



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

**A report on**

**Christ The King R.C. Primary School**

**Everest Avenue  
Llanishen  
Cardiff  
CF14 5AS**

**Date of inspection: February 2023**

**by**

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

## About Christ The King R.C. Primary School

Name of provider	Christ The King R.C. Primary School
Local authority	Cardiff Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Roman Catholic
Number of pupils on roll	222
Pupils of statutory school age	165
Number in nursery classes	27
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 23.0%)	10.4%
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 16.1%)	6.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	6.1%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/11/2014
Start date of inspection	06/02/2023
Headteacher took up post in Sept 2020; she was the deputy previously. School came out of follow-up in 2016, Estyn cited very strong progress for all but one of the recommendations which was around governors and was judged to have made strong progress. New deputy headteacher started September 2021.	

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.

## Overview

Christ the King Roman Catholic school provides a warm, inclusive learning environment for its pupils. The sense of belonging to the school community is a strength of the school. The school promotes its values well, linked to its motto, 'Learning to love, loving to learn'.

The school is developing its curriculum to focus on important concepts and to engage and stimulate nearly all learners. The school makes effective use of its extensive outdoor provision, including a forest school area. Recent improvements to reading provision, including a new library, enable pupils to read for pleasure independently.

Staff promote pupils' health and well-being diligently. There are strong opportunities for pupils to develop their physical skills, both in lessons and in the range of extra-curricular clubs on offer. Although the curriculum is sufficiently broad, the school has not yet developed aspects of the Expressive Arts systematically enough.

Staff encourage pupils to become ambitious, confident learners. There are particularly beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their oracy and thinking skills. There are regular opportunities for pupils to discuss and debate matters of topical interest. The pupil participation groups, which form the school's Senedd, are very effective in bringing about positive changes in the school. In these groups, pupils use their own ideas to consider wider aspects of school life and beyond, such as health and nutrition and how to help the local community. However, in lessons, opportunities for pupils to influence how and what they learn are too limited.

The headteacher ensures that all staff have beneficial opportunities for professional development so that they can fulfil their roles and support school improvements confidently. Leaders and governors monitor pupil progress and the improvements the school makes conscientiously. They listen to pupils and take the view of parents into account when deciding how best to move the school forward. All staff work very well as a team. They encourage their pupils and know them well. This contributes to the supportive and caring ethos in the school and helps new pupils to settle into the school successfully.

## **Recommendations**

R1 Further develop the school's curriculum to ensure suitable progression across all areas of learning and experience

R2 Extend opportunities for pupils to influence how and what they learn in lessons

## **What happens next**

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

## Main evaluation

### Learning

Most pupils enter the school with skills that are average or above for their age. From their starting points, nearly all younger pupils make strong progress in their oracy skills. They become confident in expressing their needs and begin to discuss their feelings. Most explain competently what they are doing in their tasks and in play. They use their knowledge to begin to take on a role when playing in the role play shop, asking suitable questions as a shopkeeper. As they move through the school, most pupils develop their skills so that they are able to ask and answer questions in larger groups. Most volunteer their opinions or make a prediction about what will happen next in a story. Most older pupils become articulate speakers. They enjoy the opportunity to debate an issue of topical interest. When discussing 'should spreading fake news be illegal?' they use increasingly sophisticated language and appropriate expression to illustrate their viewpoints with maturity and flair.

Most younger pupils listen purposefully. They respond to stories and take turns in speaking. Most older pupils build on what they hear in conversation to debate and discuss and provide a counter argument.

Most younger pupils develop their phonic knowledge quickly. They use this to decipher words well. They enjoy learning about traditional tales and show good understanding of what they have read. Over time, they become increasingly independent readers. Most older pupils read for pleasure. They name favourite authors and genres. They recognise the features of a text, such as personification. Most use their skills to locate specific information in a text successfully.

From their starting points, most younger pupils make rapid progress with their writing skills. Most write simple sentences accurately and use a range of descriptive vocabulary to add detail. More able pupils punctuate their written work correctly and start to use a cursive script. Most spell well and write at suitable length confidently.

