



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**St Philip Evans R.C. Primary School  
134-340 Coed-Y-Gores  
Llanedeyrn  
CF23 9NX**

**Date of inspection: September 2019**

**by**

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

## About St Philip Evans R.C. Primary School

St Philip Evans Roman Catholic Primary School is in Llanedeyrn in Cardiff. There are 398 pupils on roll aged from 3 to 11 years, including 36 who attend part-time in the nursery. The school organises its pupils into fourteen single-age classes, plus the nursery.

Around 19% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is similar to the national average of 18%. The school identifies about 13% of pupils as having special educational needs. This is below the national average of 21%. A minority of pupils come from an ethnic minority background and around a quarter have English as an additional language. A very few pupils speak Welsh at home.

The headteacher took up her post in January 2000. The school's previous inspection was in January 2013.

Estyn does not inspect 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 religious education and collective worship to be inspected separately.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.  
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

## Summary

St Philip Evans Roman Catholic Primary is a highly successful and nurturing school. Most pupils make very good progress in their learning. They develop very strong literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills and apply these confidently. Their wellbeing and attitudes to learning are exemplary. Nearly all are kind, caring and supportive of each other.

Leadership at the school is very strong. The headteacher leads the school expertly. Leaders at all levels know staff and pupils well and work successfully to create a harmonious, nurturing learning environment. They create a culture of continuous improvement that values and supports all staff beneficially. The governing body supports them ably.

The school's curriculum is engaging and teachers and support staff ensure that all pupils, including those with particular needs receive highly effective support. This ensures that pupils are happy in school and engage well with their learning.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Develop provision and practice so that all foundation phase pupils have the opportunity to engage in purposeful outdoor learning
- R2 Share the highest quality teaching across all classes

## **What happens next**

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations.

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to the highly effective way that senior leaders involve senior and middle leaders, and all staff, in school improvement processes, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

## Main findings

### Standards: Excellent

Many pupils begin school with skills and understanding that are appropriate to or below those expected for their age. Most make very strong progress in their learning and, by the end of key stage, 2 demonstrate highly effective skills in many areas of learning. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their individual goals.

In the foundation phase, most pupils communicate enthusiastically and well. In the nursery, many pupils share their ideas clearly and confidently in their play. For example, when finding a pebble in the sand, they tell others that it might be a dinosaur egg. By the end of the foundation phase, many pupils listen with sustained concentration and explain their thoughts clearly using an effective vocabulary. By Year 6, most pupils have highly developed listening and speaking skills. They concentrate when others speak and contribute purposefully to group discussions, sharing ideas well. Many express their ideas clearly, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate. For example, they explain that during the Second World War evacuees might have been 'terrified' or 'apprehensive' at leaving their families.

Towards the end of the end of the foundation phase, many pupils read with fluency, and accuracy. They read aloud effectively with attention to full stops. Most use different features of texts purposefully, such as pictures, to help them understand stories. Most recall and retell information from books with useful details, for example recalling that a house in a story is haunted by a ghost. By Year 6, most pupils develop very strong higher-order reading skills. For example, they skim and scan factual and biographical information well to identify the important points in the text. When reading, many identify skilfully how authors add interest to their work, such as using similes to add description.

In the foundation phase, many older pupils write thoughtfully for different purposes, such as chronological reports and stories. They organise their writing well, with a beginning, middle and end, so that it makes sense to others. They use simple descriptive words very well to improve their writing, such as describing lies as 'big hairy whoppers'. Many use punctuation, such as capital letters, full stops and question marks accurately. Towards the end of key stage 2, almost all pupils write maturely and to a very high standard. They have a broad vocabulary and use their understanding of punctuation very well in their writing. Their writing is thoughtful and takes account of feelings and emotions highly effectively, using descriptions such as 'I'm all alone in this cage of loneliness and frustration.' Nearly all use their literacy skills very well in their work across the curriculum.

