



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

A report on

St Paul's C.I.W. Primary School

**Oakley Place
Grangetown
Cardiff
CF11 7EU**

Date of inspection: June 2023

by

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

About St Paul's C.I.W. Primary School

Name of provider	St Paul's C.I.W. Primary School
Local authority	Cardiff Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Church in Wales voluntary-aided primary school
Number of pupils on roll	224
Pupils of statutory school age	172
Number in nursery classes	22
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 23.0%)	34.3%
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 16.1%)	9.3%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	48.3%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	29/09/2015
Start date of inspection	26/06/2023

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.

Overview

St. Paul's Church in Wales Primary is a diverse, welcoming and inclusive school at the heart of its local community. A commitment to the safety, well-being and progress of all pupils is central to the values of the school. The school community values and respects pupils and families from all backgrounds, cultures and abilities and, as a result, everyone is proud to be part of it. Pupils describe St Paul's as a special place with 'many languages but we are all the same'.

The curriculum is engaging and exciting, and places pupils at the heart of their learning through carefully considered enquiry questions. A well-planned range of visitors and experiences provides valuable opportunities for pupils to take part in the creative arts, develop their physical skills and learn about their culture and heritage.

There is good provision for pupils to develop their English, mathematical and digital skills through the school and, as a result, most make at least the progress they should. However, the provision and progress in pupils' Welsh language skills are not as strong.

Most teaching, classroom practice and support for pupils with additional needs is of a high quality. However, on occasions, teachers over-direct pupils' learning and do not provide them with enough opportunities to think for themselves.

The headteacher and staff work tirelessly to ensure that pupils develop as a 'family of learners who believe, belong and succeed together'. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and are proud to be a part of such an inclusive and supportive learning community. The governing body has a strong understanding of the strengths of the school and works successfully with the headteacher, staff, pupils and parents to support ongoing improvement.

Recommendations

R1 Build on existing effective practice to ensure that all pupils have meaningful opportunities to develop as independent learners

R2 Raise standards in Welsh

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to how an inquiry based curriculum can support a diverse community school to prepare pupils for life as citizens in modern Wales, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main evaluation

Learning

Most pupils, including those eligible for free school meals, make good progress with their skills, knowledge and understanding during their time at the school. Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make appropriate progress from their individual starting points. Those pupils who speak English in addition to a home language make rapid progress once they have acquired language skills to access the curriculum.

When they start in nursery, many pupils have underdeveloped communication skills. By the end of their first year, these skills develop successfully, and many pupils listen carefully to adults and other pupils and share their ideas willingly. By the end of Year 2, pupils speak confidently about their work and express opinions clearly. As they move through the school, most pupils speak with confidence about their learning and give considered responses to complex questions, such as 'what does it mean to belong?'

Most pupils across the school develop their reading skills effectively. The youngest pupils get off to a good start in learning the sounds that letters make and, by Year 2, many read straightforward texts confidently using their knowledge of phonics to decode unfamiliar words. They demonstrate good understanding of what they read, for example thinking about what might happen next. A few read exceptionally well, with fluency, nuance and humour.

By Year 6, most pupils read at the expected level or better and use their reading skills across all aspects of their learning. They read widely and enjoy a varied range of books and authors. They use their skills to question what they read and infer and deduce information beyond the text.

Overall, most pupils' writing skills develop well. In nursery and reception, they acquire imaginative early writing skills as the year progresses. They enjoy mark marking for a variety of purposes and, by the end of Year 2, many pupils use simple sentences well with appropriate punctuation. Most older pupils build on this progress, and as they move from Year 3 to Year 6 many develop as confident writers with a good understanding of audience and purpose. Many Year 6 pupils use lively and engaging vocabulary and vary sentence structures to build excitement and tension in their writing. Most pupils' writing develops well across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 3 write letters to community businesses to ask for support for their sustainable gardening project.

Most pupils develop their mathematics skills well as they progress through the school. The youngest pupils count accurately to at least five, such as when they count the legs on their sheep as they decorate an Eid card. In Year 2, most pupils apply their understanding of number well and count accurately in twos, fives and tens when finding totals of money under a pound. Most pupils develop a strong understanding of place value and apply this when adding and subtracting numbers up to one hundred. By Year 6, many pupils use the four rules of number competently and confidently using a range of different strategies. Their understanding of shape, measure and data handling develops well. For example, pupils draw line graphs and

calculate the area and perimeter of irregular shapes with accuracy. These skills enable pupils to solve problems and apply their skills to real-life situations in other areas of the curriculum.

