



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**St Anne's R.C. Primary School  
Prince Charles Road  
Wrexham  
LL13 8TH**

**Date of inspection: February 2019**

**by**

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

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

St Anne's Catholic Primary School is in Caia Park, on the outskirts of Wrexham, in Wrexham local authority. There are currently 185 pupils on roll between the ages of 3 and 11, including 17 part-time pupils in the nursery. The school has eight single-age classes, and a resource provision class for seven pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

The three-year rolling average of pupils eligible for free school meals is around 32%, which is notably above the national average of 18%. The school identifies around 25% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This is slightly above the national average of 21%. A very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Around 41% of pupils have English as an additional language and no pupils speak Welsh at home. About 11% of pupils are from the Traveller Community.

The school was last inspected in January 2013. The current headteacher took up their post in September 2015.

Estyn does not inspect religious education or the religious content of collective worship when it is a school with a religious character. Instead the governing body is required by law to arrange for religious education and collective worship to be inspected separately.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.  
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

## Summary

Staff at St Anne's Catholic Primary School place strong importance on ensuring pupils' wellbeing and providing a high level of support and guidance. There is an exceptionally warm and caring atmosphere in the school and this helps pupils to feel valued. Most pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.

The headteacher has been successful in developing a collaborative ethos among staff. She shares their vision and aspirations for improvement with all stakeholders effectively. As pupils move through the school, most become very capable mathematicians who enjoy solving problems. They develop effective speaking and listening skills, often from low starting points, and make strong progress with their reading.

Staff generally plan stimulating and engaging indoor and outdoor learning activities, and most take good account of pupils' ideas. This helps pupils to become independent, resilient and confident learners.

| <b>Inspection area</b>                     | <b>Judgement</b> |
|--|------------------|
| <b>Standards</b>                           | <b>Good</b>      |
| <b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b> | <b>Good</b>      |
| <b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>   | <b>Good</b>      |
| <b>Care, support and guidance</b>          | <b>Good</b>      |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>           | <b>Good</b>      |

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Address the health and safety issues highlighted during inspection
- R2 Ensure that teaching and learning experiences meet the needs of all pupils
- R3 Monitor the impact of school improvement planning robustly, and share good practice regularly across the school
- R4 Develop opportunities for all pupils to make choices about how and what they learn
- R5 Improve pupils' attendance

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

On entry to the nursery, pupils' skills vary considerably. By the end of key stage 2, most make good progress. Most pupils identified as having additional learning needs and those in the resource provision make worthwhile progress towards their personal goals. Pupils with English as an additional language make strong progress from their starting points. The progress of more able pupils varies too much, as teachers sometimes do not challenge them well enough.

Across the school most pupils are confident speakers. From an early age, they enjoy talking about their learning with visitors. Most pupils listen well and value each other's ideas and opinions. Most pupils use 'talking partners' very successfully to move forward when they are finding a piece of work hard.

By Year 2, most pupils apply phonic strategies well when reading unfamiliar words. Many more able pupils read with increasing levels of fluency and expression, and alter their voice to indicate that a character is speaking. Nearly all key stage 2 pupils use a broad range of reading strategies well. They decode unfamiliar words and scan ahead quickly to predict what will happen next. Most extract information from books and websites effectively to support their factual writing linked to topics.

Many pupils in the nursery and reception classes enjoy experimenting with mark-making and eagerly make letter shapes and patterns in the sand. Many try to write their names in chalk on the playground. By the end of Year 2, most pupils organise their ideas well, and present engaging pieces of extended writing. For example, they use interesting adjectives to enliven their story of the whale and the snail.

As they progress through key stage 2, pupils structure their writing appropriately for different purposes. Most use similes and adjectives to add interest to their poems and present a balanced argument on the pros and cons of renewable energy. Many older key stage 2 pupils write to a good standard. They use paragraphs and redraft their work successfully to make improvements. In Year 6, pupils use their skills well when writing an emotive account of Banquo's ghost appearing at Macbeth's banquet, for instance. However, pupils do not always present or punctuate their work well enough, when writing independently at length.

Many pupils in the resource provision are confident speakers. A few read their own work back and show pride and enthusiasm when talking about their work. They use electronic equipment confidently to record each other speaking.

Throughout the school, most pupils make solid progress in developing their Welsh language skills. In the foundation phase, many respond enthusiastically to instructions given by adults. They enjoy talking about how they feel and what the weather is like. By Year 6, many pupils sustain a conversation about their likes and dislikes, favourite food and the clubs they attend confidently. Many read simple texts with growing understanding and generally accurate pronunciation. They answer basic questions about their reading book correctly.

Most pupils across the school develop a sound knowledge of mathematical concepts and are very confident mathematicians by the time they reach Year 6. In the foundation phase, many younger pupils demonstrate their understanding of repeating patterns and early number recognition well. Many Year 2 pupils weigh objects accurately when investigating the weight of parcels. Older pupils apply their numeracy skills successfully to solve problems, for example, when recording distances that pupils travel on holiday. They work out who has travelled the furthest, and the difference between the shortest journey and the longest, competently.