Older pupils write for different purposes. As they progress, they use different sentence or story starters to convey meaning and to engage the reader. Many write extended stories with imaginative content. They edit their work to improve errors in spelling and punctuation to achieve their best piece.

Most pupils develop strong numeracy skills during their time at the school. Many of the youngest pupils measure the shoes in their shoe shop using blocks independently. A few count objects beyond ten. Nearly all pupils go on to add and subtract successfully, for example using money to buy books in the book shop. A few more able pupils work out change within ten pounds.

Older pupils' numeracy skills develop progressively. Most use measuring skills accurately to arrive at a conclusion in science investigations. They work out the mean from their results in percentages when finding out the best way to wash your hands and solve simple algebraic problems confidently. Most explain their reasoning and suggest more than one way to solve a mathematical problem.

When speaking Welsh, younger pupils quickly learn to use greetings, to identify colours and to count. They sing songs and begin to say how they are feeling in Welsh. Most older pupils' Welsh skills develop successfully. They make reasonable attempts at telling the time, saying what they did yesterday to hold a simple conversation.

Most pupils use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills confidently. Younger pupils use tablet computers to photograph their work and upload it to a program that allows their parents to view it. Many change fonts and colours in their work. Most older pupils use ICT to compose songs or make videos. They make presentations and use databases confidently. They use a spreadsheet to record each pupil's achievements in physical education. Nearly all pupils are aware of important aspects of online safety.

Most pupils have very well-developed problem-solving skills. Younger pupils use trial and error independently in their play to complete a symmetrical pattern. Older pupils enjoy opportunities to think critically and engage with topical and real-life matters. They respond passionately to discussion and debate and put forward interesting, worthwhile arguments based on their analysis of the issue.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

The school motto, 'Learning to Love. Loving to Learn' is evident in the way pupils show empathy and respect towards each other and in their enthusiasm for learning. Relationships between staff and pupils across the school are highly supportive. Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Throughout the day, they are polite and caring to other pupils, staff, and visitors. They learn and socialise well with each other. Most pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons and on the playground.

Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and drinking. They understand the benefit of physical exercise for their health and enjoy participating in physical tasks. Most pupils have a secure knowledge of the importance of good mental well-being and know whom to turn to if they need help. For example, pupils experiencing emotional difficulties alert staff using the class 'check in' board where they show how they are feeling. A few pupils who experience difficulties with their emotions work in a small group with staff support to help them understand their emotions. Most younger pupils develop their independent skills well in activities, safely accessing and using resources themselves.

Nearly all pupils across the school have positive attitudes to learning. They participate in lessons conscientiously and enthusiastically, particularly enjoying those activities that allow them to work in depth and at length. For example, when investigating how exercise affects their body, they persevere to record and analyse their results.

Many pupils are developing well as capable and ambitious learners. They concentrate well in lessons, show great pride in their work and are eager to do their best in their learning. Most younger pupils focus well on their tasks when working independently. Many older pupils persevere when faced with challenging tasks and confidently apply their knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

Most pupils listen attentively to teachers and settle quickly to their tasks. They are very keen to express their ideas and opinions. They do this with confidence and enthusiasm. For example, they speak confidently to visitors and enjoy the opportunity to share their views and talk about their learning. Many of the older pupils are showing strong signs of ambition for their future. They express ideas clearly for their future career and talk enthusiastically about what they might become.

The majority of pupils are keen to take on leadership roles and are active, enthusiastic members of a range of worthwhile Senedd groups. For example, the Tech Guardians are helping other children to understand the various ways they can keep themselves safe from danger online. Members of the Senedd groups take their responsibilities very seriously and encourage other pupils to make changes for the better. For example, The Eco Evolution group members looked at ways of reducing traffic emissions outside the school by encouraging pupils to cycle, scooter or walk to school.

Most pupils are developing positive attitudes and are becoming more ethically informed. They understand and speak confidently about their rights as children and are developing their understanding of diversity in their studies, for example how the lives of famous people such as Mary Seacole and Martin Luther King teach us about equality.