Younger pupils respond with enthusiasm to questions and songs in Welsh. By Year 3, a majority of pupils use basic language patterns and share personal information. However, too many pupils' Welsh language skills do not progress well enough through the school and the majority of older pupils' Welsh language skills are not well developed.

Across the school, most pupils develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills well. Younger pupils use a wide range of applications confidently to support their learning. For example, as part of their topic 'Does the camera ever lie', they edit photographs and consider airbrushing and other techniques to manipulate the photograph. By Year 6, most have well-developed digital skills and use a breadth of software and applications skilfully across the curriculum.

Most pupils develop their creative skills well and have the confidence to explore ideas, such as when pupils in the nursery mix powder paints on canvas, and older pupils work with local artists to produce screen prints of local landmarks.

Younger pupils develop their physical and co-ordination skills well through purposeful outdoor learning and loose parts play. Older pupils benefit from opportunities to work with local sporting clubs, such as Cardiff Rugby.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils behave well, are polite and respectful to their peers, adults, and visitors to the school. Nearly all pupils respect the cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds of each other, and this is a real strength of the school. Nearly all pupils feel proud of their school.

Most pupils feel safe and well supported in school. For example, older pupils know that staff will respond appropriately to the feelings they express when they complete their morning check in sheets. Many pupils are interested in their work, sustain concentration and engage enthusiastically with tasks. Most confidently express their views on teaching and the curriculum, and this influences what and how they learn. Many younger pupils understand the importance of making healthy choices, for example the importance of healthy eating, drinking water and exercise. By Year 6, pupils plan and prepare nutritious meals and describe ways they can support their own mental health.

Most pupils play well together and interact well with adults at lunch and break times. They develop their physical skills well in lessons and make good use of the outside areas during lessons and breaktimes. Many pupils understand the digital rules of their class and what they need to do to stay safe online. Most older pupils know how to keep their personal information safe, for instance by not sharing their passwords and not speaking to strangers online. They enjoy learning in the outdoor areas, which supports them to develop their well-being.

Most pupils understand the importance of identity. They develop their understanding of local and regional democracy well, for example by interviewing the Assembly Member at school on his childhood, education and job. Most pupils understand their rights and feel strongly about fairness and equity.

All pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 join pupil voice groups. These include 'Enterprise Troopers', the 'Wildlife Warriors' and the 'Kindness Committee'. The groups help influence the wider life of the school well. For example, the 'Get Creative' group contributed to a mural to enhance community cohesion, supported the local carnival and contributed to a community picnic. Worldwide Warriors encourage other pupils and staff to be eco-aware, for example turning off lights, recycling waste and working with classes on sustainability projects. Most pupils feel that senior leaders listen to their views and act on their suggestions.

Nearly all pupils are happy in school and enjoy their learning experiences. Pupils settle well when joining the school and quickly gain confidence. From an early age, most pupils develop extremely positive attitudes to learning and engage well with the learning experiences in class. They develop well as ambitious, confident and capable learners, and most pupils enjoy talking about their learning and progress. Many pupils concentrate particularly well on their enquiry-based learning activities. For example, they ask each other thoughtful and meaningful questions such as, "Do you have to travel to have an adventure?" Where provision allows, the pupils develop their individual learning skills well.

Pupils are very aware of the impact of their behaviour. Most pupils use a wide range of strategies skilfully to regulate their emotions and behaviours. They know how to treat each other and understand how to address the very occasional disputes and fallouts between groups of friends. They know that staff will deal with any incidents of unacceptable behaviour fairly and effectively. Nearly all pupils demonstrate good standards of behaviour in lessons, whilst moving around the school, in assembly and at breaktimes.

Many pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular clubs including music and mindfulness, baseball, and cookery. These clubs are well attended by all groups of pupils.

Attendance has improved since the pandemic and the gap between the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers has narrowed. Most pupils arrive punctually for school in the mornings.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school has developed a well-considered, innovative vision for the curriculum that reflects the needs of its pupils well. There is a particularly strong focus on shared values, inclusivity and embracing the rich diversity of the school community.

A range of engaging inquiry-based topics captures pupils' interest effectively through many authentic experiences. For example, during an inquiry about expression, pupils in Year 2 speak with interest about their visit to a puppet show and display enthusiasm when creating their own puppets. Across the school, inquiries invite pupils to explore interesting and challenging questions and as a result most pupils

develop their thinking and oracy skills successfully. For example, pupils in Year 6 discuss sensitive questions about racism with understanding and maturity.

