



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

A report on

St Julian's School

**Heather Road
Newport
NP19 7XU**

Date of inspection: May 2024

by

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

About St Julian's School

Name of provider	St Julian's School
Local authority	Newport City Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Secondary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	1428
Pupils of statutory school age	1251
Number in sixth form	176
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 Secondary is 21.2%)	24.7%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Secondary is 14.8%)	16.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	22.1%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/12/2014
Start date of inspection	20/05/2024

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

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

Overview

St Julian's School holds true to its mission 'A school for all, where everyone succeeds'. It is a highly inclusive community where staff focus wholeheartedly on pupils' personal and academic development. There is a strong sense of teamwork and mutual respect in the school. Staff and pupils are proud to be part of the school community.

Most pupils are welcoming and friendly, while many enjoy school and feel safe. Many demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and respond maturely to challenge and questions. Pupils' attendance rates are improving well, but this remains a priority for the school.

Teaching is effective in many lessons and, as a result, pupils make at least secure progress. In a minority of these lessons, teaching is particularly effective. A few pupils do not make enough progress, mainly because of shortcomings in the quality of teaching.

The broad and varied curriculum reflects the inclusive ethos of the school and responds well to pupils' individual needs as well as issues affecting the general school community. However, despite the variety within the curriculum there is insufficient focus on developing pupils' understanding and appreciation of their Cynefin, their local area and Welsh language, history and culture.

The provision to develop pupils' literacy skills is well established. Many pupils' literacy skills are generally secure, and their strong oracy skills are of particular note. The provision to develop pupils' numeracy skills is also developing well, though that to develop their digital skills is at an early stage of development.

As with all aspects of the school's work, the approach to developing its provision to support pupils' well-being is a strategic one that is underpinned by heartfelt care for the pupils and their families. For example, leaders have established additional support centres and services over recent years as a result of findings from self-evaluation activities such as seeking the views of parents and pupils. Support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is strong, enabling these pupils to make secure progress.

Leadership at all levels is a notable strength. This has led to sustained improvements in many important areas including the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' attendance. Effective internal and external communication is appreciated by all stakeholders.

There is a mature culture of self-evaluation and collective responsibility, which is embraced by staff, who understand that they have autonomy with accountability. This is underpinned by a rigorous process for monitoring, review and evaluation (MRE), which ensures that there is a consistent and effective focus on school improvement in all areas.

The school hosts a local authority resource base centre, the Learning Development Centre (LDC), for pupils with moderate to severe learning difficulties. The centre

provides a nurturing and caring environment and a stimulating curriculum that is tailored carefully to the needs of pupils. This enables them to make good progress from their starting points.

Due to the timing of the inspection, we did not observe lessons in the sixth form or scrutinise pupils' work.

Recommendations

R1 Improve the provision to develop pupils' understanding and appreciation of their Cynefin, the local area and Welsh culture and heritage

R2 Improve the provision to develop pupils' digital skills

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare case studies on its work in relation to self-evaluation and developing pupils' oracy skills, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main evaluation

Learning

Pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make at least secure progress in many lessons. In a minority of these lessons, pupils make strong progress. A few pupils do not make enough progress in their learning, mainly due to shortcomings in teaching.

Many pupils recall previous learning well, and develop their knowledge and understanding effectively in lessons. They apply previous learning to new contexts competently, for example when Year 7 pupils make links between previous work on prejudice and discrimination to stereotypes in society today in Personal Development and Cultural Studies (PDCS) lessons. In the minority of lessons where teaching is particularly effective, pupils have strong recall of prior learning and make significant progress. A few pupils struggle to recall prior learning and apply it to new contexts. These pupils have less secure knowledge and understanding of key terms and concepts, and struggle to complete tasks independently.

Pupils' oracy skills are a notable strength. Most pupils listen well to their teachers and peers. Many willingly contribute to class discussions and answer questions, and a majority do so with enthusiasm. Many express themselves clearly and structure their verbal responses well, explaining and exemplifying their responses. Many have a

secure and broad vocabulary. For instance, Year 8 pupils use the words liminal, ominous, illusion and redemption when discussing imagery of light and darkness in *Romeo and Juliet*. Many pupils use subject terminology confidently, displaying a secure understanding of meaning. A minority of pupils provide particularly sophisticated and mature responses, using rich vocabulary. A few pupils only offer brief verbal responses, largely as a result of teachers' expectations. A few pupils are reluctant to contribute or do not express themselves clearly.