Many pupils are developing as ethical citizens. They participate in fundraising activities with enthusiasm to support local and global charities. Most pupils collaborate successfully in lessons and in Senedd groups. For example, The Library group collaborate well to plan World Book Day.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

The school's shared vision for its curriculum centres around the four core purposes in the Curriculum for Wales. The school provides stimulating and engaging opportunities for pupils, which develop their knowledge and understanding well. For example, the school provides interesting outdoor areas where younger learners work independently, and a forest school area, which all pupils access regularly.

The curriculum provides pupils with appropriate learning experiences across nearly all areas of learning. The school develops pupils' literacy and numeracy skills systematically and provides worthwhile opportunities for the development of digital skills. It develops pupils' oracy and critical thinking skills particularly well. There are extensive opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills, for example when debating the 'pros and cons' of using technology and keeping safe. Pupils have regular, stimulating opportunities to develop their physical skills in gymnastics, ball skills and dance sessions.

The school has good arrangements to promote pupils' understanding of science and technology. Pupils have opportunities to explore and investigate and use their literacy and numeracy skills to measure and collect their results. Staff have a sound overview of the topics that they will use to promote pupils' skills across areas of learning and experience. There are regular opportunities for pupils to use their problem-solving and thinking skills. However, the school has not yet planned for the progression of



pupils' creative skills in depth and there are limited opportunities for pupils to influence how and what they learn.

Teachers take full account of each pupil's individual learning needs. Nearly all plan series of lessons, which build on previous knowledge and learning. They set clear learning objectives and enable most lessons to move at a good pace. Many teachers use effective questions to develop pupils' thinking skills and take their learning forward. They have suitably high expectations and engage pupils of all abilities in their learning successfully.

Most teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their own learning and that of their peers, which enables pupils to improve their work well. There are ample opportunities for pupils to work together, such as when they create a presentation to inform other pupils about online safety.

Pupil progress meetings assist teachers in identifying individual pupil achievements and next steps in literacy, maths and well-being. Teachers share information about individual progress with parents in useful annual reports. These suggest the steps to develop each pupil's literacy and numeracy skills further.

A dedicated team of teaching assistants provide very beneficial support for pupils both in learning and well-being. They use their expertise effectively and make useful contributions to the provision the school offers. Teachers and support staff work together successfully. Nearly all staff set clear expectations for pupils' behaviour and participation. They make effective use of praise and feedback to pupils on their learning.

Nearly all teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills throughout the day. For example, they teach pupils Welsh games and songs, choose a Welsh speaking helper of the day and encourage pupils to use Welsh in the fruit tuck shop.

Learning experiences that enable pupils to learn about the diverse nature of Wales and the wider world are at an early stage of development. The school celebrates Black History month when pupils learn about influential people, including Martin Luther King and Maya Angelou.

Older pupils have the opportunity to raise their aspirations around future careers and the world of work, for example when participating in the 'Open your eyes' week. Pupils hear from people in a variety of different jobs and consider what skills they would need to do these jobs and what they might do themselves in the future.

The school supports the social and emotional skills of pupils and a whole-school focus on well-being is evident around the school. Teachers provide opportunities for younger pupils to be active and develop physical skills on a daily basis. Older pupils have regular physical education lessons where they can practise and refine their gymnastic or ball skills. There are appropriate arrangements for pupils to learn about healthy eating and drinking across the curriculum. For example, pupils learn how having a healthy diet affects the digestive system.

## **Care, support and guidance**

Staff know their pupils well and meet their emotional needs effectively. This strong focus on supporting all pupils' emotional, health and social needs is a key aspect of the school's provision. There are systems for pupils to alert staff about their feelings. Pupils learn to understand their feelings and reflect upon them, for example in planned reflection activities. The school promotes positive virtues and expects pupils to show respect and empathy towards others. Daily meditation sessions help pupils to reflect on fundamental strengths such as truthfulness and on their own beliefs.

There are suitable procedures in place to identify pupils who need additional support, and the school provides appropriate intervention to help them. Highly effective teaching assistants, alongside class teachers, provide beneficial support that is tailored to pupils' individual needs. Staff track the progress of pupils requiring additional learning support carefully and, as a result, these pupils make the expected level of progress. The school works collaboratively with a wide range of external agencies to meet the needs of individual pupils. For example, teachers take advice from the hearing-impaired service and a theatre group helps all pupils to understand the needs of people with a hearing impairment.

