around half make more than expected progress. Teachers provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to apply these skills across other areas of learning.

Pupils now benefit from a coherent, systematic approach to the teaching of reading and the school's positive culture of reading. As a result, they are becoming more confident when applying their reading skills independently across a range of materials and discussing what they have read. Across the school pupils increasingly apply their reading

skills to support independent learning. In addition, staff support pupils to develop a love of reading, for example through regular opportunities to share and enjoy books and stories during ‘cosy toes’ time.

There is now a consistent, progressive approach to developing pupils’ writing skills. As the result of targeted professional learning and the sharing of effective practice, nearly all teachers use a range of techniques to teach writing skills successfully. This enables most pupils to build their skills progressively and express their ideas across different areas of learning. They develop a wide vocabulary and a sound understanding of punctuation and spelling patterns. They use these effectively to improve their writing. As a result of the school’s focus on improving the quality of writing, most pupils now write accurately and at length across a range of genres.

Leaders have worked with staff across the federation to create a Welsh language curriculum that builds pupils’ skills progressively over time. Staff use Welsh more confidently in their everyday teaching, drawing on a wider vocabulary and a better understanding of sentence patterns. For example, most staff regularly use Welsh to give instructions or ask pupils simple questions. This helps pupils to broaden pupils’ Welsh vocabulary. Many pupils are now enthusiastic about using familiar words and phrases in meaningful contexts. A minority ask extended questions, while a few answer appropriately, providing additional information when prompted.

#### **R4. Improve rates of attendance for those pupils at risk of the impact of poverty**

Since the core inspection, the school’s attendance rates have improved. There is a significant increase in the rates of attendance of pupils affected by poverty. This is due to the strong focus leaders place upon monitoring attendance, including for vulnerable groups of pupils. The school has strengthened its attendance policies and procedures and apply these consistently when monitoring attendance and punctuality. The appointment of a school attendance officer, who works with a wide range of local schools, has had a significant impact. This is particularly evident through the development of strong working relationships with families, who appreciate the support the school now provides for them.