Summary of School Development Plan 2026 - 2027

1. **Summary of Self Evaluation Strengths and Areas for Improvement – Estyn 2023 and 2025**
2. **A report of progress against the previous year's priorities**
3. **Self Evaluation: Strengths and Areas for Improvement based on School Development Plan 2025 - 2026**
4. **School Development Plan Priorities Overview and Planned Actions 2026 - 2027**
5. **Relevant Milestones**

1. Summary of Self Evaluation Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Estyn Outcomes (June 2023)

Overview

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School is an inclusive and caring school that supports success for all pupils, and service to others, exceptionally well. All pupils love belonging to the school. They speak warmly about their friends and teachers and look forward to coming every day. Pupils are kind and respectful towards each other and the relationship between the oldest and youngest pupils is very strong. The positive and nurturing relationships that exist between pupils, and between staff and pupils, contribute well to the inclusive and welcoming nature of the school and community.

Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and willingness to support one another in their work and play are notable. They are confident and inquisitive learners and enjoy finding out about things that interest them. Nearly all pupils develop good speaking and listening skills and use these well to build on, or challenge, each other's ideas Across the school, most pupils develop good mathematical and digital skills. Pupils build their musical and artistic skills well and enjoy performing to a range of audiences. However, pupils do not make enough progress in their writing during their time in the school.

Many teachers plan and deliver a knowledge rich curriculum effectively, through a comprehensive range of engaging learning experiences. Outside learning areas are stimulating and enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills effectively. Teachers offer many opportunities to learn about the history and culture of Wales and the local area. Provision for physical development is strong, as is the teaching of mathematics where learning happens at a suitably brisk pace. Overall, the quality of teaching across the school is variable, particularly in younger year groups where many activities are over-directed by adults and opportunities to develop independence are limited.

The headteacher has created a clear vision for the education and well-being of learners and shared it effectively with all stakeholders. The headteacher takes the lead in ensuring that the school provides an inclusive and caring environment for all. There is a strong team ethos across the school, where pupils and staff feel supported and valued. Members of the governing body are supportive and well-informed. Leaders have identified many of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, self-evaluation and improvement processes are overly complex and leaders identify too many priorities. This makes it difficult for the school to focus well enough on the most important aspects of its work.

Recommendations	
R1	Sharpen self-evaluation and improvement processes to ensure that they focus on the most important areas of school improvement
R2	Improve the consistency of teaching and provision to ensure that it is appropriate to pupils' stage and age of development and successfully develops pupils' independence
R3	Improve pupils' writing skills

The report summary for parents and carers can be found here:
https://estyn.gov.wales/system/files/2023-08/Parents%20and%20carers%20-%20Inspection%20Report%20-%20St%20Joseph%27s%20R.C.%20Primary%20School%202023.pdf

Estyn Interim Visit (March 2025)

Overview

Purpose of the Visit

Inspectors visited the school to evaluate progress made since the core inspection in June 2023, focusing on two key recommendations:

1. Sharpen Self-Evaluation and Improvement Processes

Clearer Focus: School leaders have refined self-evaluation and improvement processes to concentrate on high-impact priorities.
Distributed Leadership: The senior leadership team leads on teaching and learning quality, while other staff take on activities such as book scrutiny and progress evaluation, creating manageable and effective monitoring.
Professional Learning: Staff development aligns with school priorities, incorporating peer collaboration, research, and external visits.
Governor Involvement: Governors now actively participate in self-evaluation through learning walks, learner interviews, and staff discussions—providing informed support and challenge.

2. Improve Consistency of Teaching and Provision to Support Pupils' Development and Independence

Consistent Teaching: A school-wide approach has improved consistency, especially in assessment for learning strategies.
Questioning and Vocabulary: Most teachers use effective questioning to check understanding and develop vocabulary.
Independent Learning:
Staff are fostering independence, particularly in younger learners, through purposeful play and choice-led learning, though consistency still needs development. Older pupils show strong independence and motivation, often solving problems without adult help. Pupil-led inquiry is promoted across the curriculum.
Effective Use of Environment: Classrooms and outdoor spaces are used well to support learning.
Assessment and Planning: Teachers use assessments effectively to inform planning and provide appropriate challenge for individuals and groups.

Overall
The school has made strong progress in addressing key recommendations from the 2023 inspection. Leaders and staff demonstrate a clear commitment to continual improvement and recognise areas still requiring development.

The full version of the Interim Visit letter can be read here: https://estyn.gov.wales/app/uploads/2025/04/Interim-visit-letter-St-Josephs-R.C.-Primary-School-2025.pdf

2. A report of progress against the previous year's priorities

Evaluation of SDP Priorities - 2025 - 2026

Priority	Progress (RAG)		
	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Priority 1: Embedding strategic self-evaluation to drive continuous improvement			
Priority 2: Embedding consistent, age- appropriate practice to deepen pupil independence			
Priority 3: To enhance teaching consistency and pupil outcomes in mathematics through the implementation of a new scheme of work: *White Rose Maths*			
Priority 4: To promote fluency and confidence in Welsh across the school community.			

