

**Report following monitoring**

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

**St Richard Gwyn Roman Catholic High School**

**Albert Avenue  
Flint  
CH6 5JZ**

**Date of visit: February 2026**

**by**

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

## Outcome of visit

St Richard Gwyn Roman Catholic High 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. Improve the quality of teaching to improve engagement and pupils' progress in learning to address the shortcomings identified in the report**

Since the core inspection, senior leaders have developed a worthwhile culture of professional learning with a strong emphasis on improving the effectiveness of teaching. They have introduced a variety of beneficial approaches, including 'pedagogy pairs', where staff across departments work together to improve their planning and teaching, and weekly collaborative planning time. Senior leaders evaluate the impact of professional learning thoughtfully and use their findings to plan subsequent support.

Middle leaders are developing a clear understanding of their role in driving improvements in teaching and learning within their subject areas. They are supported well by senior leaders and use collaborative planning time effectively to focus on departmental priorities. As a result, leaders are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make in lessons.

Most teachers establish positive working relationships and clear routines that support pupils' learning and engagement well. They demonstrate secure subject knowledge and use subject-specific terminology appropriately. Explanations and instructions are generally clear, and teachers use starter activities purposefully to settle pupils quickly and help them recall their prior learning. These teachers monitor pupils' progress closely during lessons and provide helpful verbal feedback. They use basic questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding and adapt their teaching accordingly.

In many lessons, teachers have clear learning intentions and plan activities that build purposefully on pupils' prior knowledge, supporting them to develop their understanding. These teachers use a variety of beneficial strategies effectively to gauge whole-class understanding. They ask probing questions that encourage pupils to think more deeply and extend their responses. In these lessons, pupils make at least sound progress.

In the few lessons where teaching is particularly effective and supports pupils to make strong progress, teachers demonstrate enthusiasm for their subject which motivates and inspires pupils. They adapt their teaching skilfully to meet the needs of all pupils and challenge and support them to extend and develop their verbal responses.

In the few instances where pupils make less progress, expectations are not consistently high enough and tasks lack sufficient challenge, particularly for more able pupils. In these lessons, over-scaffolding and over-direction limit pupils' independence and thinking. Teachers' questions do not probe pupils' understanding, and they are overly accepting of brief responses. Although a few teachers provide useful, subject-focused feedback that identifies clear next steps, in many cases feedback is too generic and does not help pupils improve their work well enough.

## **R2. Ensure that self-evaluation and improvement processes focus more precisely on improving teaching and its impact on pupils' progress**

Since the core inspection, leaders have taken a range of well-considered steps to strengthen this aspect of the school's work. They have reviewed and refined the school's quality assurance processes to help leaders focus more closely on the impact that teaching has on pupils' progress. For example, senior leaders have changed the way that leaders record their self-evaluation findings to encourage leaders at all levels to consider provision in light of the impact on pupils' learning. 'Golden Thread' reviews are helping subject leaders to triangulate their findings from a range of first-hand evidence and to identify specific strengths and areas for improvement.

Middle leaders have received beneficial professional learning to support this aspect of their role. This includes development opportunities provided by the local authority and other external agencies. Middle leaders have received valuable support and challenge from their line managers. In addition, the introduction of weekly departmental collaborative planning sessions has helped subject teams to review together the effectiveness of their provision and to share good practice.

Middle leaders now have a much stronger understanding of their role in evaluating the impact that teaching has on pupil progress. They are starting to focus more precisely on the specific aspects of teaching that support the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. This means that they now have a more secure awareness of the specific aspects of teaching that require improvement than was the case at the time of the core inspection.

There remains some variation in how precisely leaders evaluate teaching. They do not always hone in on the specific ways that teaching helps pupils to improve their subject learning and skills. In particular, they do not always consider how many pupils are making progress in specific aspects of their learning. This reduces leaders' ability to monitor

progress with consistent robustness and precision. Despite this, overall, the strengthening of this aspect of the school's work has enabled it to secure considerable improvement in the quality of teaching since the core inspection.

### **R3. Develop a strategic approach to planning, evaluating and improving the progressive development of pupils' skills for all pupils**

Since the core inspection, leaders have strengthened the planning for the progressive development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital skills. They have taken a sensible approach in ensuring that these skills are developed in a meaningful way in relevant subject areas across the curriculum.

Senior leaders have ensured that co-ordinators have sufficient time to work with subject teams to plan worthwhile opportunities for pupils to develop their skills. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators work productively with local primary schools to plan for the development of pupils' skills as they move into Year 7. There are now beneficial intervention programmes available to support pupils with weaker skills. The impact of this provision is evaluated regularly to ensure that pupils are making progress from their starting points.

To evaluate the impact of skills provision on pupil standards, co-ordinators now conduct regular skills-focused quality assurance activities. By observing lessons and reviewing pupils' work they are increasingly identifying strengths and weaknesses in the literacy, numeracy and digital provision. Skills leaders share their findings with staff to help them improve the quality of opportunities pupils have to develop these skills in their lessons.

The literacy co-ordinator works with departments to ensure that there are suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their advanced reading and extended writing skills. There are relevant whole-school and bespoke professional learning experiences offered to staff to support them with this work. Leaders promote a whole-school culture of reading well. In general, literacy provision is having a positive impact on developing pupils' skills. However, in a few instances, literacy-focused tasks across the curriculum are poorly planned or lack challenge.

There are improved opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in a few relevant subjects across the curriculum. There are now worthwhile opportunities in a few relevant subjects for pupils to present and analyse data. This is starting to have a positive impact on how well pupils develop their numeracy skills.

Leaders have undertaken a detailed audit of the current opportunities available for pupils to develop their digital skills, and have identified the professional learning needed for staff to develop digital provision further. However, the planning for the progressive development of pupils' digital skills remains in its early stages.

#### **R4. Ensure that all pupils have full access to provision to develop their Welsh language skills**

Since the core inspection, the school has strengthened its provision to develop pupils' Welsh language skills. The allocation of curriculum time for teaching Welsh is consistent across Years 7 to 11. In addition, most pupils in Years 10 and 11 are entered for a GCSE qualification in Welsh.

The Welsh department has been notably strengthened and staff have worked purposefully to increase opportunities for pupils to practise spoken Welsh in lessons. They have improved the learning environment to include engaging displays and purposeful learning walls, which support and encourage pupils to develop and improve their language skills.

In Welsh lessons, many pupils listen attentively, respond appropriately to basic questions and participate well in structured language activities. The majority pronounce words accurately and are beginning to extend their vocabulary and sustain short conversations in Welsh. However, particularly among older pupils, confidence in speaking is less well developed. They rely on vocabulary lists and sentence builders to support their responses.

The school has taken purposeful steps to strengthen the promotion of the Welsh language and culture. There are valuable cultural experiences for pupils through activities such as the residential visit to Glan Llyn and the school eisteddfod. The pupil voice group 'Cyngor Cymraeg' plays an increasingly influential role in promoting the Welsh language across the school. They have produced a helpful booklet of Welsh terminology and everyday phrases to support staff and lead on initiatives such as 'Diwrnod Shwmae Su'mae'.

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