Towards the end of key stage 2, most pupils use mental and written mathematical strategies successfully. Most carry out written calculations independently and correctly, and check true or false number facts quickly. Nearly all give sensible explanations for their answers. They demonstrate a sound understanding of the relationships between operations, such as multiplication and division, percentages and fractions. Most apply their numeracy skills consistently well across the curriculum, for example, when collecting and recording temperatures during different months as part of their science work, and recording results on a line graph.

Throughout the school, most pupils use a broad range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills confidently. Many create and upload content independently to an online platform, and add short video clips. They access games and applications on a computer tablet successfully to support the development of their mathematical, phonic and spelling skills. Most key stage 2 pupils use their word processing skills well to research and present information as part of their topic work. Many use an electronic database competently to input census information and extract and analyse data from this competently

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good**

Nearly all pupils feel safe and happy in school and have a secure knowledge of how to stay safe online. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily. They take part in physical activity regularly, including using a local gym to keep fit. Nearly all pupils enjoy attending a wide range of after school clubs which contribute positively to their wellbeing and fitness.

Most pupils show respect to others and behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. They are polite and welcoming to visitors and share their learning experiences enthusiastically. Pupils work together willingly and co-operate successfully.

Pupils respond positively to staff and are happy to approach them to discuss any worries or concerns. The school responds appropriately to their concerns and pupils take part in discussions about using and recognising appropriate behaviours maturely.

When pupils work independently, nearly all make sensible choices and persevere well. Many display good levels of perseverance and resilience. Older pupils have a secure understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. Most pupils are aware of their targets for improvement, and the strategies they would use to achieve these.

Many pupils take on leadership roles willingly, and carry out their duties effectively. For example, the active Eco Council has recently received a national award and the pupils are very proud of their contributions towards achieving this. However, pupils' ability to make independent choices varies too much. This means that they do not make decisions about what and how they want to learn often enough.

Most pupils know about the world around them and are aware of how their actions have an impact on the environment. For example, pupils in Year 4 speak confidently and knowledgeably about the research they undertook on pollution. They then delivered an assembly to the rest of the school that helped all pupils to understand how they could work together to reduce the impact of pollution on the environment.

Pupils' attendance rates have been consistently lower than those in similar schools over recent years. Most pupils are responding well to a range of initiatives, such as rewards. However, the sporadic attendance of a few pupils from specific groups has a negative impact on raising attendance rates overall.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

Teachers and support staff work together well to plan and deliver a broad range of learning experiences that engage most pupils effectively. These include purposeful trips to enhance pupils' topic work. For example, a visit to a local country park enabled older pupils to understand the need to care for the environment in order to encourage more wildlife. Interactive workshops, including opportunities for Year 2 pupils to dress up and re-enact life as Victorian children, bring pupils' studies to life and help them to understand what school was like during that time.

Throughout the school, staff establish positive working relationships with pupils. As a result, nearly all pupils feel cared for and valued. This encourages them to apply themselves to their learning with enthusiasm and confidence. In the foundation phase, teachers generally plan and provide a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning. Staff plan carefully for the practical and engaging use of all areas to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy, and creative skills, effectively. Most staff know when to stand back to enable pupils to try out new activities and to take calculated risks in their learning. As a result, most pupils develop valuable independent learning and problem-solving skills. In key stage 2, 'working walls' provide useful prompts, scaffolds and examples of pupils' prior learning. Pupils refer to them regularly to help them in their tasks. This supports most pupils to work more independently and to persevere when they face challenges. Most teachers promote pupils' independent learning skills regularly and effectively. However, in a few classes in key stage 2, learning experiences are too adult directed and prescriptive.

In most classes, learning moves at a good pace. Staff use questioning techniques well to assess pupils' understanding and to move their learning forward. Support staff work purposefully in lessons and intervention groups to support targeted pupils successfully. Most teachers provide useful feedback to pupils on the quality of their work. Pupils respond well to these comments, for example by using their 'purple polishing pens' to redraft sections of their writing to make it more interesting for the reader. Many teachers use self and peer marking and success criteria purposefully to encourage pupils, to assess their own work and that of others constructively. As a result, most pupils have a clear understanding of what they do well and what aspects of their work require improvement.

There is a strong focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills systematically and progressively as they move through the school. There are regular opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in different contexts. However, occasionally, a minority of teachers do not match tasks well enough to the ability of pupils. As a result, activities do not always provide enough opportunity for pupils to develop their basic skills in line with their individual targets and abilities.

