

Report summary for parents and carers on St Mary's C in W Voluntary Aided School

Date of inspection: 27/04/2026

Summary

Senior leaders work well as a team and make a significant contribution to the school's positive ethos. Staff set high expectations for themselves and for pupils' progress. They ensure that pupils feel valued in a safe learning environment and place a high priority on their well-being.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school each day. They take great pride in their school and feel part of its inclusive community. Pupils are extremely polite and respectful towards adults, visitors and each other. Older pupils act as positive role models, and many take on leadership roles that build their confidence and sense of responsibility.

Adults and pupils enjoy positive working relationships, and most pupils engage very well in their learning and make good progress as they move through the school. Most teachers plan activities that are purposeful, build on prior learning, and provide an appropriate level of challenge to support pupils well in the development of their skills and knowledge. However, there is a tendency for staff to over direct pupils' learning and this limits their opportunities to develop independence. Most teachers provide well planned opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively, enabling them to value the contributions of others.

Most pupils show pride in the Welsh language and culture. Staff model Welsh exceptionally well and pupils develop confidently as Welsh speakers. Teachers incorporate Welsh effectively in many lessons. Across the school, pupils see, hear and speak the Welsh language throughout the school day. This develops their understanding, vocabulary and enthusiasm for learning the language very well.

Staff use questioning effectively to gain a valuable insight into pupils' levels of understanding and to support them to make progress. Many staff question pupils effectively and provide useful verbal feedback while learning is taking place. A minority of staff provide valuable verbal feedback that accurately targets the next steps in pupils' learning. However, across the school, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to respond to feedback. This limits their capacity to learn how to improve their work.

Recommendations and next steps

We have made two recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Ensure that all teachers provide pupils with helpful feedback and give them opportunities to respond and improve their work
- R2 Enable all pupils to make choices and influence how they learn to further develop their skills as independent learners

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

Full Report

If you would like to read more about Estyn's evaluation of the school, please follow this link to the [full report](#)

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