Staff ensure that each inquiry focuses on key concepts that run through the curriculum, such as belonging or power. This supports pupils to deepen their understanding of topics well. For example, older pupils explore the concepts of identity and freedom successfully when learning about Guy Fawkes and consider whether or not we should celebrate bonfire night.

Teachers plan interesting 'launch days' at the beginning of each inquiry that engage pupils' interest very well. For instance, younger pupils show fascination when exploring coloured cellophane with a local artist at the beginning of an inquiry about changing colours.

The 'St Paul's offer' enhances learning well through additional experiences designed to meet the specific needs of its pupils. For example, regular 'Coastal School' sessions teach pupils about nearby coastal environments and the importance of staying safe. Younger pupils explore rockpools and learn about water safety while older pupils visit the RNLI base to learn about search and rescue at sea.

Further experiences provided through the offer include life skills sessions that develop pupils' independence and confidence successfully. For example, younger pupils learn to chop food safely when preparing healthy food and older pupils learn to budget when planning a family food shop.

Learning experiences are broad and balanced and build progressively on pupils' skills. Provision for literacy, numeracy and digital skills is effective. However, provision for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills does not build on their skills consistently well as they move through the school.

Teachers develop strong working relationships with pupils throughout the school and treat them with respect, which helps pupils to settle and gain confidence. They have high expectations for all pupils and plan a wide range of engaging and authentic activities. When most effective, provision is clearly focused on the development of skills and includes opportunities for pupils to make decisions to help them to work independently. For example, pupils in the nursery class have a wide choice of brushes and colours when painting, and older pupils can select a range of resources to measure the height of their sunflowers.

Across the school, most teachers use questioning well to support pupils to recall prior learning and deepen their understanding. They have high expectations and use ambitious vocabulary well to extend pupils' thinking. For example, Year 5 pupils consider the concept of sustainability and Year 6 discuss the impact of artificial intelligence.

Well-trained and skilful teaching assistants provide valuable and effective support both within class and through a wide range of interventions. Staff use carefully targeted resources well to support pupils with additional needs, and sensitively use a range of strategies to support the very few pupils with challenging behaviour.

Opportunities for pupils to make choices about how they organise and share their work are developing appropriately. For example, pupils in Year 4 use a range of digital skills to research the life and achievements of Iris de Freitas and present this in creative and individual ways in their inquiry journals. However, on a few occasions teachers guide activities too much and this limits pupils' creativity and opportunities to decide how they organise and present their work.

Most teachers effectively share what pupils need to do to be successful with their work. Where teaching is most effective, pupils have regular opportunities to generate their own success criteria, review progress and respond to feedback.

Most adults model the Welsh language in class and around school. However, they do not always progress beyond simple commands, greetings and questions about the weather and people's interests. As a result, as they progress through school pupils do not develop their language skills well enough.

Care, support and guidance

The school is highly inclusive with a warm, welcoming and caring ethos. The shared vision permeates throughout the school community and there is a strong sense of belonging where nearly all pupils feel safe, respected and valued. A strength of the school is the worthwhile opportunities for pupils to celebrate their identity, heritage, cultures and diversity.

The school offers impressive support to develop pupils' emotional health and social needs. Staff know the pupils well and respond with sensitivity to their emotional and social needs. They use a range of effective strategies in class and through intervention groups to support pupils and ensure that they are happy and ready to learn. The school also engages well with a wide range of specialist services to support pupils' physical and mental health and well-being.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is highly effective. The school has developed strong relationships with specialist services who provided successful support for children with additional needs. There are worthwhile individualised plans that support these pupils to make sound progress from their individual starting points. The school offers a range of interventions delivered by experienced and skilled support staff. As a result, pupils that receive additional help make appropriate progress from their starting points. Leaders track pupils' progress carefully to monitor the impact of interventions and ensure that they result in pupils making strong progress. Furthermore, adults identify and support other pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable to under achievement, for example by using a 'St Paul's Plan' to pinpoint the additional support or nurture that they need.

The school offers worthwhile opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, work during 'Refugee Week' provided pupils with the opportunity to reflect on the life of a refugee empathetically. Pupils' work on the Windrush generation provided opportunities to question why their experiences were important and what we have learnt from them.

Educational visits are used very well to enhance the curriculum experiences of the children. For example, pupils in Year 3 visited Big Pit as part of their enquiry-based

learning on safety, and pupils attend regular swimming lessons at a local pool using the train as sustainable transport. Pupils develop confidence through the opportunities offered to participate in individual and group performances, for example the extra-curricular 'Glee club' and dance projects linked to the theme of diversity following workshops at the Wales Millennium Centre.