In the foundation phase, many pupils carry out simple data handling exercises confidently, such as surveying their classmates about their favourite fruits. They develop a beneficial range of strategies for solving number problems, such as splitting up larger numbers to make their calculations easier. Most have a strong understanding of place value and use this effectively when responding to questions posed by the class teacher. By Year 6, most pupils develop their mathematical thinking skills successfully and use this to calculate complex equations, such as

those including letters and numbers. Most pupils transfer their mathematical skills to a variety of contexts skilfully. For example, they work out the median and mean scores of games in the Rugby World Cup. They work systematically to identify patterns and trends when investigating probability. Most interrogate graphs and data very well in different contexts, such as when studying the improvements made to a suspension bridge or in terms of climate. Nearly all pupils use their numeracy skills confidently in different contexts across the curriculum, to the same standards as they do in their mathematics lessons. For example, pupils in Year 6 compare temperatures in Warsaw and Cardiff in geography.

Throughout the school, most pupils show enthusiasm towards the Welsh language. In the foundation phase, many pupils use their understanding of Welsh to greet others and ask simple questions confidently. For example, they ask for a drink or say 'thank-you' to others. By Year 6, many pupils have an appropriate command of simple sentence structures in the present tense. They talk about themselves and their families, using a few simple mutations accurately. They extend their sentences purposefully using appropriate conjunctions, such as 'and' and 'because'. Pupils that are more able write extended pieces of text appropriately, for example when writing a letter to Mr Urdd.

In the foundation phase, many pupils use their ICT skills beneficially to support their learning. For example, they make effective use of apps on a tablet computer to narrate scripts onto short films successfully. In lower key stage 2, many pupils use their ICT skills confidently and well to research information on a given topic. By Year 6, many pupils have highly effective ICT skills. They use software highly creatively to create sophisticated web pages to support and develop other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils have created a website to support the school's aims of being eco-friendly. Most use spreadsheets purposefully to create data tables and line graphs, for example analyse and compare traffic flow in two contrasting locations.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent**

Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to learning and wellbeing are exemplary. They feel safe and secure, and approach school life with enthusiasm and pride. Nearly all pupils show sustained effort when approaching their work, and demonstrate a determination to reach the high standards set by the school. For example, pupils in Year 5 persevere to describe and organise their thinking expertly when working with newly introduced concepts in maths.

Most pupils work well with others, collaborating effectively from a young age. They work productively as classes, individually and within smaller groups, sharing their achievements enthusiastically with each other. For example, in the reception class pupils work in small teams to collect, organise and count 'evidence' that is hidden in the outdoor learning area. Most pupils show pride in their work. They understand well that they can learn from their mistakes and celebrate them positively through the 'mistake of the week' award.

Nearly all pupils have a very strong awareness of how they are responsible for their own actions. They exemplify the school's value of respect for others through their responses to adults and the care and consideration they demonstrate towards each other. They interact productively and appropriately with their peers and adults,

showing an openness and respect towards others' points of view. Pupils listen attentively, are ready to learn during teaching sessions and understand the expectation placed upon them, in terms of behaviour.

Many pupils have a good understanding of what makes a healthy relationship. For example, pupils in Year 4 explain how these are evident in their own lives in school and within their families. Nearly all pupils understand how to make healthy choices relating to diet and physical activity. Many take part in wide variety of extra-curricular clubs provided by the school. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe online using 'smart rules' and describe well the importance of being careful about sharing personal information.

Pupils contribute exceptionally well to the life of the school and to school improvement through a variety of highly effective pupil groups. This is a significant strength. For example, the school council have improved behaviour across the school by developing a child friendly set of rules, rewards and consequences. Pupils understand and respond to this system exceptionally well. The 'Healthy and Fit' club have improved the uptake of fruit through their class tokens system and the digital champions have successfully supported both teachers and pupils to improve their ICT skills. As a result, pupils use these skills confidently and highly beneficially across the school to improve their learning.

Pupil groups support the local community very effectively. For example, members of the eco-group highlighted the importance of recycling and reducing waste at Christmas time through talking and meeting with parents and other adults at outside events. Additionally, the 'Mini Vinnies' group develop and share the school's ethos of respect and value for their community by working to recognise a need, and turning this concern into action. For example, they support the Cardiff Night Shelters project by providing much needed resources to help the homeless. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds contribute to these clubs positively and willingly.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Excellent**

In most classes, teachers plan purposeful learning opportunities that engage pupils well. For example, pupils analyse and evaluate the quality of interesting newspaper articles thoughtfully. Adults develop beneficial working relationships with pupils and this has a highly positive effect on pupils' confidence to share their thoughts and to try out new ideas. Throughout the school, adults' positive attitudes encourage pupils to help others and try their best. Most teachers have consistently high expectations of themselves and their pupils. Many teach in pairs effectively and this helps them to question, challenge and extend pupils' learning well. As a result, nearly all pupils work diligently, make strong progress and concentrate on tasks beneficially.

