



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

**A report on**

**St Teilo's C.I.W. High School**

**Circle Way East  
Llanedeyrn  
Cardiff  
CF23 9PD**

**Date of inspection: March 2022**

**by**

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

## About St Teilo's C.I.W. High School

Name of provider	St Teilo's C-in-W High School
Local authority	Cardiff
Language of the provider	English Medium
Type of school	Secondary
Religious character	Church in Wales
Number of pupils on roll	1427
Pupils of statutory school age	1193
Number in sixth form (if applicable)	234
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average  <i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the secondary sector is 18.7%)</i>	24.5%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a)  <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the secondary sector is 21.7%)</i>	17%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	7.4%
Date of headteacher appointment	September 2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	04-02-2014
Start date of inspection	14-03-2022
Additional information	

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

The headteacher and his staff at St. Teilo's are united in their strong commitment to keeping pupils safe, raising their aspirations and helping them to develop and achieve. The Christian values of the school underpin all its work, helping it to create a caring ethos where pupils feel valued and well supported.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the school responded to the needs of its pupils and local community with flexibility and dedication. As pupils have returned to school, staff have worked hard to protect and enhance pupils' well-being alongside supporting progress in their learning. In many lessons, teachers' high expectations and careful planning help pupils to both readjust to normal school life and make sound progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills. In a minority of instances, teachers do not challenge pupils consistently well enough, which reduces the progress that they make.

The school provides an extensive range of effective pastoral support to meet pupils' needs and ensures that pupils with additional learning needs get the help that they require. There is a strong culture of safeguarding, and staff have a clear understanding of their role in supporting pupils' safety and well-being through all aspects of their work. However, the school canteen is currently closed, and the school is not providing pupils with hot meals or sufficient access to drinking water.

Leaders have a clear vision for developing a Curriculum for Wales that closely matches its ambition for creating 'brilliant learners'. The school adapts its curriculum to meet the needs of individual and groups of pupils, although currently it does not meet statutory requirements in a few subject areas.

The headteacher provides strong, thoughtful leadership and his commitment to equity and success for all pupils and the school community is shared by staff and governors.

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Resolve the issues that are currently preventing the school providing hot meals in the canteen, and improve pupils' access to drinking water
- R2 Improve the effectiveness of teaching in a minority of lessons, so that pupils are consistently challenged to achieve as highly as possible
- R3 Ensure that the curriculum meets all statutory requirements

## **What happens next**

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

## Main evaluation

### Learning

In lessons, many pupils recall their prior learning well and are able to apply their understanding in new contexts. They make secure progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills. In a few instances, where pupils are not sufficiently engaged in their learning, they make only limited progress. Many pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make sound progress from their starting points.

Many pupils write accurately and produce appropriately structured extended writing for a range of purposes and audiences. A minority produce fluent, engaging pieces of writing. Many pupils make notes and summarise information competently, although a few rely too much on simply copying. A minority of pupils make careless, repeated errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. The impact of periods of lockdown on these pupils' handwriting hampers their ability to present their writing in a clear and coherent fashion.

When examining text to understand, locate and select relevant information, many pupils demonstrate sound reading skills. They critically appraise different types of text appropriately and read aloud with fluency and expression. These pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of writers' techniques and can infer layers of meaning successfully. A minority produce sophisticated analyses of source material, such as when they consider different interpretations of the causes of the First World War.

Many pupils participate successfully in class discussion. They listen carefully to their peers and teachers and respond appropriately to questions. A minority use a wide vocabulary and a thorough understanding of subject terminology to talk about their learning in a thoughtful and articulate manner. A few pupils make only brief and basic contributions to discussion work.

Across the curriculum, many pupils demonstrate sound numeracy skills. They confidently perform mental calculations and construct and interpret graphs suitably. When given the opportunity, pupils use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills appropriately, such as when using spreadsheets to model profits in a tuck shop. They demonstrate independent thinking skills when, for example, designing and building circuits to control an electronic dice, and finding solutions to faults in their design in order to improve it. Pupils use creative thinking well, for example when exploring the symbolism in a painting about peace and liberation.