Pupils develop their team working skills well through everyday classroom activities. All pupils are provided with a wide range of team sporting activities including rugby, cricket and baseball. The school offers thought provoking opportunities for pupils to broaden their horizons and raise their aspirations. As a result, many have already begun to consider future career choices, including as an artist, pilot, baker, restaurant owner, footballer and psychologist.

Through planned activities focusing on The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the school provides meaningful opportunities for pupils to participate in making decisions and to develop their understanding of the importance of active citizenship and global issues. For example, Year 6 pupils explore the themes of equality and non-discrimination and share their work with the Children's Commissioner for Wales as part of a project on 'What does it mean to belong?'.

The schools' arrangements to keep pupils, staff and visitors safe meet requirements and give no cause for concern. The culture of safeguarding across the school is strong, and all staff know their roles and work well together to keep pupils safe. They provide a wide range of engaging activities to highlight the importance of regular exercise, healthy eating and keeping safe online.

Leadership and management

Leaders have a strong vision for the school that drives the high-quality care and education pupils receive. The dedicated headteacher, senior leaders and staff create a welcoming, inclusive ethos where everyone within the school community is valued. They have a thorough understanding of the needs of all pupils. They work passionately and embrace change as a force for improvement. As a result, the school is a dynamic, vibrant learning community.

Leaders promote staff well-being effectively, ensuring that their views are considered and that they are empowered to make a difference. Across the school, staff feel valued and show significant pride in their work. Leaders ensure that staff have clear roles and responsibilities. These are aligned well to the needs of the school and often take account of the skills and interests of individual staff. As a result, the school is developing pockets of highly effective expertise, which benefit colleagues within and beyond the school.

The governing body knows the school well and provides effective support and challenge for school leaders. Governors have an effective understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. For example, they know that the strong shared values and inclusive ethos of the school is a strength, and they monitor the impact of interventions on pupil progress. The governing body has appropriate committees in place to meet the needs of the school and its statutory obligations. Governors have a good understanding of the school's finances, which allows them to keep track of spending and make decisions that contribute to improving provision for

pupils. Governors are proactive and know the school community well. For example, they meet with parents to discuss the school's revised relationships and sexuality education (RSE) curriculum and, as a result, answer parents' questions and concerns successfully. Governors ensure a strong culture of safeguarding in the school and promote healthy eating and drinking effectively.

Overall, leaders pay good attention to addressing national priorities, such as the implementation of the new framework for supporting pupils with additional learning needs. They have been particularly successful in developing a curriculum that meets the needs of their pupils. Leaders place a strong emphasis on ensuring that pupils make good progress in a wide range of skills and this results in positive outcomes for most pupils, including their well-being. Leaders manage the budget carefully and allocate resources to meet the school's needs successfully. For example, the construction of a new building for the nursery class has enabled staff to create a welcoming and engaging environment that supports learning very well. The pupil development grant is used effectively by leaders to support pupils eligible for free school meals to make good progress.

Leaders model professional values and behaviours that contribute positively to school improvement. They demonstrate a strong commitment to working collaboratively, and staff regularly work in coaching trios to observe and learn from each other's practice.

Leaders have established a wide range of monitoring activities that identify many of the school's strengths and areas for development effectively. They gather a broad range of first-hand evidence and identify relevant areas for development, which lead to improvements. For example, staff have developed beneficial outdoor learning areas and have improved the use of trips and visitors to enhance the curriculum. However, in a few cases, the school's monitoring procedures do not focus sharply enough on outcomes for pupils.

Leaders have created a positive culture that promotes and supports the professional learning of all staff successfully. Professional learning to improve teaching and develop the Curriculum for Wales is varied and includes personal research and a range of training from specialist external providers. This has a positive impact on developing effective classroom practice that meets pupils' needs well. For example, professional learning based on an inquiry approach to the curriculum has led to positive changes to teaching and a beneficial impact on pupils' oracy and thinking skills.

Leaders successfully establish productive relationships with families and the wider school community. For example, they provide effective information about the curriculum for parents through regular meetings and workshops. Community events, such as hosting Iftar during Ramadan, are enjoyable and support community cohesion very successfully. Leaders provide beneficial support for parents in response to the current cost-of-living crisis. For instance, they provide school uniform, food parcels and subsidise trips when needed.

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

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.

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

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