3. Self-Evaluation: Strengths and Areas for Improvement based on School Development Plan 2025 - 2026

Priority 1	**Embedding strategic self-evaluation to drive continuous improvement**
Evaluation of Progress Towards Success Criteria	The priority has been successfully achieved. Self-evaluation is now embedded as a continuous process rather than a series of isolated activities. Staff, pupils, parents and governors all contribute regularly through structured feedback opportunities which increasingly influence school improvement planning. Monitoring activities are consistently focused on the quality of learning rather than compliance, resulting in more precise improvement actions. Middle leaders demonstrate increased confidence in leading evaluation activities and are beginning to articulate the impact of teaching on learner outcomes using evaluative language. The MER cycle has ensured balanced coverage across curriculum areas whilst maintaining a sharp focus on strategic priorities. Professional learning has been responsive and evidence-based, with clear improvements in teaching consistency, leadership capacity and curriculum development. External validation has consistently confirmed the school's accurate understanding of its strengths and next steps, providing confidence that self-evaluation is both rigorous and effective.
Next Steps and Recommendations for 2026–2027	• Develop middle leaders' expertise in measuring impact through advanced evaluative writing and coaching. • Refine MER documentation to focus increasingly on pupil outcomes and long-term impact. • Continue embedding peer review and external validation as routine elements of school improvement. • Further strengthen governor involvement in evaluating curriculum impact. • Use the findings from the 2023–2026 strategic cycle to inform the new School Development Plan and ensure continued alignment between self-evaluation, professional learning and learner outcomes.

Priority 2	**Embedding consistent, age- appropriate practice to deepen pupil independence**
Evaluation of Progress Towards Success Criteria	The majority of success criteria have been achieved. Observation-led planning is securely embedded within Nursery and Reception and has successfully informed provision. Practice has begun to transfer effectively into Years 1 and 2, strengthening continuity across the Foundation Phase. The Teaching and Learning Charter has improved consistency across classrooms and has become embedded within lesson observations and professional dialogue. EDIT Time is now an established feature of classroom practice, although consistency in its application continues to develop between classes. Pupils increasingly use success criteria to evaluate and improve their work and demonstrate growing confidence in explaining their learning. Learning environments across the school promote independence, accessibility and purposeful learning. Evidence from pupil voice, learning walks and book scrutiny shows that pupils are taking greater ownership of learning and are becoming increasingly reflective learners. Writing outcomes have continued to improve through the consistent implementation of the Writing Journey and progression ladders, although further work remains to ensure the highest levels of consistency across all classes.
Next Steps and Recommendations for 2026–2027	• Fully implement the Learning Toolbox to strengthen pupils' metacognitive skills and independence. • Continue embedding structured dialogue, reasoning and enquiry approaches across all classes. • Refine and further embed EDIT Time to maximise pupil reflection and self-improvement. • Extend observation-informed practice beyond Foundation Learning where appropriate. • Continue professional learning focused on questioning, metacognition and independent learning behaviours. • Maintain the strong focus on high-quality learning environments that promote pupil agency, curiosity and resilience.

Priority 3	**To enhance teaching consistency and pupil outcomes in mathematics through the implementation of a new scheme of work: *White Rose Maths***
Evaluation of Progress Towards Success Criteria	The priority has been successfully achieved. Teaching across the school demonstrates increased consistency in mathematical pedagogy, with White Rose providing a coherent progression from Year 1 to Year 6. Planning is well aligned to the curriculum and assessment cycle, and most teachers confidently use the CPA approach alongside carefully sequenced learning. Pupil voice indicates that learners are increasingly confident in mathematics and appreciate the small-step approach, which enables them to build understanding progressively. Monitoring evidence demonstrates improvements in mathematical vocabulary, fluency and pupils' willingness to explain and justify their reasoning. Assessment information and work scrutiny show that most pupils have made expected or better progress throughout the year. Staff confidence has grown considerably, with professional dialogue increasingly centred on effective pedagogy rather than simply implementing the scheme.
Next Steps and Recommendations for 2026–2027	• Deepen pupils' reasoning, explanation and problem-solving through high-quality mathematical discussion. • Continue developing teachers' confidence in adapting White Rose materials to meet the needs of all learners. • Strengthen formative assessment strategies within mathematics lessons. • Develop parental engagement resources to improve understanding of mathematical methods. • Continue using MER activities to evaluate impact on pupil outcomes and refine teaching practice.