In the most effective Welsh lessons, pupils read fluently and produce accurate writing. Otherwise, they make only modest progress and make basic errors in pronunciation and sentence structure. Pupils have limited opportunities to use Welsh in school and do not use their Welsh frequently enough apart from in their Welsh lessons, which restricts their progress in this area.

Pupils in the sixth form are keen and committed learners. They demonstrate enthusiasm for their chosen subjects, and have a secure understanding of key

concepts. They make links between different topics confidently and summarise and synthesise information well, for example when examining the integrated nature of the different branches of the criminal justice system. When participating in group discussions, pupils in general speak thoughtfully and reflectively, and ask pertinent and interesting questions. They work well independently and collaborate effectively.

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

Most pupils are courteous and friendly around the school and show respect to others. They value the diverse and inclusive nature of the school community. Most feel safe in school, fairly treated and free from bullying.

Many pupils are keen and conscientious learners. They engage well with learning activities and sustain their concentration. They participate readily in class discussions and respect the views of others. A majority of pupils collaborate well to support each other's learning, often without teacher direction. A minority are highly capable learners who demonstrate strong independence, initiative and resilience in their learning.

A few pupils do not engage well with learning activities. This includes pupils who sit quietly and do very little work as well as pupils who deliberately distract those around them. In a few lessons, poor behaviour disrupts the progress in learning of the class. A few pupils behave boisterously when moving between lessons and a very few arrive late to lessons without good reason.

Pupils have a suitable range of opportunities to take on leadership roles in the school. For example, pupils lead their own LGBTQ+ support group and volunteer as student librarians and sports coaches. Pupils carry out their roles with enthusiasm and maturity and develop their personal and social skills successfully.

Many pupils use their voice thoughtfully and constructively to influence specific aspects of school life when the individual staff seek their views. Pupils feel that staff listen to, and value, their feedback. Despite this, overall, pupils have limited opportunities to influence strategic decisions in the school, particularly as pupils in Years 11, 12 and 13 are not represented on the school council or the school's governing body.

Most pupils benefit from a range of popular sports activities at break times and after school and have a positive attitude towards their physical and mental health. They talk openly about mental health and readily take up opportunities to receive support for this in school if they are struggling. Pupils' ability to eat healthily at school is limited by the unavailability of catering facilities on site.

Owing to the coronavirus pandemic, inspectors will not report pupils' rates of attendance during the academic year 2021-2022. Inspectors will, however, consider the school's provision for monitoring and improving attendance as part of inspection area 4 (care, support and guidance).

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

Following the significant impact that the pandemic has had on both pupils and staff, the school has taken a pragmatic, sensitive and thoughtful approach to adjusting its

approach to classroom practice. Whilst it has quite rightly focused strongly on repairing and supporting pupils' well-being, it has not lost sight of the importance of developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills.

In many instances, teachers and support staff have been successful in striking a careful balance between maintaining a drive to repair and improve standards of learning and raising pupils' aspirations, whilst simultaneously supporting pupils' well-being and reintegrating them into the necessary routines of school life. Where this works well, it is because teachers develop strong working relationships with pupils that are based on trust. These teachers know their pupils well and use this knowledge to ensure that approaches and activities are matched closely to pupils' needs. This helps them to maintain a calm and productive working atmosphere where pupils feel valued, safe and ready to learn, but are still challenged to achieve as highly as possible. In these lessons, teachers provide clear explanations and use engaging resources. They use suitable questioning techniques to check pupils' understanding and monitor progress carefully. These approaches are supported effectively by the way that teachers work with support staff.

The school's approach to teaching is not consistently effective enough in a minority of cases. This is because teachers do not establish sufficiently high expectations of behaviour and engagement. In these lessons, teachers do not manage class discussion well enough or match activities sufficiently to pupils' needs, including stretching the more able. They use limited questioning techniques that do not develop pupils' thinking and plan undemanding activities that do not help pupils to make progress.

Pupils receive valuable verbal feedback that helps them to improve in many instances. Overall, however, there is too much inconsistency – both within and across subject areas – in how well teachers use feedback to ensure that pupils improve their work. The school has recently developed an approach to written feedback that is, when used effectively, helpful in guiding pupils to make improvements, for example in addressing issues of technical accuracy. However, it is not used or monitored consistently well enough.

