

St John Lloyd Catholic Comprehensive School
Havard Road
Llanelli
Carmarthenshire
SA14 8SD

11/02/2025

Dear Fran Clegg

Interim visit: January 2025

Dear Fran

Thank you for your support with the interim visit to the school on 21st and 22nd January 2025. We valued the opportunity to meet with you, your staff and pupils and discuss the improvement work that the school has carried out since the core inspection. We note your very recent appointment as headteacher and the short time you have been at the school at the time of this visit.

During our visit, we had the opportunity to:

- Talk with pupils and hear their feedback about the school.
- Visit a sample of lessons across the curriculum to see pupils and staff undertaking their work.
- Undertake lesson observations and work scrutiny activities alongside senior leaders.
- Speak with senior leaders about your improvement work and how you have adapted approaches in the areas of focus
- Speak with middle leaders about their work and hear about the benefits and challenges they are experiencing.

Estyn, Llys Angor, Heol Keen, Caerdydd,
CF24 5JW Ffôn: 02920 446446
ymholiadau@estyn.llyw.cymru
www.estyn.llyw.cymru

Mae Estyn yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Bydd gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn y naill iaith neu'r llall yn cael yr un flaenoriaeth.

Estyn, Anchor Court, Keen Road,
Cardiff, CF24 5JW Telephone: 02920
446446 enquiries@estyn.gov.wales
www.estyn.gov.wales

Estyn welcomes correspondence in both English and Welsh. Correspondence received in either language will be given equal priority.

Focus of visit

How effective is the leadership of the progressive development of pupils' reading skills?

It is clear that the school has placed considerable emphasis on the development of pupils' reading skills across the curriculum. From the sample of work seen and the lessons we visited, we could see that the 'clunk words' approach is well established across the school. This is placing a helpful emphasis on the importance of relevant and accurate vocabulary. However, we agree with the school that there is inconsistency in how well this approach is used to develop pupils' ability to deal with unfamiliar words. It is also evident that teachers have developed the range of opportunities pupils have to practise their reading skills across the curriculum. Senior leaders recognise that there is still work to do to ensure that these activities are consistently challenging enough to develop pupils' advanced reading skills.

Leaders have prioritised the development of a reading culture across the school. They have deployed a wide range of strategies to promote the importance and benefits of reading for pleasure, for example 'DEAR time' and a reading buddy scheme. The pupils we talked to were very positive about these developments. They think that this approach is making reading more popular and helping them to read aloud more confidently.

We think it would be helpful for you to consider:

- How well are subject areas planning reading-focused activities that are suitably challenging and develop pupils' more advanced reading skills?
- How consistently are teachers across the curriculum helping pupils develop a range of reading strategies?
- How accurate are middle leaders' evaluation of their reading provision?

Do the school's improvement processes enable them to gather an accurate view of teaching and plan for improvement precisely?

During the visit, we heard how senior leaders use a range of evidence to evaluate the impact of teaching on learning. They regularly observe lessons and review pupils' work enabling them to provide appropriate evaluations of teaching. We recognise that senior leaders work well together to moderate these evaluations which helps to provide consistency and reliability.

The school's self-evaluation processes allow senior leaders to prioritise aspects of teaching that need to be improved. It was interesting to hear the school's plans to address these priorities. This includes both professional learning and action research to support individual teachers to develop their classroom practice.

We noted that senior leaders support middle leaders to carry out their role through coaching, professional learning, and the involvement of external agencies. The school

recognises the need to continue to support these leaders to develop their capacity to drive improvements in teaching and learning.

We think it would be helpful for the school to consider:

- How does the school ensure that all middle leaders strengthen their focus on improving teaching and learning in their subject areas?
- How do senior leaders ensure that all middle leaders independently and robustly evaluate the impact of teaching on learning?
- How does the school support middle leaders to better hold teachers to account and develop their practice?

Thank you again for all your help to plan and arrange our visit.

The school's latest core inspection report and further information on the process and purpose of interim visits can be found on our website:

<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/6694600>

Yours sincerely



Catherine Evans
Assistant Director