



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

**A report on**

**St Andrew's Major C.I.W. Primary School**

**St Andrew's Road  
Dinas Powys  
CF64 4HB**

**Date of inspection: February 2024**

**by**

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

## About St Andrews Major C.I.W. Primary School

Name of provider	St Andrew's Major C.I.W. Primary School
Local authority	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Church in Wales
Number of pupils on roll	235
Pupils of statutory school age	177
Number in nursery classes	29
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 23.7%)	8.9%
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 13.2%)	3.4%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	2.8%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2024
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	28/04/2016
Start date of inspection	05/02/2024

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](https://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. Andrew's Major CIW Primary School is a happy, inclusive school that places a high priority on the well-being of its pupils. They clearly love coming to school where they make good progress with their social and academic skills.

Pupils understand how much staff care for them and there is a feeling of mutual respect between adults and pupils. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent. There is thoughtful and effective provision for pupils with additional learning needs. Pupils contribute well to a variety of groups and committees and give examples of where their influence has had a positive impact on school life. However, as they move through the school, teachers over-direct pupils' learning and, as a result, limit their opportunities to develop as independent learners.

The acting headteacher provides strong leadership and is well supported by other senior leaders. All staff work extremely hard to create this ethos which ensures a key role in promoting effective learning at school. Overall pupils make good progress with their skills in English and mathematics. Teachers and support staff provide high quality feedback to pupils and, as a result, pupils make strong progress in their learning, knowing which steps to take to improve their work. However, staff do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to make choices in their learning. Governors know the school very well and fulfil their role as critical friend, asking challenging questions about decision-making, which supports the acting headteacher in moving the school forward.

Leaders keep in close contact with the wider school community and build on the positive relationships with parents. There is a clear sense of everyone working together at the school and leaders make decisions in the best interest of pupils.

## Recommendations

- R1 Provide pupils with opportunities to develop their skills as independent learners
- R2 Provide opportunities for pupils to make choices in their learning to develop a more engaging curriculum

## What happens next

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

## Main evaluation

### Learning

During their time at school, nearly all pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those eligible for free school meals, make very good progress from their starting points.

Nearly all pupils in nursery and reception classes develop their speaking and listening skills quickly. For example, learning new vocabulary when engaging in role play in the Gruffalo café. By the time they reach Year 2, pupils combine their speaking and listening skills effectively. They listen attentively and respond to the contribution of others well, even when they have something that they are keen to say themselves. Most older pupils work very well collaboratively and relate sensitively to one another. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils discuss challenging topics with impressive maturity.

Most pupils develop their reading skills rapidly. The youngest pupils learn the sounds of letters quickly. By Year 2, most pupils know how to tackle unfamiliar words and have a number of effective strategies for doing so. Many more able readers can name favourite authors and genres. Most pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to make good progress in their reading skills and discuss the plot in stories intelligently. By the time they reach Years 5 and 6, most pupils are fluent readers. They make inferences from their reading and understand how authors write for effect.

Nearly all pupils in nursery and reception make beneficial progress in their pre-writing skills. Most Year 2 pupils develop their writing skills very well covering a range of genres, for example, when completing a newspaper report on the first moon landing. Most pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 make sound progress in their punctuation and grammar and learn to spell complex words accurately. They begin to write in paragraphs, extending their vocabulary to use technical words purposefully. They write confidently in a range of styles and for different audiences covering a variety of genres. However, they do not always apply their well-developed literacy skills across the curriculum frequently enough.

Most pupils make effective progress in developing a range of skills in their maths sessions and have a good understanding of how numbers work. The youngest pupils recognise numbers through a range of practical activities, for example, counting how many different trucks there are in the construction area. Year 2 pupils measure an area by counting squares and convert centimetres into millimetres accurately. As the pupils move through the school, they recall and build on previous learning successfully. They support each other well to tackle mathematical problems, such as when calculating the angles in a quadrilateral or constructing a triangle using a compass. Many older pupils begin to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum successfully, for example, comparing and interpreting data on temperatures during the year in New York and Cardiff.

Throughout the school, most pupils have a good understanding and recall of a few Welsh words and phrases. By Year 2, a majority use a suitable range of simple sentences. For example, they greet others and ask how they are feeling. By Year 6,

pupils' Welsh language skills are developing appropriately. They recall basic sentence patterns and are beginning to show more confidence when holding simple conversation with one another.

The younger pupils develop their digital skills well. By the end of Year 2, they use their skills purposefully, for example when creating a pictogram to present information on insects and producing simple code to programme a device. They use tablet devices confidently to share and celebrate class work with others, including their parents. As they move through the school, most pupils' digital skills build consistently on previous learning. They use an increasing range of software and equipment to present their topic work. For example, they use a green screen skilfully to bring photos and short films to life and produce a variety of presentations. Many of the older pupils are beginning to develop their data-handling skills. Most pupils are aware of how to stay safe online and can clearly articulate important messages, such as not to share personal information.

Most pupils' physical skills are developing well through a variety of stimulating experiences and activities that promote their health and well-being effectively. For example, when playing team games they begin to develop a good awareness of space and how this affects other players.

Younger pupils develop their creative skills effectively. They create paintings out of a variety of foods following the methods of a local Welsh artist. As they progress through the school, many older pupils use their well-developed creative skills to complete a range of activities across the curriculum. for example designing and making Mexican Masks and building their own Iron Man out of junk material.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

Nearly all pupils feel a strong sense of pride in their school and feel happy within its caring, nurturing environment. They have a thorough understanding of what is right and wrong, and why the school rules and values are important. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are respectful to staff and visitors and feel they are treated fairly. They are considerate of their peers and respond sensitively and maturely when their friends need support. Nearly all pupils feel safe and know who to turn to if they need help. They are aware of the importance of attending school regularly and punctually, and this contributes effectively to maintaining high rates of attendance.

Across the school, most pupils are ready to learn. They demonstrate confidence and concentrate for extended periods when learning and playing in the classroom or the outdoor areas. They show positive attitudes to learning and engage well in the wide variety of activities provided. Most listen attentively to teachers' instructions and concentrate on their work for sustained periods. They readily engage in new, unfamiliar experiences. For example, pupils in the nursery and reception classes develop their fine motor skills as they discover, hold and build with natural items in the outdoor classroom. Most pupils value the feedback they have from staff during lessons and make the improvements their teacher has asked them to make. They check their own work and make relevant corrections appropriately. From a young age, pupils take ownership of their learning and enjoy opportunities to work independently. However, as they move through the school, because of a lack of

opportunity, they do not always develop their independent learning skills successfully enough.

Most pupils have a thorough understanding of the importance of equality and respect for others. The older pupils consider and discuss children's rights and the responsibilities that accompany them, meaningfully. Most pupils have a clear understanding of the essential values that contribute to their development as responsible citizens, including treating everyone with respect. For example, older pupils buddy up with the younger pupils to support them during break times and well-being days. They are aware of the importance of sustainability and are considerate of the effect people have on the environment. The older pupils show an understanding of a variety of cultures intelligently, for example when learning about different religions and influential people during black history month such as Martin Luther King.

Pupils take great pride in supporting others through their elected roles across several pupil voice groups. They influence improvements and decisions purposefully across the school, for example members of the Criw Cymraeg promote the use of the Welsh language by awarding the Welsh speaker of the week, and regularly introduce Welsh phrases in worship. Pupils suggest imaginative ideas during meetings and feel that staff listen to their views and act upon them decisively.

Nearly all pupils have a clear understanding of how a healthy diet, regular physical exercise and good mental health impact upon their quality of life. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their physical skills during lessons, break times and during extra-curricular activities. For example, all classes participate in well-being days and visit the 'Emerald Forest' in the school grounds for outdoor activities.