Most teachers provide pupils with timely and useful oral feedback during lessons. This helps them to identify where they could make improvements to their work. Where teachers provide written feedback, pupils respond well by editing and adding to their work purposefully. Pupils have regular opportunities to reflect on their own work. As they progress through the school, this allows them to develop a useful understanding of their own strengths and where they can develop further.

The school's curriculum is broad and balanced, and reflects the nature of the school's context well. Teachers design effective learning activities that reflect the cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity of Wales and the school. They link many units of work to a local or a Welsh theme. For example, Year 4 pupils recently visited Llancaiach Fawr manor house to stimulate their interest in life in Wales in Tudor times. Teachers and support staff focus well on planning the curriculum and providing the full range of pupils with engaging and stimulating activities that engage and challenge them successfully. Teachers' planning incorporates pupils' ideas and focuses well on what they want and how they want to learn. For example, Year 3 pupils suggested studying the components of a Celtic cross as a focus of their art lesson. This helps to give pupils ownership, purpose and relevance to their learning and encourages pupils to become ambitious and confident learners. The school provides pupils with a broad range of extra-curricular activities, including after school clubs that enhance the curriculum and improve learning opportunities for the pupils. Effective examples of these clubs are the coding and gardening clubs.

The school uses the extensive outdoor areas, including a playing field, pond, log circle and wildlife area, beneficially as learning resources. The nursery class has a well-organised outdoor learning area. This includes engaging areas for younger pupils to discover and learn through play, such as a mud kitchen. However, the use of the outdoor area in other foundation phase classes is less well developed and does not support consistently the ethos of this phase.

Teachers have effective systems to ensure that pupils have purposeful opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum. For example, they plan activities that encourage pupils to use their ICT skills and create multi-media presentations, drawing on their knowledge and understanding of skills from different subject areas.

The school's provision to develop pupils' Welsh language is effective. Staff provide pupils with suitable opportunities to develop their Welsh language skills and their understanding of Welsh culture. For example, members of the 'Cryw Cymraeg' encourage pupils to speak Welsh regularly, inside and outside of the classroom.

### **Care, support and guidance: Excellent**

The school's approaches to care for and support pupils are outstanding. They ensure exceptionally high levels of wellbeing. Leaders and staff have established high levels of respect and trust between staff and pupils. They understand and provide for the needs of pupils very well. School's leaders collect and analyse extensive information to track pupils' wellbeing, behaviour, attendance and progress. They use this information highly effectively to ensure that almost all pupils make very strong progress from their different starting points. Their detailed records help them to identify where pupils need extra support accurately.

The quality of support for pupils with special educational needs is very strong. The school's co-ordinator plans and oversees the implementation of a comprehensive range of highly effective interventions, such as those to help develop pupils' emotional wellbeing and resilience. A well-qualified and highly enthusiastic staff team deliver these interventions skilfully. The school engages with a wide range of external agencies, such as the support team for pupils with complex learning needs.



These have a highly beneficial impact on these pupils' progress and wellbeing. The school has very strong processes and support systems in place to manage the needs of pupils with emotional challenges. Working with a nationally recognised therapeutic approach to raising pupils' emotional literacy, and having staff who are qualified to provide this, the school integrates and supports highly successfully pupils with emotional needs. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Communication and engagement with parents and carers is a strength of the school. The extensive weekly newsletter provides current and detailed information of the school's activities. The school informs parents extensively about their children's progress and offers them beneficial, practical support. For example, leaders and staff organise a range of worthwhile workshops to help parents understand how to support their children in subjects, such as mathematics. In addition, the school produces comprehensive and helpful parental guides, for example to help parents develop children's reading skills at home.

