



**Report summary for parents and
carers on
St Christopher's School**

Date of inspection: March 2023

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

Overview

St Christopher's school continues to adapt its provision to meet the needs of its pupils.

Principles of respect, acceptance and tolerance are very strong features throughout the school, and this is evidently displayed in pupils' interactions with one another, staff and vice versa. Overall pupils are happy and enjoy school. The positive behaviour of nearly all pupils is a notable feature as are their exceptionally strong attitudes to learning, mutual respect and support for one another.

As a result of the strong and trusting working relationships between staff, families and pupils, many pupils make strong progress from their starting points during their time at school.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and pupils benefit from real life opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills. Where appropriate, pupils contribute to influencing what they are taught, and this includes vocational options for older pupils. These align well to pupils' interests and next steps in learning.

The leadership capacity at the school has been strengthened in recent years and the school now organises provision by phase. These phases and the classes within them are generally well suited to the needs and abilities of pupils.

Leaders at the school clearly understand that for pupils to succeed the school needs highly effective relationships with parents and other professionals. The school has taken appropriate steps to further strengthen its own well-being team.

The school benefits from a governing body with an exceptional range of skills and knowledge and these are being used to very good effect in supporting leaders as they develop the school.

Leaders are capable and ambitious and have a very clear vision for the future of the school that is understood well.

Recommendations

R1 Improve the systematic planning for and tracking of pupils' digital skills

R2 Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching, including feedback

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 the process of change management and the rationale for and impact of the school's provision and support panel, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

School context

Name of provider	St Christopher's School
Local authority	Wrexham County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Special
Number of pupils on roll	269
Pupils of statutory school age	173
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 Maintained Special is 46.2%)	48.4%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Maintained Special is 99.8%)	100.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/03/2014
Start date of inspection	06/03/2023
<p>St Christopher's is a day special school maintained by Wrexham local authority. The school provides education for pupils aged 6 to 19 years with profound and multiple learning difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions, moderate and severe learning difficulties and associated emotional and social difficulties. In addition to making provision for pupils from Wrexham, the school currently accepts pupils from Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Shropshire.</p> <p>The additional learning needs of pupils has become more complex, particularly in the primary phase.</p> <p>Nearly all pupils have statements of special educational needs. Around a half of all pupils are eligible for free school meals. A very few pupils are looked after by a local authority.</p> <p>A very few pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds with pupils transferring directly from other countries such as Syria, Turkey and Poland.</p> <p>There are 51 teachers, 30 classes and 126 support staff. The school is organised into four areas.</p>	

- Pebbles – for pupils aged 6-11
- Innovate – for pupils aged 11-14 with moderate to severe learning needs
- Discovery – for pupils aged 11-19 with complex and severe learning needs
- Stepping Stones – for pupils aged 14-19

The school was last inspected in 2014 and was judged to have excellent standards and excellent prospects for improvement. The current headteacher was appointed in 2019.

Since 2019, many of the senior leaders are new to post, with 14 new teachers. The chair of governors was also appointed in the past three years.

The school was previously a pioneer school for health and well-being.

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