Many pupils benefit from attending the wide range of extra-curricular activities staff provide for them. Pupils describe how these opportunities help them to develop skills around their interests, increase their enjoyment of school and enhance their personal well-being.

## **Teaching and learning experiences**

Staff have excellent working relationships with pupils. This creates a warm and caring ethos throughout the school that supports learning well. Teachers and support staff work together successfully to provide effective strategies for promoting positive behaviours. This means that nearly all pupils know what behaviours are acceptable and do their best to work hard and listen to adults.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, planned through half termly topics, that align effectively to the vision and principles of the curriculum for Wales and the school's Christian ethos. However, planning for the systematic development of literacy, numeracy and digital skills across the curriculum is at an early stage of development. Where teaching is most effective, teachers provide learning experiences that engage pupils' interest effectively. They link activities to previous learning and use skilful questioning techniques to build effectively on pupils' knowledge and extend their understanding further. Teachers across the school have strong subject knowledge and -plan specific objectives for learning. They explain tasks clearly to pupils and help them understand what to do. The school is beginning

to provide pupils with suitable opportunities to influence what they learn. For example, younger pupils make suggestions about the topic they wish to study whilst older pupils suggest areas they could investigate as part of their class topics. However, teachers do not always ensure that learning experiences stimulate pupils enough. In addition, they do not provide pupils with enough meaningful opportunities to influence their own learning.

Teachers know their pupils well. They assess their progress regularly and use the information sensibly to plan the next steps in their learning. In the best examples, teachers' feedback helps pupils understand their own strengths and areas for improvement. However, in general, there is a tendency for teachers to over-direct pupils' learning, which limits opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills.

Teachers plan suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture and heritage of Wales, for example in learning about y fari lwyd, the hunting of the wren and the Hen Galan traditions in celebrating the beginning of a New Year. They generally use resources appropriately to support pupils in developing their Welsh language skills. Across the school, teachers plan opportunities for pupils to communicate in Welsh regularly and, as a result, their Welsh language skills are developing well.

Throughout the school, the learning environment is welcoming and stimulating. The school makes good use of its outdoor areas to provide pupils with a range of activities that support their well-being. Across the school, pupils relish the time spent in their woodland area. The school provides a stimulating range of additional learning experiences through the use of extra-curricular clubs and a range of visits and residential opportunities. These enrich pupils' experiences, expand their knowledge and develop their physical and team building skills. For example, staff work diligently to prepare pupils to perform in the end of term musical and in the school Eisteddfod. The curriculum includes strong opportunities for pupils to learn and celebrate diversity in society, for example by learning about Betty Campbell and the poet Benjamin Zephaniah.

The school welcomes a range of visitors to enrich the curriculum. For example, older pupils develop digital skills through cybersecurity and coding workshops. Younger pupils develop creative skills through dance workshops and learn about the world of work through valuable talks given by parents. Pupils visit a range of places to enhance the curriculum. Older pupils visit a working farm in their locality while older pupils develop their historical knowledge by visiting Cardiff Castle. The older pupils benefit from residential visits to Llangrannog and develop confidence and teamwork skills through outdoor pursuits visit to in the Brecon Beacons.

### **Care, support and guidance**

The school's values culture is a strength and high levels of respect and kindness permeate the school. It provides a nurturing and caring environment where staff and pupils display mutual respect so that all members of the community feel valued. Provision to support pupils' emotional health and well-being is effective and staff plan additional support for pupils, where needed, to strengthen their emotional resilience. The strong links with families are a priority in the school. The school has a clear

approach to managing behaviour through positive reinforcement. As a result, the pupils' high standard of behaviour is a strong feature of the school.

The support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is a strength of the school. The ALN co-ordinator (ALNCo), with the support of the experienced acting headteacher, coordinate and oversee robust systems for the identification and support for pupils with ALN. The ALNCo liaises promptly and effectively with staff across the school to ensure these pupils make appropriate progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their learning. Parents value the support their children receive at the school. The school works well with other agencies, such as educational psychologists and specialist services, to identify appropriate strategies to support individual needs.