Many pupils develop their reading skills and apply reading strategies successfully across many areas of the curriculum. Most locate information competently and many handle reading material from a variety of sources and text types with confidence. Many pupils develop their basic analytical skills well and a majority do so confidently. Many have sound inference skills. In history, they consider aspects such as bias and reliability thoughtfully. For example, they consider and annotate pictorial sources insightfully, making suitable observations, with a minority making perceptive inferences and asking intelligent questions. Many pupils analyse language and writing techniques successfully when studying texts. They are developing their ability to analyse literature well, showing a good understanding of basic meaning and style in literary texts. Many pupils' grasp of literary and linguistic terminology is sound. A majority of pupils synthesise information from a range of sources competently, but overall there are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop this reading skill. A few pupils struggle to apply reading strategies and deal with a variety of different reading material. A few pupils also struggle to analyse reading texts suitably.

When writing, many pupils have a sound vocabulary and make a determined effort to use ambitious vocabulary and subject-specific terminology, though their spelling of these words is not always secure. Many write at length for a variety of purposes and audiences, structuring their responses appropriately and often making good use of writing strategies learnt in their lessons. Many show an appropriate understanding of audience in their written work, though a few do not demonstrate a confident understanding of audience and register. For instance, they use language that is too casual. A few pupils are particularly confident writers who write sophisticated pieces and employ a broad, rich vocabulary, such as when they write atmospheric gothic descriptions in English lessons. A majority of pupils write with suitable technical accuracy but a minority struggle with spelling and basic punctuation, especially the use of full stops and capital letters. A few pupils write very short written pieces and struggle to produce extended writing. They are too reliant on examples and scaffolds and do not develop their independent writing skills well enough. A few pupils have weak handwriting and there is very little work in the books of a similar proportion of pupils.

Many pupils develop their numeracy skills suitably in their mathematics lessons and in relevant subjects across the curriculum. They use the basic rules of number aptly for multi-step calculations, such as working out patterns in sequences or handling ratios. More able pupils use their multiplication skills confidently, for example to calculate the percentage yield of reactions in chemistry. Many pupils' algebraic skills are appropriate, and they collect like terms together and solve simultaneous equations suitably. In geometry, most pupils calculate areas and volumes of shapes well and many understand and use co-ordinates appropriately. They perform simple reflections and translations competently. More able pupils calculate and solve complex problems and handle data successfully, for example when working out

cumulative frequency. Many pupils construct simple graphs with a suitable degree of accuracy when given the scale, but lack precision when plotting points. The majority of pupils construct more challenging graphs with a degree of accuracy, for example when drawing population pyramids in geography. A minority do not understand the relationships they describe and do not use graphs to draw conclusions well enough. Most pupils measure accurately when given the opportunity, for example when cutting material to create a wooden animal in their technology lessons. However, overall, pupils do not apply their numeracy skills in real life contexts well enough, which is partly due to the lack of opportunities to do so.

On the whole, pupils do not develop their digital skills well enough. They develop these skills appropriately in a few instances in information communication technology (ICT) lessons and in selected subjects across the curriculum. For example, in media lessons pupils develop their filming and editing skills effectively when creating an audio-visual advertisement.

Most pupils participate enthusiastically in their Welsh lessons and enjoy activities such as drilling exercises. When speaking, many are able to provide basic answers or translations appropriately and have sound recall of learnt vocabulary. Many pronounce Welsh words accurately and are able to hold short conversations in Welsh in pairs and groups. A minority of pupils lack the confidence to speak Welsh in lessons. Although pupils have positive attitudes towards the language, they are reluctant to use Welsh outside of Welsh lessons. Many pupils identify key details and information in simple reading texts, such as pupil fact files. When writing, a few pupils structure sentences effectively and apply their knowledge of mutations accurately. However, many pupils rely too heavily on structures and scaffolding and are reluctant to attempt to speak or write in Welsh without them.

Many pupils make good progress in developing their creative skills across a range of areas and particularly in subjects such as design and technology (DT), performing arts and art. For example, pupils are able to independently mix and apply paints in a range of tones and tints when developing their continuous line drawings of insects in complementary colours in art. In performing arts, they create improvised performances based on the court scene in 'Blood Brothers'.

In general, many pupils develop their thinking skills well, particularly when responding to teachers' questioning. They respond positively to challenge and enjoy opportunities to extend their thinking. For example, in geography pupils apply their knowledge of microclimates to give reasoned responses when thinking why there are variations in wind speed across the school.

Pupils develop their physical skills appropriately. For example, pupils with ALN in Year 9 use their fine motor skills well to make wicks for hydroponic bottle gardens and to plant cress seeds. In physical education lessons, many pupils demonstrate endurance, stamina and agility during a circuit training activity, enabling them to progress through the full circuit within the allocated time.

Overall, pupils who attend the Learning Development Centre (LDC) make good progress from their starting points. They recall prior learning well and apply this appropriately to new situations. Nearly all pupils listen attentively to teachers and

their peers. They are keen to share their thinking with others, for example when explaining what happens in a short clip of the film 'Peter Rabbit'.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Most pupils behave well, interact positively with visitors and staff and are calm and orderly when moving around the school. Many enjoy school, feel safe and know how to seek support if needed. The school's inclusive and supportive culture ensures that many pupils are respectful towards each other and adults.

Many pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Most arrive promptly to lessons, are ready to learn and settle to work quickly. Many pupils are engaged in their learning and sustain concentration well. A few are easily distracted and have difficulty sustaining concentration, and as a result they do not complete enough work or make sufficient progress in lessons.

Many pupils develop well as resilient learners who respond confidently and thoughtfully to challenging questions. They contribute maturely, volunteer their ideas and make insightful contributions in lessons. Many pupils listen carefully to teachers and follow instructions and familiar routines promptly. When expected to, they respond well to teacher feedback and improve their work. Many pupils work well independently and in pairs. They interact well with each other and listen carefully to each other's responses. These pupils take pride in the presentation of their work and organise their work appropriately.

Pupil participation in extra-curricular activities is high. All pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular opportunities including sports, drama, a science club and school visits including trips to London and local places of worship. Pupils develop their confidence, social and physical skills through these enrichment activities and this impacts positively on their well-being.

Pupils develop their understanding of how to make healthy lifestyle choices well, for example, in physical education, food technology and PDCS lessons and benefit from the healthy options in the canteen. Pupils develop their leadership skills suitably by participating in groups such as the school council, eco committee and the 'LGBTQ+' forum. However, other pupils are not always aware of the ongoing work of these groups.

Pupils develop a suitable awareness of fairness, equality and diversity through the curriculum and pastoral programme. They benefit from a range of worthwhile awareness-raising events, for example a cultures day. Pupils in the sixth form, including the pupil leadership team, develop their leadership skills well by planning and delivering events to support local charities and the local community. For example, they collect food donations for 'Feed Newport' and organise Valentine's day gifts for the homeless. Pupils participate responsibly in decision-making at the school. For example, they develop activities for schemes of learning, contribute their opinions to learning reviews of subjects and share their views on the anti-bullying and behaviour policies.

In the LDC, nearly all pupils engage well in their learning. They take pride in their learning and produce work that is organised and presented well. These pupils also

benefit from working in the outdoor learning area and enjoy growing vegetables in the garden. They share their thoughts and feelings confidently and respect the views of others.

Between the academic years 2018-2019 and 2022-2023, the school's rate of attendance fell by a greater amount than that seen nationally. Last year it was similar to that of similar schools. Pupils' attendance has improved since last year and is now above the national average. The attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals has improved since last year. The rate of persistent absenteeism for pupils, including those eligible for free school meals, has reduced since last year but remains a priority for the school.

Teaching and learning experiences

Most teachers foster positive working relationships with pupils based on a culture of mutual respect. They have established accepted routines and clear expectations for learning. These teachers have secure subject knowledge, are good language models and give clear instructions. They plan lessons suitably, providing purposeful tasks and carefully prepared resources.

In many instances, teachers have high expectations of pupils. They make learning intentions clear, model work well and provide helpful explanations. They use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding, monitor their progress carefully and provide useful verbal feedback. In the majority of lessons, teachers use questioning well to develop pupils' understanding and often adapt their teaching in light of pupils' responses to tasks and questions.