Teachers make good use of available resources and plan appropriately to allow pupils to develop a beneficial range of ICT skills. There are worthwhile opportunities for pupils to learn about their Welsh heritage. These include making Welsh love spoons when celebrating Santes Dwynwen's Day, and listening to a Welsh harpist. The school promotes the use of Welsh effectively. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills in their lessons and this means that most are very enthusiastic about learning and using Welsh.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The school is a caring, inclusive environment where staff and pupil wellbeing is central to its ethos and work. The high level of care, support and guidance that staff provide for pupils is a strength of the school. Staff know pupils well and provide a nurturing environment that builds pupils' confidence and self-esteem. They teach pupils effectively about important values and how to respect and appreciate others.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs, including those in the resource provision, is good. Teachers analyse a range of information about pupils in the school and use this information and a range of data effectively to raise standards. This has led to beneficial improvements in raising pupils' oracy, reading and mathematical reasoning skills. Pupil reviews take place every term and staff use the information from these well to plan and deliver a comprehensive range of support for individuals and groups of pupils.

The school has strong partnerships with outside agencies, including the English as an additional language service and traveller support. Teachers and specialist support staff use advice from specialists to produce relevant targets in pupils' individual learning plans. These plans are robust and take good account of the voice of the child and the views of parents.

The school fosters positive relationships with parents. Teachers provide useful information about the progress of pupils during termly parents' evenings and in an informative end-of-year written report. Staff provide guidance on how parents can support their child at home. As a result, parents feel well informed about the achievements of their children, and appreciative of the school's readiness to engage with them, and offer support when needed.

When pupils are given suitable opportunities to contribute ideas to their daily learning experiences, they respond to the challenge enthusiastically. However, this practice is not consistently good across the school and teachers do not offer pupils enough chances to influence what and how they learn. As a result, a minority do not focus well enough on learning activities.



The school has put in place a broad range of initiatives to improve punctuality and attendance, for example, rewards and immediate phone calls to parents. However, currently these are not always followed up robustly enough due to long term staff absence. As a result, it is too soon to judge fully their impact on raising attendance over time.

The school has sufficient opportunities for pupils to make healthy life choices. They have suitable arrangements for pupils to learn about substance misuse, sex and relationships and online safety. There are many opportunities for pupils to be active at break times. For example, many use the trim trails and play a variety of ball games enthusiastically.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern. However, the inspection team identified several areas of concern relating to health and safety matters, which they brought to the attention of senior leaders and the governing body.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

Senior leaders have a clear vision for the school that focuses well on meeting the needs of pupils and ensuring their wellbeing. The clear promotion of these values is a strength of the school.

The headteacher has high expectations of staff and pupils. Her drive, supportive approach and enthusiasm has a positive impact on moving the school forward. As a result, staff morale is high and the school is a happy and successful learning community.

The governing body has a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This enables governors to make valuable contributions to discussions with senior leaders about the quality of provision and the necessary actions to raise standards. They have a sound understanding of the local community and its needs, and work well with the headteacher to deliver the best for pupils and their families. Governors provide professional expertise to support specific areas of the school's work effectively, for example, to support the school's financial management.

Leaders use a wide range of self-evaluation activities to identify the school's strengths and areas for development effectively. In most instances, staff plan relevant actions to address identified priorities, and work conscientiously to implement them. For example, introducing robust systems and processes to develop pupils' application of their numeracy skills across the curriculum has raised standards in this area of work.

Leaders monitor progress towards school priorities for improvement appropriately. They identify areas that will impact positively on raising standards and improving provision and wellbeing successfully. For example, they provide highly effective speech and language support for targeted pupils, including those with English as an additional language. However, they do not always evaluate progress and impact on standards well enough, nor share identified good practice regularly. Occasionally, this leads to variable expectations of what pupils can achieve and this slows the rate of progress of these pupils.

Arrangements for performance management and staff's professional learning is effective. Targets link directly to school priorities and reflect the expected professional standards. Staff lead areas of the curriculum knowledgeably and know their roles within the school well.

All members of the leadership team model and promote professional values and support colleagues to improve their own practice successfully. They work collaboratively with other schools and higher education establishments to develop their own skills and knowledge. For example, training on the effective use of outdoor learning is developing foundation phase pupils' independent skills well.

Leaders plan purposefully to meet local and national priorities. For example, most pupils have a positive attitude to learning Welsh and they apply a good range of ICT skills to support their learning. Leaders use and monitor the school budget effectively. As a result, the school uses grant funding beneficially to support small groups and individual work that focuses closely on improving pupils', oracy and numeracy skills.

Staffing levels are appropriate to meet the needs of learners and well-resourced classrooms provide an interesting environment in which to learn. The school makes effective use of the outdoor environment. For example, pupils have taken an active role in establishing a prayer garden and tending to the allotment areas.

## 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))

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Excellent</b>                                   | Very strong, sustained performance and practice                          |
| <b>Good</b>  | Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement          |
| <b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>              | Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement |
| <b>Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement</b> | Important weaknesses outweigh strengths                                  |

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

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Publication Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court, Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

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