Throughout the school, staff provide opportunities for pupils to understand the importance of healthy eating and leading a healthy lifestyle. For example, pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities such as netball and physical circuits for the younger pupils and have many opportunities to be physically active at playtimes.

The school places a strong emphasis on inclusion for all. The staff are beginning to encourage pupils to challenge stereotypes and promote the school as a place where all are welcome to learn and thrive. Pupils explore their own spiritual beliefs and develop an understanding of cultures and religions around the world. For example, they learn first-hand about Jewish traditions from a regular visitor to the school. The older pupils participate in a purposeful whole-school project to learn about racism and the importance of respecting everyone. This contributes to their understanding of diversity and deepens their understanding of values in modern day Wales.

The staff provide regular opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles across the school and in a range of areas. For example, the Health and Well-being club implement and monitor playtime activities and have established a worry box for the pupils. The Values Committee have created an interactive prayer space within the school that is inclusive of all faiths.

Many pupils have purposeful opportunities to perform in school and in the community, for example during services in the local church. This encourages participation and enjoyment in performing in front of an audience as well as raising aspirations among pupils.

Staff communicate well with each other to support pupils. They understand their role in keeping pupils safe and maintain the school's strong inclusive ethos. The school's approach to safeguarding is robust and as a result pupils feel safe in school. Leaders monitor attendance and punctuality carefully and provide appropriate support to identified pupils and their families to support them to attend school regularly and punctually.

## **Leadership and management**

The acting headteacher provides strong, stable and sensitive leadership. She is ably assisted by an effective and dedicated acting deputy headteacher and the newly formed senior leadership team. Senior leaders work constructively with pupils, staff,

governors and parents to establish a vision based on a strong culture of well-being. Staff, pupils and parents say that they feel part of a family and this supports the caring, inclusive ethos that permeates the school.

Self-evaluation is robust and, in most cases, provides an accurate reflection of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The current school improvement priorities reflect the school's needs and local and national priorities purposefully. Senior leaders allocate resources to ensure that they have the capacity to address these priorities and evaluate progress against them appropriately. As a result, there is a good track record of bringing about improvement. For example, the school's focus on improving attendance since the pandemic has been successful.

Recently distributed leadership responsibilities are appropriate and senior leaders ensure that all staff contribute purposefully to school improvement. For example, the early years team ensure that all pupils have regular access to purposeful, planned outdoor provision linked to developing pupils' skills across the curriculum.

The school's arrangements for performance management are effective and all staff are fully involved. Individual targets reflect whole school priorities and professional development needs. The school places a high priority on developing staff and providing them with the necessary skills and experience to develop their careers. Performance management is used well to support staff in accessing worthwhile professional learning opportunities. The school benefits from strong links with cluster schools, which has focused on Curriculum for Wales and, more specifically, a shared understanding of the areas of learning and experience. However, teachers do not have enough opportunities to observe each other to share effective practice and establish greater consistency in the quality of teaching across the school.

Overall, the school uses its financial resources well. The deployment of well-trained and highly skilled staff is prioritised, and this impacts positively on the progress pupils make.

The governing body is very knowledgeable and highly experienced. Governors provide the school with strong support and, alongside the acting headteacher, manage the budget well. They keep up to date with national developments, which provides a beneficial context for helping them to monitor and provide robust challenge about the school's work. They have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and use this knowledge thoughtfully, to support the acting headteacher in moving the school forward. Governors ensure that the school has effective policies and procedures to promote the importance of healthy eating and drinking among pupils. Leaders and governors pay close regard to the impact of poverty on pupils' attainment. They provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to access a range of experiences and activities where finances may be a barrier. Senior leaders and governors ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school.

## 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](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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

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