

22 July 2025

Dear

Following from your request made in accordance with Estyn's Freedom of Information policy, please find attached the latest monitoring report for Christ the Word School

Yours sincerely

Robert Gairey

Swyddog Arweiniol Cyhoeddiadau / Lead Officer: Publications

Estyn

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Estyn welcomes correspondence in both English and Welsh. Correspondence received in either language will be given equal priority.

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: 18 July 2025 12:56

To: Enquiries <Enquiries@estyn.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information request - Christ the Word Catholic School, Rhyl

Dear Enquiries,

Please can I ask if a new report has now been written? If so, please can I be sent a copy of it?

Yours sincerely,

Report following monitoring

Level of follow-up: Special measures

Christ The Word School

Cefndy Road

Rhyl

LL18 2EU

Date of visit: June 2025

by

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

Outcome of visit

Christ the Word School is judged to have made insufficient 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 maintaining the level of follow-up activity.

Estyn will re-visit the school in around four - six months' time to monitor progress against a sample of the recommendations.

Under the provisions of Section 39 (9) of the Education Act 2005, every annual report to parents prepared by the governing body under Section 30 of the Education Act 2002 must include a statement on the progress made in implementing the action plan.

The Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) (Wales) Regulations 2015 state that an induction period may **not** be served in a school requiring special measures i.e. as described in grounds 6 or 8 in section 2 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (1). The presumption is that schools requiring special measures are not suitable for providing induction for newly qualified teachers, other than in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, schools requiring special measures should not normally appoint a newly qualified teacher (NQT) to their staff.

Progress since the last inspection

R1. Strengthen safeguarding arrangements and address the concerns identified during the inspection

Inspectors did not evaluate this recommendation during this visit.

R2. Improve leadership at all levels, including leaders' ability to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning

Since the last time we evaluated this recommendation there have been significant changes at senior leadership level resulting in a clearly defined leadership structure. During this period, senior leaders have benefitted from working collaboratively with partners on resetting expectations and re-establishing important structures and processes. Leaders are now modelling their expectations of staff, and this is beginning to have a positive impact on building a culture of reflective practice and professional accountability. Generally, there is emerging evidence of a growing willingness among staff to engage with feedback and improve their practice. Overall, leaders have secured improvements in strengthening the culture of safeguarding and ensuring that the upper school curriculum is fit for purpose. However, the school has been unable to appoint a substantive headteacher and leadership arrangements for September have not been confirmed.

Overall, the new senior leadership team has demonstrated a clear and sustained commitment to strengthening accountability across the school. They have set high expectations for staff and through regular line management meetings, and focused quality assurance activities they now hold staff to account robustly for the quality of their work.

Leaders at all levels now have a clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The 'support and challenge' meetings between senior and middle leaders, have helpful common agendas and documented actions. However, follow-up actions from meetings are not always specific enough and leaders generally do not evaluate their impact on standards and provision. In addition, the focus of these meetings is mainly on operational aspects and on improving consistency. A minority of middle leaders still require significant support to operate strategically and implement change.

Leaders regularly evaluate the school's work through a variety of quality assurance activities to gather first-hand evidence. These increasingly involve middle leaders and align with the school's main priority of improving teaching. However, the activities focus mainly on compliance and do not give enough consideration of the impact teaching has on pupils' progress.

Summaries of findings from quality assurance activities are used suitably by leaders to provide useful feedback to staff on aspects of teaching and provision. While there are emerging pockets of effective practice in teaching, there remains significant variability and whole-school consistency is still at an early stage of development.

Senior leaders identify clearly which teachers need the most support to improve and are beginning to provide them with purposeful professional learning opportunities. Leaders have not fully evaluated the impact of this support on pupils' progress.

R3. Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils of all ages and abilities make strong progress.

Inspectors did not evaluate this recommendation during this visit.

R4. Ensure that the curriculum provides pupils of all ages with broad, balanced and relevant learning experiences

Inspectors did not evaluate this recommendation during this visit.

R5. Strengthen the provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills

The school has taken initial steps to enhance its provision for developing pupils' skills. However, the overall coordination of skills across the curriculum remains at an early stage of development and strategic planning lacks clarity and impact. Given the length of time since the core inspection, this is an important concern.

In the lower school, teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes. Where practice is strongest, pupils produce good quality writing and respond positively to feedback. However, progress in developing pupils' writing skills is inconsistent across classes, and in too many cases, pupils make limited progress. Although teachers have begun to develop opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum, these are not planned well enough or systematically. Overall, pupils in the upper school have limited opportunities to write at length. In a very few instances, teachers provide specific purpose and audience for pupils' extended writing. However, teachers expect pupils to complete tasks with too little planning which limits their ability to organise their thoughts logically.

Generally, teachers support the development of pupils' reading skills appropriately in the lower school through regular reading tasks and targeted interventions. They place a suitable emphasis on early reading, including the teaching of phonics, which helps pupils

to recognise sounds and begin to decode simple words. These approaches are beginning to raise pupils' confidence and improve their attitudes towards reading.

In the upper school, teachers plan activities that develop pupils' basic reading skills suitably such as the retrieval of information. However, opportunities for pupils to improve their advanced reading skills are undeveloped. In lessons, while a few pupils are willing to contribute verbally, teachers do not support pupils well enough to engage in discussions or develop their communication skills.

In mathematics, teachers in the lower school provide structured tasks to develop pupils' number skills and are beginning to use assessment to monitor progress. However, across the school pupils have very few opportunities to apply their numeracy skills meaningfully across areas of learning.

In the upper school, leaders are beginning to strengthen the provision for developing pupils' numeracy skills in discrete mathematics lessons. For example, there are a few useful opportunities for pupils to apply their procedural skills to develop their reasoning and solve problems. However, teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in context across the curriculum.

Teachers are beginning to improve provision for Welsh across the school. A few are beginning to use common simple phrases in sessions and provide opportunities for pupils to practise and use basic sentence patterns to ask each other questions. However, across the curriculum, teachers do not plan consistently to develop pupils' Welsh skills.

The development of pupils' digital skills remains an area for improvement.

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