

St Mary's R.C. Primary School
Queens Hill
Newport
NP20 5HJ

14/11/2025

Dear leaders and staff

Interim visit: November 2025

A team of inspectors visited St Mary's R.C. Primary School recently to consider progress in relation to two recommendations from the previous core inspection. The inspection team took the opportunity to observe teaching and learning, talk with pupils and staff, consider documentation, and look at samples of pupils' work. Below is a summary of the findings from the visit.

Focus of visit

Utilise the strong practice in the school to ensure that all teaching encourages pupils to think for themselves

- Senior leaders have focused well on developing teaching to improve pupils' thinking skills. This has included a phased introduction where a few staff trialled and reviewed proposed approaches. After careful reflection, leaders have introduced a structured problem-solving approach across the school successfully.
- Leaders have worked with staff to develop projects that give pupils opportunities to take ownership of aspects of their learning. These link closely to themes within the school's curriculum. This work is developing well and having a positive impact on outcomes for pupils.
- Older pupils research projects, before generating ideas and creating original work such as an animated advertisement or piece of artwork. They enjoy working collaboratively and identify the benefits of sharing responsibilities with others. Pupils are increasingly reflective and speak confidently about how they could improve their ideas or finished product.

Estyn, Llys Angor, Heol Keen, Caerdydd,
CF24 5JW Ffôn: 02920 446446
ymholiadau@estyn.llyw.cymru
www.estyn.llyw.cymru

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Estyn, Anchor Court, Keen Road,
Cardiff, CF24 5JW Telephone: 02920
446446 enquiries@estyn.gov.wales
www.estyn.gov.wales

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

- Across the school there are increased opportunities for pupils to share their ideas and opinions. They take part in regular discussion sessions where they are beginning to justify and deepen their thinking. Younger pupils often work collaboratively, such as when they discuss and select different methods for solving subtraction problems successfully.
- When younger pupils have the opportunity to select from an effective range of resources, they develop their independence, creativity and thinking skills well. For instance, they try things out and adapt their ideas independently as they use a variety of resources to make a large-scale model aeroplane. However, overall, provision that supports younger pupils to make their own choices, and follow their own ideas, is underdeveloped.

Strengthen the provision for Welsh and develop provision for pupils to learn an international language

- Senior leaders have placed a sustained focus on developing the school's Welsh language provision. They have supported middle leaders to create detailed schemes of work, develop useful resources and deliver effective training. This clear, strategic leadership has established a strong, whole-school approach to the teaching of Welsh.
- Middle leaders have collaborated with staff to create meaningful opportunities for pupils to practise their Welsh while deepening their understanding of Welsh culture. This enables pupils to learn about significant events in Welsh history and apply their language skills in rich and engaging contexts.
- The teaching of Welsh across the school is consistently strong and purposeful. Most lessons are well paced and support the progressive development of pupils' Welsh oracy skills.
- Nearly all teachers make regular use of Welsh as a natural part of teaching and daily routines to reinforce vocabulary and support language use beyond discrete lessons. In addition, the school is now beginning to apply these effective approaches more widely to support pupils' competence in other languages, such as French.
- As a result of the school's consistent and collaborative focus on improving Welsh provision, most pupils make secure progress in learning the language. They use familiar sentence patterns with increasing independence and participate well in partner and group activities. The Welsh language is becoming a natural and regular part of everyday classroom life.

The school's/PRU's latest core inspection report and further information on the process and purpose of interim visits can be found on our website:

<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/6803302>

Yours sincerely



Liz Miles

Assistant Director