Priority 4	**To promote fluency and confidence in Welsh across the school community.**
Evaluation of Progress Towards Success Criteria	The priority has been highly successful. Staff confidence has increased considerably as a result of sustained professional learning and collaborative practice. Daily Welsh language routines are now evident across the school, with pupils responding confidently to familiar classroom language and participating enthusiastically in Welsh songs, greetings and everyday conversations. The Welsh Language Continuum has begun to inform planning and progression, providing greater consistency between year groups. Learning walks and pupil voice demonstrate that Welsh has become more visible, purposeful and authentic within classroom environments. Professional learning has created a culture in which staff are increasingly willing to use Welsh beyond scripted phrases, resulting in richer language experiences for pupils.
Next Steps and Recommendations for 2026–2027	• Continue the Penarth Cluster Welsh professional learning programme to further develop staff fluency and confidence. • Embed the Welsh Language Continuum consistently within planning, assessment and progression. • Increase opportunities for purposeful pupil talk and spontaneous Welsh across the curriculum. • Develop richer opportunities for authentic Welsh experiences through school events, pupil leadership and links with the local community. • Continue monitoring the quality and frequency of Welsh language use through MER activities and coaching.

4. School Development Plan Priorities Overview 2026 - 2027

2026 – 2027 Priorities	Overview	Success Criteria
Priority 1: Phonics and Reading (Year 1) ***Raise standards in reading through a whole-school culture of reading and high-quality foundational literacy.***	**Raise standards in reading by establishing a consistent whole-school approach to foundational literacy. Embed high-quality phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension teaching, foster a strong reading culture, use assessment to inform targeted support, and ensure practice aligns with national guidance through collaborative professional learning.**	1. A clear whole-school reading strategy is implemented consistently across all year groups and understood by all staff. 2. Reading for pleasure is embedded across the school, with pupils demonstrating positive attitudes, increased engagement and regular reading habits. 3. Monster Phonics (Nursery – Year 2) and Superhero Spelling (Years 3 – 6) is implemented with fidelity, with effective intervention pathways supporting older pupils requiring additional phonics provision. 4. High-quality teaching of phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension is evident in all classrooms. 5. GL Reading Assessments and internal assessment information demonstrate improved progress and attainment in reading across all year groups. 6. Teachers use assessment information effectively to identify need, adapt teaching and implement timely interventions. 7. Professional learning and collaborative projects (SRG Vertical Collaboration and Calon Cymru) strengthen classroom practice and improve consistency. 8. Reading environments, displays and resources actively promote a strong whole-school reading culture. 9. School practice aligns with the expectations of the Foundational Literacy Plan, Estyn recommendations and CSC guidance. 10. Monitoring activities, pupil voice and lesson observations demonstrate consistently high-quality reading provision across the school.
Priority 2: Teaching and Learning – (Year 1 – Renewed Focus) ***Strengthen high-quality teaching and learning through consistency, excellence and authentic learning.***	**Further strengthen the quality and consistency of teaching by embedding a shared pedagogical approach, developing instructional coaching and assessment practices, promoting pupil independence and metacognition, and providing authentic learning experiences that secure excellent outcomes for all learners.**	1. The Teaching Charter and agreed pedagogical non-negotiables are consistently implemented across all classrooms. 2. High-quality teaching is evident across the school, with reduced variability between classes, phases and subjects. 3. Learning environments consistently promote independence, engagement, resilience and high expectations for behaviour and presentation. 4. Assessment, feedback and the online tracking system are used consistently to identify next steps and improve pupil progress. 5. Instructional coaching supports continuous professional growth and leads to measurable improvements in classroom practice. 6. Teachers use progression frameworks confidently to plan learning, provide appropriate challenge and secure learner progression. 7. Pupils demonstrate increasing independence, metacognition, resilience and ownership of their learning through effective use of the Learning Toolbox and EDIT Time. 8. Structured dialogue, questioning and enquiry approaches are embedded across the curriculum, improving pupil thinking and oracy. 9. Authentic, purposeful learning experiences engage pupils in meaningful contexts and strengthen application of knowledge and skills. 10. MER activities, pupil outcomes and self-evaluation evidence demonstrate improved teaching quality and accelerated progress for all learners.

Priority 3: Teaching and Learning – Mathematics (Year 2) ***Embed and deepen high-quality mathematics teaching through White Rose Maths.***	**Embed and deepen the consistent implementation of White Rose Maths through high-quality teaching, adaptive practice, mathematical reasoning and effective assessment, ensuring all learners make strong progress and develop confidence in mathematics.**	1. White Rose Maths is implemented consistently across the school, with teachers adapting planning effectively to meet the needs of all learners. 2. School mathematics provision aligns with the expectations of the Welsh Government's Foundational Numeracy Plan, with curriculum, pedagogy and assessment reflecting national guidance. 3. