



Headteacher: Michael Coady BSc.

5 February 2016

ESTYN REPORT

Dear Parents,

The report of the Estyn Inspection that took place in school in early December is published today and as you can read it is very good. I have highlighted below some comments that read particularly well.

The Estyn Reports are very much driven by the school's achievement data. In particular the most important factor in the 'Standards' judgement, on which all the other judgements are based, is how well the school's achievements compare with similar schools. Our Free School Meals take up is just under 10% (9.3%) and so St Alban's outcomes are compared with the schools in the 0%-10% Free Schools Meals benchmarking group. That means our performance was judged against the least deprived, and usually the highest performing, schools in the country. It is a shame that Estyn outcomes appear so closely determined by the performance in the Free School Meal benchmarking group. Just five extra students in the school eligible for Free School Meals would have placed St Alban's in the next benchmarking group and that may have been enough to secure an 'Excellent' outcome from the inspection.

Even so we are very pleased with the report and as you can see from the extracts below much of our very good work has been reported in glowing terms:

Estyn Quotes:

Our Pupils

- "Nearly all pupils have a strong sense of community and show a high level of respect, care and concern for others. They feel safe in school and are confident that the school deals well with the rare incidents of bullying."
- "Nearly all pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviour in lessons and around the school and they are courteous and considerate."
- "Nearly all pupils behave extremely well and have positive attitudes to learning"... and "are well-motivated, enthusiastic learners."

Our Teachers

- "In nearly all lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and develop strong working relationships with pupils. This creates a positive and supportive working environment, which enables many pupils to make good progress."



ST ALBAN'S RC HIGH SCHOOL
The Park, Pontypool, Torfaen, NP4 6XG

YSGOL UWCHRADD GATHOLIG SAIN ALBAN
Y Parc, Pontypwl, Torfaen, NP4 6XG

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- “Teachers demonstrate a high level of clarity and enthusiasm in their explanation of concepts, which engages and motivates pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding well.”
- “The school uses highly performing staff well to share and model good practice.”
- “In nearly all lessons, there are strong working relationships and a highly supportive, purposeful working environment”

Our Ethos and our Community

- “The school's highly inclusive ethos has a very positive impact on pupils' learning, behaviour and personal development. The school is highly effective in making sure that the aptitudes and achievements of all pupils, including vulnerable pupils and those with additional learning needs, are recognised and celebrated.”
- “The caring and inclusive ethos successfully promotes high expectations for all pupils and strong mutual respect between all members of the school community”
- “Support for pupils with additional learning needs is strong.”
- “The school creates a very caring and supportive environment where pupils are happy and feel safe. The school motto, ‘Be the best you can be’, is well understood by staff and pupils and plays an important part in maintaining high aspirations.”
- “The Headteacher provides principled and purposeful leadership and is supported well by his senior leadership team. Together, they have been successful in securing strong outcomes for pupils and a positive school ethos.”
- “Senior leaders communicate a clear vision based on high aspirations for the achievement and welfare of pupils. The school's sense of ambition is well understood and supported by pupils, staff and parents.”
- “The strong and well-established relationship with local churches is an important part of the caring and supportive ethos of the school. This makes a beneficial contribution to pupils' wellbeing and their spiritual and moral development, for example through charity work and international links.”

Please note the Estyn Inspection did not look at how well St Alban's performs as a **Catholic** school. A separate team from the Archdiocese of Cardiff undertook that Inspection and that report will be presented shortly.

I urge you to read the report in full and you will note for example that the results of the students' and parents' questionnaires (presented in the report) are very positive. I would like to thank governors, all the staff in school in whatever capacity, students and parents for the hard work, support and encouragement that have led to the outcomes in this report.

Yours sincerely

Lucy