



St Martin's School

Ysgol Martin Sant

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Headteacher/Prifathro: Mr L Jarvis

Dear Parent / Carer,

It gives me great pleasure to provide you with a summary from our recent Estyn Inspection in May 2019.

We are all extremely proud of this report which sums up the outstanding work at St. Martin's School. The report clearly shows the standard of education provided at our school. I would like to thank all staff, parents, carers, pupils and governors for their hard work and support in achieving these exceptional results.

Summary

St Martin's Comprehensive School has a strong, caring ethos. Many teachers show high levels of dedication to ensure that pupils perform to the best of their ability. They deliver exciting lessons that capture pupils' imagination. As a result, most pupils enjoy coming to school. They are resilient learners and many have a mature attitude to their work.

Outcomes for pupils are consistently strong. During their time in school, many pupils develop their skills and subject knowledge well. In particular, pupils gain strong literacy skills.

The headteacher offers strong leadership. Senior leaders work well as a team and have exceptionally high expectations of staff and pupils.

Inspection Area Judgements	
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and Attitudes to Learning	Good
Teaching and Learning Experiences	Good
Care, Support and Guidance	Good
Leadership and Management	Good

Standards: Good

- During their time at school, many pupils make strong progress in their learning. They develop a deep understanding of key concepts and apply these ideas skilfully in unfamiliar contexts.
- The manner in which pupils speak and listen to one another is a strength of the school. Many pupils across the ability range, have a wide subject specific and general vocabulary. When given the opportunity, they offer well considered responses to their

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teachers' questions and respond maturely to their peers in animated classroom discussions.

- Many pupils make strong progress in their reading skills. They use a range of reading strategies, such as skimming and scanning, successfully to gain a general overview of texts and pick out specific facts.
- Many pupils communicate their ideas articulately in extended pieces of writing, for example when discussing themes such as the existence of god in their ethics lessons.
- Most pupils have a competent understanding of how to use ICT packages for basic word processing, making presentations and searching the internet.
- Since 2015, performance in the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics and the capped points score is notably higher than in similar schools. Over the same period, the proportion of pupils gaining five A*-A at GCSE is consistently higher than in similar schools.
- In the sixth form, performance at 3A*-A is close to that in other schools and the proportion of pupils gaining three A*-C grades is consistently above that in other schools.

Wellbeing and Attitudes to Learning: Good

- Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Nearly all arrive punctually to lessons. Most listen attentively, engage readily in learning activities and sustain their concentration well.
- Many pupils show high levels of perseverance and try to solve problems for themselves before asking staff for help. Most pupils are courteous and respectful to staff, peers and visitors to the school.
- During their time in school, many pupils develop their leadership skills well through taking on various responsibilities.
- There is appropriate pupil involvement in making decisions about issues that impact on their wellbeing through valuable surveys and focus groups.

Teaching and Learning Experiences: Good

- Many teachers develop positive working relationships with pupils and manage their behaviour well. They are highly committed to securing the best outcomes for pupils.
- Teachers display strong subject knowledge and provide strong language models for pupils.
- In a few cases, teaching has outstanding features. In these instances, teachers have exceptionally high expectations and deliver their lessons with verve.
- Teachers challenge all pupils including those with additional learning needs skilfully, for example by encouraging them to use ambitious vocabulary when completing literacy tasks.
- At key stage 4, the school provides opportunities for pupils to gain a suitable range of general and vocational qualifications.
- The school has mapped opportunities to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital competency skills across the curriculum well. Many subject areas plan beneficial opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills.
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- The school monitors pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy closely and implements a beneficial range of strategies to support the development of pupils with weaker skills.
- The school's strategies to improve pupils' Welsh language skills are having a positive impact on outcomes in key stage 4.

Care, Support and Guidance: Good

- The school has a supportive culture that promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and many pupils feel staff are caring and approachable.
- The school has strong procedures for monitoring behaviour and tackling any issues that arise. Leaders regularly seek pupils' opinions and respond to their concerns well.
- Positive relationships with partner primary schools and transition arrangements help pupils to settle quickly at the school.
- The school provides valuable support for pupils with additional learning needs. Staff identify individual pupils' learning needs promptly on arrival at the school and plan high quality interventions. This helps them to access the curriculum as well as developing their social and life skills beneficially.
- There is a wide range of initiatives that allows pupils to build strong relationships with the local community.

Leadership and Management: Good

- Since the Headteacher's arrival in the school four years ago his enthusiastic and decisive leadership has led the school successfully through a considerable period of change.
- Senior leaders have established a clear vision for the school with appropriate strategic aims that meet the needs of pupils and the local community. These are reflected by the school's motto of 'dysgu ynghyd, cyflawni ynghyd - learning together, achieving together'.
- Senior leaders work well together to deliver the school's strategic aims. They set high expectations for staff and pupils and model and promote professional values and behaviours in their everyday work. They have secured very strong pupil outcomes, effective teaching and improved pupil behaviour.
- Governors have a secure understanding of the schools' strengths and weaknesses. They provide valuable support and an appropriate degree of challenge to the headteacher and the senior team. They have a sound understanding of performance data. As a body, they understand the needs of the community well and make sure that the school reflects their aspirations for the pupils.
- Senior leaders are developing a strong learning culture across the school, for pupils and staff. All staff benefit from an appropriate range of professional learning activities, including weekly 'Teach meet' sessions to share good practice, and coaching and mentoring triads to explore new approaches to teaching and learning.
- The headteacher, business manager and governors manage in year expenditure suitably to ensure that finance is used for the benefit of pupils and staff. In general, the school uses its available finances well to maintain and improve the learning environment in a challenging estate.

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A full copy of the inspection report is available on the Estyn website and from the school upon request. I trust you are as delighted with it as I am.

Yours sincerely,



Mr L Jarvis
Headteacher

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