

**A report on**

**St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School**

**Ringland Circle  
Newport  
NP19 9PQ**

**Date of inspection: June 2026**

**by**

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

## About St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School

|                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Name of provider                                                                                                                                                                               | St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School |
| Local authority                                                                                                                                                                                | Newport City Council             |
| Language of the provider                                                                                                                                                                       | English                          |
| School category according to Welsh-medium provision                                                                                                                                            | English- medium                  |
| Type of school                                                                                                                                                                                 | Primary                          |
| Religious character                                                                                                                                                                            | Roman Catholic                   |
| Number of pupils on roll                                                                                                                                                                       | 211                              |
| Pupils of statutory school age                                                                                                                                                                 | 182                              |
| Number in nursery classes                                                                                                                                                                      | 0                                |
| Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 21.7%) | 15.2%                            |
| Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 9.2%)                | 4.9%                             |
| Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home                                                                                                                                                   | *                                |
| Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language                                                                                                                                    | 32.4%                            |
| Lead partner in Initial teacher education                                                                                                                                                      | Yes                              |
| Date of headteacher appointment                                                                                                                                                                | 01/05/2018                       |

A report on St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School  
June 2026

|                                                   |            |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable) | 22/03/2019 |
| Start date of inspection                          | 22/06/2026 |

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:

[mylocalschool.gov.wales](https://mylocalschool.gov.wales)

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

## Summary

St Gabriel's Roman Catholic Primary School provides a safe, positive and caring ethos where the learning and achievement and well-being of every pupil matters. Staff build strong relationships with pupils and communicate high expectations for their behaviour and learning. Most pupils behave well in school. They feel safe and happy in the school's nurturing and inclusive environment and treat each other with care and respect.

The school's curriculum provides a broad range of interesting learning experiences that engage most pupils well. The school gives valuable opportunities for pupils to build upon their skills systematically. This enables most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those eligible for free school meals, to make good overall progress in the development of their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. During their time in school, most pupils make very good progress in developing their Welsh language skills.

Teachers use assessment information well to ensure that lessons meet the needs of pupils. They provide valuable feedback to pupils. This supports their learning and helps them to improve their work effectively. Teachers ensure that there are meaningful opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across the curriculum, though too often these lessons are over-directed, and this limits pupils' independent learning.

Leaders have a thorough understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school and a clear vision and pathway to making improvements, which all staff share and work towards beneficially. School leaders have a good track record of making and sustaining improvements over time, such as the development of a successful curriculum and a highly effective approach to teaching the Welsh language. Despite a sustained focus, pupils' attendance rates remain low. Governors provide worthwhile support and challenge to school leaders.

## Recommendations

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

- R1      Improve attendance
- R2      Improve pupils' independent learning skills by reducing over direction in teaching

## What happens next

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

## Main evaluation

St Gabriel's Roman Catholic Primary School provides a caring and inclusive environment for pupils to learn and develop. The well-being of pupils is central to the school's work and staff work together successfully to build pupils' self-belief and pride in their achievements. Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. Most pupils throughout the school behave well and participate in their learning enthusiastically. Most pupils show good self-awareness and self-control, maintaining a strong focus in lessons and responding well to instructions and guidance. There are strong relationships between staff and pupils, which result in most pupils feeling safe, valued and free to express themselves.

The school's curriculum design is well-considered and provides pupils with a good breadth and depth of learning across all areas of learning and experience. The development of pupils' skills is interwoven successfully, and pupils benefit from a range of engaging and purposeful learning experiences. The curriculum has a strong community focus and there are meaningful opportunities for pupils to learn about the local area and the wider world. This develops their sense of belonging and identity well. There are rich opportunities for pupils to develop an appreciation of their own culture and those of others, which contribute well to their understanding and empathy.

Pupils develop their spiritual awareness well as they move through the school. Regular opportunities for reflection support pupils to consider their own beliefs as well as those of others. The school offers valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their social and

emotional skills. This means that many older pupils reflect sensitively, show a good understanding of one another and function well in social situations.