The way that the school adapts its curriculum to meet the needs of individual pupils is a notable strength. As well as providing a wide range of courses and pathways across the age range, it provides tailored provision that meets the needs of the most vulnerable pupils particularly well. The 'LEAP', 'ACE' and Year 12 foundation provision, for example, is effective in supporting the academic progress and personal and social skills of those who find it difficult to access mainstream provision.

The challenges caused by the pandemic, especially with regard to the staffing available to the school, have led it to temporarily adapt some aspects of its provision in a way that reduces pupils' access to a few subject areas. Whilst the school has appropriate plans in place to address this issue, currently it does not meet the statutory requirements for a minority of pupils, for example with regard to ICT, science, Welsh and physical education.

Pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. However, plans to strengthen this aspect of the school's work through a more coordinated approach to the progressive development of pupils' skills



are at an early stage of development. The school has a clear vision for developing the new Curriculum for Wales, which is integrated closely with its mission for developing 'brilliant learners'.

### **Care, support and guidance**

The school provides exceptional care, support and guidance to its diverse community. Its caring ethos is underpinned by the school's strong Christian values and a consistent focus on equity.

During the pandemic, staff at the school focussed relentlessly on securing the well-being of their pupils and the local community. For example, they held weekly catch-ups with parents and pupils, provided food or well-being support to families in crisis or isolation, and supplied equipment and learning materials to households during school closures. The school remained open for five out of six weeks during the summers of 2020 and 2021 to support vulnerable learners.

Since the return to school, an extensive team of pastoral support staff continues to provide comprehensive support to pupils to repair some of the effects of the pandemic. This work has successfully brought the school and its community closer together. Of particular note is the 'Puffins' provision of cooking facilities and healthy food for families with the greatest need. This provision is funded as a charitable endeavour by staff.

Staff work in a highly effective, collaborative way with a range of partners to provide pupils and their families with advice, therapeutic support and targeted interventions on a range of issues such as self-harm, knife crime and domestic violence. The school is involved, for example, in a pilot programme with South Wales Police and the local authority Children's Services aimed at keeping pupils safe from extra-familial harm. The focus of this support has been carefully identified by the school in response to the needs of individual pupils and the local community.

The school has a robust approach to safeguarding. Procedures to ensure the safeguarding of pupils are well understood by governors and staff. Staff are highly committed to keeping pupils safe and happy in school, and integrate this successfully into the way in which they carry out their roles.

The school has developed an extensive system to identify pupils at risk. Information on individual pupils is used well to help target support in a responsive way and to inform conversations with social services when appropriate. This approach is one of the ways in which the school supports and promotes the importance of good attendance. The pastoral team takes an active approach to addressing absenteeism and takes good account of the many different challenges pupils face.

Leaders monitor behaviour closely, and the school has developed clear, well-understood approaches for dealing with behaviour issues in lessons. Staff receive beneficial support and guidance for dealing with these issues. A very few pupils feel that the school does not always make it clear enough how it has dealt with incidents involving slurs based on ethnicity, gender or sexuality. However, overall, the school deals with bullying well, using restorative practice to rebuild relationships when appropriate.

As part of the school's Christian philosophy for inclusivity, leaders have broadened their admissions criteria to provide places for pupils from the local community, regardless of their faith background. This demonstrates the school's commitment to equity. Transition arrangements are strong. The school works well with its partner primary schools to promote continuity of curriculum, teaching and learning in light of a Curriculum for Wales. Pupils receive appropriate information regarding their options at the end of Key Stage 3 and post-16, but the school does not always monitor closely enough that pupils have a clear understanding of all the pathways available to them.

The school's curriculum and enrichment arrangements provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of issues related to equality and diversity. The school supports pupils to explore spiritual, moral and ethical beliefs, as well as the values of respect and empathy. However, the school's personal and social education is not formally coordinated. This hinders its ability to ensure that all aspects of statutory provision, for example sex and relationships education, are delivered consistently.