Staff provide numerous opportunities for many pupils to take part in a wide variety of interesting working groups as part of the Senedd. This is a real strength of the school. In these groups, pupils learn a wide range of life skills and develop a deep understanding of issues that affect life for them and others. For example, members of the Working for Others group regularly visit residents in the local care home to learn about dementia and how it affects people. Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to take on leadership roles within the Senedd groups and fulfil their roles conscientiously. These groups make a difference to the school's provision, such as the development of the library. The school offers pupils the opportunity to learn a range of skills in courses that interest them, for example Performing Arts, Mini Medics, and Outdoor Survival courses. Staff provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to participate in performances, for example the Eisteddfod and Christmas plays.

The school provides a range of extra-curricular clubs such as the Sign Language Club, rugby and football clubs. Staff encourage pupils to take part in tournaments. For example, the football team enters the Cardiff City Tournament and the Catholic Schools' Sports Tournament.

The school is beginning to introduce topics that encourage pupils to explore and understand their own identity and learn about their Welsh Heritage. Staff arrange visits to the local and wider community, including local areas of environmental interest and museums.

The school provides opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of equality. Staff promote inclusion successfully so that pupils understand that people may live differently and come from different places. Younger pupils learn about the heritage of pupils in their class. Older pupils celebrate Black History month and consider the history and influence of black people over time.

Arrangements for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance are effective and most pupils' attendance rates remain high. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

## **Leadership and management**

Leaders have a vision for the school that is based on building caring and positive relationships. The school promotes respect for pupils' rights and a strong sense of belonging to the school community. The headteacher models these virtues very well in her day-to-day interactions with staff, pupils and parents. The dedicated leadership team assist the headteacher, alongside a team of committed staff who work very well together to achieve the school's aims.

A particular strength is in the relationships that exist between the school and the community it serves. There are many opportunities for parents to support their child's learning and development. Parents appreciate the effective communication between home and school and the support the school provides for their child as an individual. Staff liaise closely with parents to ensure that each child's needs are met successfully. Staff take parents' views into account, for example, when devising homework policies or when developing the school's curriculum. Regular newsletters keep parents informed of a wide range of curriculum activities, faith matters, attendance, the work of pupil participation groups and a few Welsh phrases to practise at home.

Governors provide beneficial support to the school. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively. They use their range of expertise to benefit the school well. They provide valuable support and challenge to ensure that the school continues to address its priorities for improvement. For example, they look at samples of pupils' work and discuss progress for more able pupils. Governors consider aspects of health and well-being and ensure that the school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

There are detailed processes to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Leaders address national priorities including literacy, numeracy and developing an engaging curriculum, which helps pupils to achieve the four purposes in the Curriculum for Wales. Senior leaders work diligently to ensure that the school makes good progress against its targets. They use a wide range of evidence to evaluate provision and the progress that pupils make. The school's middle leaders look at first-hand evidence to monitor the impact of school improvement actions on pupils' learning and well-being. The middle leaders report back to senior leaders and to governors. This enables them to influence further developments and to improve their own leadership skills. For example, after listening to pupils after the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown periods, staff realised that there was a need to improve pupils' reading. They wanted to engage pupils better in reading for pleasure. They prioritised spending to improve the range of books on offer and set up a school library, which is run by a group of older pupils. This provision encourages pupils to develop regular reading habits in school. The school's cycle of monitoring and evaluation is effective in ensuring that leaders and staff identify strengths and areas for development accurately.

Leaders make effective use of data to identify where pupils need particular support for learning or well-being. The headteacher uses the pupil development grant effectively to support vulnerable pupils to improve their literacy and numeracy skills and aspects of their well-being.

All staff have opportunities for professional development. Leaders manage staff performance effectively to ensure that staff develop their teaching and leadership skills and fulfil their roles successfully. Staff visit other schools to share good practice and resources. The school works particularly well with other local Catholic schools, for example to agree on important concepts within its curriculum.

The school promotes a culture of safeguarding and leaders prioritise safety and well-being appropriately. They are proactive in identifying problems and they act quickly to address any that occur.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer 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

## 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:

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