There are extensive opportunities for pupils to be physically active in the school, and a wealth of successful extra-curricular clubs. The school enjoys strong links with outside agencies to support this element of its work, such as the sports department of a local university. As a result, pupils have high quality opportunities to develop their physical skills. The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

The school provides highly effective experiences to develop pupils' spiritual and moral awareness. Leaders and staff embed these skilfully throughout the curriculum and school day, with clear, consistent messages, such as the importance of caring for one another. Staff encourage pupils to take pride in the school and this evident in the way that the school anthem is sung in assemblies. The school is successful in promoting the understanding of equality and diversity and won recently a national award to recognise the effective work it carries out with respect to the teaching of tolerance and understanding of issues such as disability, race and gender. The curriculum effectively develops pupils' understanding of a wide range of subjects, such as injustice, relationships, similarities and the differences between people. Consequently, pupils are very understanding of each other.

The school works highly effectively to encourage pupils to take on important leadership and decision making roles. Groups such as the school's Senedd, eco-newts, and Criw Cymraeg influence positively the running of the school. This allows pupils to have a positive impact they have on the life of the school. For example, the Senedd have identified and implemented notable improvements in the school's environment.

### **Leadership and management: Excellent**

The experienced and highly effective headteacher, supported by her conscientious deputy, has established a clear vision for the school and communicated it successfully to staff, parents and pupils. This vision focuses on providing all pupils with a highly effective education, in a nurturing and caring environment, that gives them as good an opportunity as possible to achieve the best they can whatever their background. Senior leaders implement this effectively and have very high

expectations of staff, pupils and themselves. They have clear aims, strategic objectives and plans that focus very well on meeting the educational and wellbeing needs of pupils.

There is a very strong culture of teamwork amongst the staff. Individuals feel respected, and endeavour to support and challenge each other to ensure high quality learning, care, support and guidance for pupils. Staff at all levels understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities conscientiously and effectively, and most collaborate successfully in driving forward strategic priorities and school improvement.

The school has robust and effective processes to evaluate its strengths and areas for improvement. Middle leaders garner and analyse first-hand evidence of standards, provision and teaching for their own areas of responsibility. These include lesson observations, learning walks and scrutinising of pupils' work. They use this information to identify opportunities for further improvement and share this information successfully with senior leaders. This ensures that leaders and staff at all levels have ownership of school improvement activities. Leaders also involve a wide range of partners, including pupils and parents, in identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Governors have a very good understanding of the school's work and discharge their responsibilities productively. They participate effectively in setting the school's strategic priorities and in monitoring progress against improvement targets. They undertake high quality monitoring and evaluation tasks, and hence have a very good understanding of the school's main strengths and areas for improvement. There is an effective balance between support and challenge in the way governors discharge their role in holding the senior leaders to account.

Senior leaders gather the views of parents and pupils, and take note of these when appropriate. Examples where leaders have addressed suggestions from parents include amending the way it reports pupils' progress and setting homework tasks on-line instead of on paper. Suggestions made by pupils that the school has adopted include purchasing a silver cup to reward good attendance and introducing a 'consequence club' to improve behaviour. These have a highly effective impact on pupil wellbeing throughout the school.

The school has a strong culture and ethos to support the professional learning of all staff and in developing leaders at all levels. Senior leaders encourage staff to take responsibility for various projects and activities, encourage them to see them through and evaluate their success. This prepares them well for accepting more leadership responsibilities as their careers develop.

There are robust processes for evaluating staff performance and for supporting them in improving their practices. All teachers and support staff participate effectively in good quality professional learning experiences, appraisal and performance management processes. Performance management objectives link well to improvement priorities and teachers use the professional standards to structure their development paths purposefully. Senior leaders support teachers well to evaluate and improve their professional practice by providing them with an effective coaching system whereby they work in triads where they share features of their teaching with other staff and discuss ways that they can all learn from each other.

Senior leaders use the school's resources efficiently, with spending decisions and financial planning linking directly to strategic priorities and improvement plans. They make effective use of specific funding, such as the pupil development grant, to improve the learning and wellbeing of those pupils eligible to receive free school meals. There is an appropriate level of staffing, with teachers working effectively in pairs, often alongside teaching assistants, and operating a successful team teaching approach.

The school uses its indoor environment well and this supports effective teaching and learning. The playgrounds and other outdoor areas are clean and tidy, and include a pond and log circle that teachers use well as learning resources. However, outdoor teaching areas for many foundation phase classes are not well developed. Leaders have identified this as a priority in the current improvement plan.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent 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 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' wellbeing, 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

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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