In the minority of lessons that are highly effective, teachers have notably high expectations, for example regarding the vocabulary that pupils use. Their meticulous, thoughtful planning and effective use of modelling maximises the pace of learning. These teachers use questioning skilfully to probe and challenge pupils' thinking. This helps pupils to make rapid, strong progress in their learning.

In a few cases, shortcomings in teaching limit the progress that pupils make. In these lessons, teachers often over-direct the learning, or plan activities that are insufficiently challenging. They too readily accept brief, underdeveloped verbal responses from pupils. In these lessons, pupils are over reliant on their teacher, lack independence in their learning, and do not make enough progress.

Many teachers give pupils helpful written advice about how to improve their work. In general, pupils respond to this well, and develop their answers meaningfully. In a few cases, teachers monitor pupils' responses closely, and this helps pupils to make substantial improvements to their work. Where written feedback is not as effective, teachers do not provide pupils with clear enough guidance as to how they can improve, and they do not ensure that pupils respond to their feedback. In addition, there is too much variation in how effectively written feedback supports the technical accuracy of pupils' writing.

The school has a comprehensive system for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress. It uses this information effectively to support pupil progress and school improvement. Reports to parents are clear and easy to understand, and they contain

a range of useful information. They provide pupils with helpful personal targets for improvement.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and has been planned carefully to reflect the school's inclusive mission to enable all pupils to succeed. Leaders provide pupils with helpful support and guidance when making option choices. They consider pupils' views carefully to ensure pupils can study their chosen subjects. At Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, the school provides a comprehensive range of courses, which includes academic and vocational options. Vulnerable pupils benefit from a bespoke curriculum that includes courses tailored to their individual needs. The school enables nearly all pupils to progress to further education, employment or training.

In the LDC, pupils generally follow entry pathway courses. Here, the curriculum is tailored and adapted regularly to meet the needs of individuals. Pupils benefit from bespoke timetables and access some lessons in mainstream such as art, physical education, science and design and technology. Through enrichment activities involving real life scenarios, these pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their life skills in order to prepare them for the future.

Leaders have a clear vision of Curriculum for Wales. They have retained subject specialisms, whilst focussing helpfully on good teaching. Subject leaders have a high level of autonomy regarding what and how they teach their curriculum. They have worked successfully with their partner primary schools to ensure that their curriculum builds beneficially on pupils' previous learning. However, the provision to develop pupils' appreciation of their Cynefin and their local area, as well as Welsh heritage and culture, is underdeveloped. In addition, there are insufficient opportunities for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills and promoting the status of the Welsh language across the school.

The school offers effective provision for developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. The skills co-ordinators work closely with the relevant leaders and have developed a strong vision and a comprehensive strategy, tailored to the needs of St Julian's pupils. They have supported departments and staff successfully through valuable professional learning.

The approach to developing pupils' literacy skills has been embedded successfully within the school. This has been led by the English department to ensure consistency and standards, and is supported by other literacy rich subjects such as history and performing arts. In particular, the school has focused on developing pupils' oracy skills. As a result, many pupils are articulate and confident to contribute verbally in lessons, often using sophisticated language.

Within numeracy, leaders have mapped the skills and progression successfully and they have appropriately identified data handling as a key area to improve. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to further develop their numeracy reasoning skills. The provision to develop pupils' digital skills is at an early stage of development

The school monitors pupils' progress against their targets closely. It puts suitable interventions in place to support any pupils who are underachieving. It also provides worthwhile interventions to support pupils with weaker skills. These literacy and

numeracy sessions are matched well to the pupils' levels of need and enable most of them to make suitable progress from their starting points.

The personal and social education (PSE) programme is comprehensive and responds well to relevant and contemporary topics identified through pupil well-being surveys and issues that arise in the school community. The PSE curriculum is delivered effectively through the Personal Development and Cultural Studies (PDCS) lessons. As a result, pupils understand the importance of making healthy lifestyle and career choices. Leaders make particularly good use of links with a wide range of external partners to reinforce the themes covered in the PSE programme.

The school's provision to promote pupils' understanding of the LGBTQ+ and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities is developing effectively. An example of this is the culture day where pupils are encouraged to wear cultural dress, enjoy traditional foods and learn about different cultures in order to celebrate the diversity within the school.

