



Report summary for parents and carers on St Brigid's School

Date of inspection: February 2024

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

Overview

Many pupils at St Brigid's School make secure progress in learning and skills, particularly in their oracy. Most pupils develop valuable personal qualities over time and grow into conscientious, well-mannered and sociable individuals. They are proud of the school's Catholic ethos and the 'Brigidine' values it promotes. The respectful and polite nature of most pupils is a notable feature of the school.

Overall, staff and pupils enjoy strong and productive working relationships and this creates a happy learning environment. Many teachers prepare their lessons carefully to ensure that pupils acquire knowledge and skills through interesting and engaging learning experiences. However, in a few cases, leaders and teachers do not plan carefully enough to ensure that pupils make enough progress in skills, particularly numeracy, Welsh language and digital skills. Provision for personal and social education in the lower and middle schools is well planned but there are fewer opportunities for pupils to build on their knowledge and understanding of important issues in the upper school and in the sixth form.

Care and support for all pupils, particularly the vulnerable and those with additional learning needs, is a particular strength of the school. Leaders and staff have cultivated a close, nurturing bond with their pupils over time. Together, they profess the school's strong Catholic and 'Brigidine' values and demonstrate a strong sense of mutual respect and appreciation.

The headteacher is a motivating leader who works tirelessly to inspire staff and pupils and ensure that the school continues to improve, despite significant financial challenges and the poor state of the premises. She has a well-defined vision that is shared by most of the staff. Although leaders regularly monitor the quality of the school's work, evaluations do not focus enough on the impact of provision on pupils' learning. Governors support the school but, together with senior leaders, do not always consider the needs of current pupils when planning the curriculum for the upper school.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve the planning for the progressive development of pupils' skills, including their Welsh language skills, so that the provision meets the needs of all pupils
- R2 Strengthen self-evaluation and improvement planning processes to ensure that monitoring activities focus on the impact of provision on pupils' learning
- R3 Ensure that strategic decisions reflect the current and future needs of the school and work with the local authority to address the deficit budget

What happens next

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



School context

Name of provider	St Brigid's School
Local authority	Denbighshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	All age schools
Religious character	School with a Catholic ethos
Number of pupils on roll	471
Pupils of statutory school age	389
Number in nursery classes	12
Number in sixth form	59
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 All age schools is 21.6%)	10.2%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in All age schools is 11.0%)	7.5%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	4.6%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	4.1%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/06/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/05/2016
Start date of inspection	26/02/2024

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