The curriculum allows for skills to be developed systematically and meaningfully, which enables most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those who are eligible for free school meals, to make good overall progress. Most pupils make good progress in their oracy skills throughout the school. The youngest pupils develop vocabulary quickly, modelled well by staff and enhanced by the strong relationships that develop between staff and pupils. By the time they leave the school, most pupils collaborate well in groups and show sophistication in the way they communicate. Most pupils' reading skills develop well over time. Teachers display a good understanding of how to teach reading effectively and this contributes well to the progress that pupils make. There are meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills, and many pupils make sound progress over time.

Most younger pupils make solid progress in developing their mathematics skills. They develop a secure understanding of the value of numbers and experiment with capacity and volume in practical situations. Most older pupils make good progress in developing a broad range of skills and by the time they leave school, many are confident, competent mathematicians who are well-motivated and keen to apply their well-developed numeracy skills. Many pupils develop good digital skills over time. Learning experiences offer pupils a wide range of opportunities to apply their skills progressively and in purposeful contexts.

### **Spotlight: Effective approaches to developing pupils' Welsh language skills**

Leaders and teachers ensure learning experiences build pupils' skills progressively and provide regular opportunities for pupils to consolidate new learning. Consequently, many pupils make strong progress in developing their Welsh language skills. Professional learning has helped staff to gain a beneficial understanding of 'working memory' and effective language acquisition. This has helped the school to improve and refine its approach to teaching Welsh. The Welsh language is used purposefully and with relevance by pupils and staff throughout the school. By the time pupils leave the school, many pupils speak confidently in a range of situations and develop a wide vocabulary. They speak in extended sentences and ask relevant questions. Many older pupils use past, present and future tenses accurately, for example when speaking about their experiences both in and out of school.

Teachers make good use of ongoing assessment and timely feedback to enhance the progress that pupils make within lesson. Most pupils respond well to feedback and reflect

on their learning regularly and meaningfully. Teachers adapt lessons well in light of assessment information and this means that learning activities match pupils' learning needs successfully. Overall, teachers plan too few opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas, influence how they learn or to persevere and explore their own lines of enquiry. This limits pupils' development as independent learners.

The school supports pupils with ALN well. Staff identify pupils that need additional support at an early stage and offer tailored programmes to meet their needs. There are effective strategies which support pupils' individual social and emotional needs well. Support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. They are committed and well-trained, forming purposeful, positive relationships with pupils. Pupils with ALN benefit well from the valuable contribution that support staff make, helping them to make good progress from their starting points.

The school promotes pupils' regular attendance at school suitably. The attendance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those with ALN though remains low in comparison with their peers.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, based on providing pupils with a strong sense of confidence, and equipping them with the skills that they need to become ambitious learners. Staff and leaders share this vision and work positively and in collaboration with one another to achieve it. Leaders have a detailed understanding of the school's areas of strength and those that require improvement, which is gained through robust and well-planned evaluation processes.

Leaders identify and address the areas that need improvement with a sharp focus and purposeful actions, which helps to ensure that good progress is made against priorities. The pace of school improvement is effective and sustained well over time. Leaders at all levels have a strong track-record of making and sustaining progress against school and national priorities which benefit pupil outcomes positively. Staff engage well in high quality professional learning experiences to improve their practice in important areas such as teaching the Welsh language. Leaders use effective coaching and mentoring approaches to support and enhance staff development. Governors carry out their roles effectively. They offer strong support to school leaders, share their expertise readily and hold the school to account valuably.

### **Additional information**

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern.

The school's arrangements for site management do not give any cause for concern.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

## **Evidence base of the report**

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carers and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

## Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

|               |                          |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| nearly all =  | with very few exceptions |
| most =        | 90% or more              |
| many =        | 70% or more              |
| a majority =  | over 60%                 |
| half =        | 50%                      |
| around half = | close to 50%             |
| a minority =  | below 40%                |
| few =         | below 20%                |
| very few =    | less than 10%            |

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publications Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales)

© Crown Copyright 2026: This report may be re used free of charge: (a) in any format or medium; and (b) may be translated by or on behalf of an education and/or training provider in respect of which this report relates into any language, in each case provided that it is re used and/or translated accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must, in each case (including in the case of a translation) be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 24/08/2026