Pupils' learning experiences are enhanced through a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as sporting and debating clubs, two annual school productions, and through educational visits, for example to Llancaiach Fawr.

Care, support and guidance

St Julian's School has a highly inclusive ethos and supports the personal development of its pupils successfully. Over recent years, the school has responded thoughtfully to feedback from pupils and their families regarding support for pupils' physical and mental health and well-being. As a result, senior leaders have made significant and well-considered improvements to this provision. Pupils have access to a range of beneficial, timely and relevant support from school staff and through external agencies. For example, staff collaborate with Barnardo's to support young carers. Pupils are able to call at the 'Student Support Centre' to request help or advice, or visit 'Cwtch', a warm and welcoming hub that caters sensitively for a wide range of well-being needs. Senior and pastoral leaders, and the support staff team, oversee the work of these well-being centres effectively and ensure that pupils' needs are met very well.

Leaders communicate effectively with parents and keep them well informed about their children's progress, attendance and well-being. The school has strengthened beneficially its focus on pupils disadvantaged by poverty, young carers and those with English as an additional language (EAL). Staff liaise closely and thoughtfully with pupils and their families to remove barriers to learning. Pastoral leaders monitor the representation of these pupils on different forums, such as the school council, to ensure that they can contribute their views. Leaders have developed many beneficial partnerships with external agencies, including the St Giles Trust and Gwent Education Minority-ethnic Service (GEMS) to support pupils with EAL. These links complement and enrich the work of the school.

Leaders have developed a comprehensive 'Behaviour curriculum' that is delivered skilfully by form tutors. This curriculum promotes successfully the school's values of 'Respect, Inclusion, Collaboration and Ambition' and teaches well the behaviours for learning that embody them. As a result, pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the

school is respectful and considerate overall. The school has a well-considered staged intervention process that is used consistently when pupils' behaviour does not meet expectations, and staff apply this judiciously. Alongside these interventions, the pastoral support team use restorative conversations usefully to help pupils to improve their behaviour. The school deals well with any incidents of bullying and responds swiftly when pupils raise concerns. For example, leaders recently invited Show Racism the Red Card to deliver workshops in response to pupils' questions about incidents in the news.

There are robust systems in place to monitor attendance and punctuality, and regular contact is made with the families of pupils whose attendance is too low. Pastoral leaders use a range of helpful strategies to promote and encourage good attendance. The school also engages well with the education welfare service to tackle persistent absence. As a result, the attendance of all groups of pupils is improving, although it has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Overall, persistent absence is falling, but the school recognises the need to continue to tackle this, and has beneficial strategies in place. For example, they support families through an off-site forum that gives parents the opportunity to discuss any challenges to attendance and helps them to find solutions to improve it.

Leaders ensure that all pupils have opportunities to participate in the many activities the school offers, including school trips and curriculum experiences, for example the recent performing arts visit to France. Pupils also have suitable opportunities to develop their leadership skills through year group councils and an eco-committee.

The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well through the taught curriculum, a raft of extra-curricular activities and a well-planned programme of assemblies and form tutor sessions. These activities help pupils to understand their rights and to think about aspects of equality and diversity. In addition, the school further raises the aspirations of pupils through well-considered support for the options processes and access to helpful careers guidance. These are tailored to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with ALN.

The school has highly effective systems in place for identifying pupils with additional learning needs and monitoring their attainment and progress. Provision for these pupils is a strength of the school and many make secure progress in their learning. Leaders use evidence well to monitor and evaluate the interventions they put in place. They ensure that staff in the ALN team have appropriate and timely opportunities for professional learning. The school is making strong progress in implementing the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (ALNET). Pupils' individual development plans (IDPs) are comprehensive person-centred documents which describe their specific needs, and the strategies staff should use to support each pupil. They include suitably challenging targets agreed annually for each pupil. All pupils with ALN also have a helpful one-page profile and, in the main, staff make effective use of this information in their planning and teaching.

There is a wide range of beneficial interventions for pupils who need extra support with their learning, such as adapted curriculum classes for younger pupils, for example the 'Boost' group in Year 7. The specific needs of these groups are monitored and catered for well.

