



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

## **Report following monitoring**

**Level of follow-up: Significant improvement**

**St John Lloyd Catholic Comprehensive School  
Havard Road  
Llanelli  
Carmarthenshire  
SA14 8SD**

**Date of visit: December 2023**

**by**

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

## Outcome of visit

St John Lloyd Catholic Comprehensive 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 significant improvement.

## Progress since the last inspection

### **R1. Ensure that senior leadership roles and responsibilities are balanced suitably and that leaders at all levels have the capacity to secure improvement**

Since the core inspection, there has been a change of headteacher at the school. The new headteacher, who started in October 2022, has established a clear and well-understood vision for school improvement based on collaboration, trust and high expectations. Senior leadership roles have been thoughtfully reorganised so that responsibilities are balanced, equitable and aligned closely to the needs of the school. In addition, the senior team has been helpfully strengthened by the appointment of two associate assistant headteachers.

Middle leaders are provided with beneficial levels of support and challenge. Line management processes have been strengthened appropriately and are focused clearly on pupil progress and the quality of teaching. Middle leaders enjoy useful professional learning to develop their leadership skills. This includes helpful opportunities to collaborate with other leaders. As a result, middle leaders now have a much more secure understanding of their role in driving improvement in their areas of responsibility and contributing to whole-school priorities.

Governors provide the school with useful support and have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They are beginning to hold senior leaders to account more robustly.

Overall, the changes to leadership are having a positive impact on pupil progress and the quality of teaching.

### **R2. Strengthen self-evaluation processes so that leaders have an accurate view of the school's areas for development and they plan for improvement precisely**

The headteacher, supported by his senior team, has established a culture of openness, reflection and collaboration. Self-evaluation processes have been strengthened well. In particular, leaders now focus more closely on the impact of the school's provision on pupil outcomes. As a result, they have a generally realistic and accurate view of the school's specific strengths and areas for improvement.

Leaders at all levels and teaching staff are now fully involved in self-evaluation activities, for example through joint work scrutiny and peer observations. This is

helping to give all staff a better understanding of what is working well, what needs to be improved and their role in realising the school's improvement priorities.

Pupil's views are now sought on a regular basis through a variety of approaches, both at a whole-school and departmental level. However, the use of pupil feedback to adapt provision is at an early stage of development.

Senior leaders have a secure understanding of the school's improvement priorities and plan for improvement appropriately. Middle leaders are developing their capacity to carry out this aspect of their role suitably, although there remains some variation in how precisely they plan for improvement. The role of pastoral leaders in self-evaluation and improvement planning is at an early stage and continues to be a priority for improvement.

### **R3. Improve the effectiveness of teaching and assessment**

Since the core inspection, the school has developed an appropriate range of strategies to strengthen the effectiveness of teaching and assessment. As a result, many pupils make at least suitable progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Nearly all teachers have good working relationships with pupils and know their individual needs well. Most manage behaviour appropriately where necessary and create a calm learning environment.

Many teachers plan sequences of lessons carefully with clear learning objectives and design engaging resources to maintain pupils' interest. They provide clear instructions and explanations, and ensure that activities are suitably challenging. In these lessons, teachers use questioning appropriately to check pupils' understanding.

Where teaching is particularly effective, teachers pose challenging questions to deepen pupils' thinking and encourage extended responses. However, in a few lessons where teaching is less effective, the level of challenge is too low, questions do not always probe pupils' understanding well enough and there are too many low-level tasks. In these lessons, teachers tend to talk for too long and do not allow pupils enough time to work independently.

Senior leaders have reviewed and adapted the whole-school feedback policy which provides useful guidance for staff and is flexible to suit different subject areas. In a minority of cases where written feedback is notably effective, teachers guide pupils carefully on how to improve their work and make sure that they respond meaningfully. However, there remains too much variation in the quality of teachers' written feedback and how well they ensure pupils improve their work.

### **R4. Strengthen the leadership of, and provision for, the progressive development of pupils' skills**

Since the core inspection, the school has strengthened leadership of this aspect of its work suitably. The skills co-ordinators have undertaken worthwhile professional learning to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of strategies to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. In turn, they have provided

staff with helpful guidance and support to improve the teaching of, for example, writing and graph work in relevant subjects.

The skills co-ordinators work closely with curriculum leaders to plan and monitor the implementation of these strategies. Together, they are beginning to evaluate the progressive development of pupils' skills helpfully, identifying strengths and areas for further improvement, such as in reading, algebra and number. Leaders have sensibly prioritised certain aspects of their skills provision, such as the development of extended writing, and have appropriate plans in place for other literacy and numeracy skills.

Many teachers use the agreed whole-school strategies appropriately to help pupils write purposefully for a range of audiences and draw graphs accurately. Pupils comment favourably on the usefulness of these strategies across a range of subjects and their extended writing and graph work is showing improvement. However, a minority of pupils do not proof-read their own work carefully enough. Consequently, they continue to make regular spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in their writing. In addition, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to interpret and evaluate graphs.

A minority of subjects provide pupils with helpful opportunities to develop a range of reading skills, although provision to develop reading skills across the curriculum is not sufficiently consistent. Leaders have identified a need to provide more focused and meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills across the curriculum, and have started to take suitable steps to address this.

The school continues to develop pupils' Welsh language skills well. As a result, in Welsh lessons, many pupils make at least suitable progress, recalling basic vocabulary and composing simple phrases confidently. They read questions and texts in Welsh to locate information. The majority of pupils write paragraphs in Welsh with a suitable degree of accuracy. In general, pupils participate appropriately in Welsh speaking activities, although their pronunciation and independent use of Welsh is less secure.

Teachers provide a range of appropriate opportunities to help pupils develop their digital skills. For example, pupils find and manipulate images creatively to construct a mood board while designing a 1960s style cushion in textiles. Pupils also enjoy a suitable range of opportunities to develop their physical and creative skills in different contexts.

Overall, leaders and teachers are beginning to plan coherently for the progressive development of pupils' skills across the curriculum. This is starting to have a positive impact on the progress that pupils make.

## **R5. Ensure that professional learning focuses on improving classroom practice**

Senior leaders have rapidly created a self-improving culture, which has led to more collaboration between staff. They have reviewed and refined their approach to professional learning which is now aligned closely to the shortcomings identified in teaching and leadership. Where necessary, helpful, tailored support is provided for individual staff. Professional learning activities are reviewed regularly in light of self-

evaluation findings, although it is too early for the school to fully evaluate their long-term impact.

There is now a meaningful range of opportunities for teachers to develop their classroom practice through internal workshops and externally led training. Staff enjoy the opportunity to take leading roles and participate in professional learning sessions and sharing good practice across subject areas. Staff appreciate this increased focus on professional learning and feel more empowered.

Overall, the programme of professional learning is beginning to have a positive impact on several aspects of teaching such as effective questioning, the pace and challenge in lessons and planning for progress. Most teachers are beginning to engage in meaningful action research projects focused on improving their own classroom practice.

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