There is appropriate provision to develop pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles. As restrictions are lifted, the school provides an increasing range of opportunities for pupils to be involved in sporting and other activities during and after the school day. These activities are popular and participation rates are high. However, the closure of the canteen and limited access to drinking water restricts the school's arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

The needs of pupils with ALN are met exceptionally well. Effective interventions by an experienced and highly skilled team – in partnership with a wide range of external agencies where required – help to secure improvements in pupils' skills and support their continued engagement in learning. The annual review process is thorough and involves the pupil, their parents and all stakeholders. Teaching staff receive helpful guidance on how best to support pupils with ALN in their classes.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher provides strong, sensitive leadership and is supported well by his senior team. Together they have provided clear and effective leadership during the pandemic, which has focused closely on ensuring pupils' and staff well-being is at the heart of every decision they make.

The school's mission to 'improve excellence, increase equity and deepen faith' is clear and well understood by all staff and governors. This aligns appropriately to the school's vision for a purpose-driven curriculum where pupils' well-being is nurtured and they are provided with high-quality teaching and learning experiences.

Senior leaders are well respected by the school community and have developed successfully a firmly committed and collaborative staff body. They have high expectations of all staff. The '#TeamTeilo' approach helps staff understand clearly how they can make a positive contribution towards the school's roll-out of a Curriculum for Wales. This understanding, along with a clear plan for change and a comprehensive professional learning offer, has helped many staff to improve the

quality of their teaching and to create a supportive and caring learning environment for their pupils.

The school's professional learning programme aligns closely to its vision for curriculum and teaching. Leaders provide staff at all levels with a wide range of opportunities to develop their practice and skills. They plan this programme carefully to respond to pupils' needs and whole-school priorities. There is also a range of helpful opportunities for staff at all levels to develop their leadership skills. For example, middle leaders benefit from observing senior leadership meetings and carrying out aspects of whole-school responsibilities.

The headteacher has created a strong culture of self-improvement. This helps staff to be reflective about their own strengths and areas for development. The introduction of teaching and learning self and peer reviews, along with 'Tweak-it Tuesdays', has contributed well to developing a strategic approach to professional learning and improvement. Leaders draw on relevant research-based evidence to inform and guide their decision-making. They take account of a wide range of information that allows staff to take measured risks and refine and develop their practice to provide the best learning opportunities for their pupils.

Senior leadership roles and responsibilities are distributed equitably and make best use of individual skills. This provides a helpful balance between supporting pupils' academic progress and their well-being, including developing their mental and physical health. Line management processes are clear and supportive. Leaders provide appropriate support and challenge for staff at all levels, and deal suitably with any underperformance.

Prior to the pandemic, the school had a suitable approach to evaluation and improvement that focused closely on the quality of teaching and pupil outcomes. The school has reflected carefully on these approaches before making changes to their improvement processes. This has enabled it to streamline its arrangements and develop a more continuous and responsive approach to improvement. Generally, leaders identify helpful priorities for improvement, although they are not always precise enough about the aspects of their work they are aiming to improve or about what success might look like. This reduces their ability to monitor accurately the impact that actions have on pupil progress.

Many middle leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and aspects that need improvement in their areas of responsibility, which helps them to fulfil their role well. They have a strong track record of securing improvement. Since the return to school, senior leaders have reduced the middle leaders' responsibilities in this area. This is intended to help them focus better on supporting pupils as they re-establish learning routines and address any regression in their skills, knowledge and understanding. Whilst this has had a positive impact on staff and pupil well-being, it has in a few instances hampered their ability to understand the specific strengths and areas for improvement in the quality of teaching within their departments, and therefore to secure improvements.

Governors are very supportive of the school and provide suitable, relevant challenge to all leaders. They are proud members of the school community and carry out their duties diligently, making a positive contribution to the strategic direction of the school.

Senior leaders and governors manage the school's finances well. They review spending carefully and plan responsibly. They make effective use of the pupil development grant. In general, governors work hard to ensure that the school promotes healthy eating and drinking appropriately. However, their ability to do so is currently hampered by the continued closure of the canteen.

## 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 going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website:

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