The school's LDC is a nurturing and supportive environment that sets high expectations of pupils. Staff know their pupils very well and utilise individual strategies to challenge each pupil appropriately. Pupils in the LDC receive highly effective care, support and guidance that helps them to develop their confidence and self-esteem. This helps pupils make good progress from their starting points. Staff work well with outside agencies and parents to ensure that pupils are supported well.

The school has established a strong culture of safeguarding that permeates its work. As a result, many pupils feel safe in school and also know who to turn to if they have any concerns. The school's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection are robust. The dedicated team work well together on safeguarding issues and respond promptly to concerns. They keep detailed records and work closely with external agencies when appropriate. This team provides all staff and governors with relevant training on safeguarding and preventing radicalisation. Staff are clear about the process to follow and how to report any concern. Leaders monitor the school's safeguarding arrangements closely and have a comprehensive overview of the issues that cause concern and how to modify their provision for keeping pupils safe. The school's arrangements for recruiting staff safely meet statutory requirements. The extensive school site is safe and is supervised well. Staff monitor visitor access carefully.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides strategic, dynamic and thoughtful leadership to realise the school's mission to be 'A school for all, where everyone succeeds'. This vision is clearly understood and embraced by staff and there is a palpable sense of teamwork and shared purpose. Staff and pupils feel proud to be part of the school.

The senior leadership team provides the headteacher with highly effective support. Their roles are matched closely to their skills and experience. They also support and challenge each other to achieve the best in their areas of responsibility. Underpinned by the school's values of respect, inclusion, collaboration and ambition, they have established a strong culture of reflection with a purposeful emphasis on evaluation and improvement.

In general, middle leaders have a good understanding of their roles, and most provide effective leadership. Performance management systems are robust and focus well on national, school and departmental priorities. Rigorous and supportive line management arrangements enable leaders to drive improvements in pupils' well-being and teaching and learning.

The monitoring, review and evaluation (MRE) process provides a rigorous framework for identifying strengths and areas for improvement, and is a notable strength of the school. Senior and middle leaders collaborate closely when carrying out self-evaluation activities, and ensure that all staff are fully involved in the process. This ensures that all staff, in addition to being accountable, have an active role in improving the school. They consider an extensive range of first-hand evidence, including the views of pupils and parents. They focus consistently on the impact provision has on pupil outcomes and use a wide range of data to monitor and evaluate progress. This enables them to plan for improvement effectively, for

example by developing specific professional learning strategies to enhance the classroom practice of both departments and individual teachers.

All staff benefit from an extensive range of professional learning opportunities, including whole-school, departmental and individualised training. These experiences have had a positive impact on teaching and leadership. Leaders ensure that professional learning, performance management and the MRE process integrate closely. Senior leaders provide tailored support for teachers in need of improvement and challenge underperformance robustly.

In addition to prioritising pupil well-being, leaders consider staff well-being carefully. Regular and open dialogue ensures that staff feel supported and valued. Leaders work productively with parents and the community. The school website contains up to date and comprehensive information about the work and organisation of the school and this information is available in numerous different languages to ensure accessibility for all.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding across the school, and staff have a sound understanding of their responsibilities. Leaders plan strategically to address national priorities, including planning for Curriculum for Wales, preparing for the implementation of the ALNET act and reducing the effects of poverty on educational attainment. Leaders work effectively to support pupils whose families are experiencing financial hardship, for example by providing access to a food bank and assistance with the cost of uniform and school trips. They make effective use of grant funding, such as the pupil development grant, to maximise the impact their strategies have on the outcomes of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Roles and responsibilities within the LDC are clear and leaders have a secure understanding of its strengths and areas for development. Leaders and teachers are committed to the inclusion and well-being of every pupil. They engage well with professional learning that benefits pupils and improves their own skills. They allocate staff to ensure that pupils are supported and monitored appropriately.

Leaders and governors manage and monitor the school budget effectively. Governors are highly committed supporters of the school and have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have a suitable understanding of their responsibility to ensure that the school promotes healthy eating and drinking. Governors provide senior leaders with helpful challenge and support.

Overall, leadership has had a notable impact on many important aspects of the school's work, including the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent 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 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 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, where appropriate
- visit a broad sample of lessons, 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

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (<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:

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