



Report summary for parents and carers on St Alban's R.C. High School

Date of inspection: May 2023

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

Overview

Staff at St Alban's R.C. High School are committed to providing pupils with the best possible education based on its values of 'Respect, Responsibility and Resilience' underpinned by the Catholic faith. The school creates an extremely caring and inclusive environment for its pupils. This is a particular strength and contributes positively to pupils' well-being, behaviour and engagement in learning.

There is a strong working relationship between pupils and teachers, which is based on mutual respect. Teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects engages pupils in their learning and staff encourage pupils to set high aspirations for themselves. Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and challenge them accordingly. As a result, pupils enjoy being at school and engage well with their learning. This helps many pupils to make good progress.

Nearly all pupils understand the school's expectations around behaviour and staff consistently and sensitively promote good behaviour. This contributes positively to the manner in which pupils conduct themselves. They display strong social skills and interact maturely with staff, their peers and visitors. They enjoy being in school and are satisfied with their learning.

The school offers a balanced curriculum, which provides for the interests, needs and aspirations of nearly all pupils. It has established a clear vision for the development of Curriculum for Wales and pupils enjoy the new approach to teaching in Year 7 based on capturing pupils' imagination and stimulating their curiosity. Planning for progress of pupils' numeracy and literacy skills across the curriculum is developing well. The school provides an excellent range of enrichment activities that support the curriculum and develop pupils' interests. Currently, the school does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills across the curriculum other than in Welsh lessons.

The headteacher, supported by a strong leadership team, shares a clear vision of high ambition and success for all. Nearly all staff promote this vision and consistently reinforce the school's values. This contributes strongly to an inclusive Catholic ethos that permeates school life. As a result, pupils enjoy school and are very proud to be part of the St Alban's community. The school has developed strong relationships with a wide variety of partners to ensure the best possible support for pupils. However, the quality of the school accommodation is poor and in need of upgrading.

Recommendations

R1 Increase the range of opportunities for pupils to practise their Welsh language skills

R2 Improve the condition of the buildings

What happens next

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



School context

Name of provider	St Alban's R.C. High School
Local authority	Torfaen County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Secondary
Religious character	Roman Catholic
Number of pupils on roll	770
Pupils of statutory school age	770
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 20.2%)	16.0%
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 17.8%)	24.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.6%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	7.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/12/2015
Start date of inspection	15/05/2023
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.	

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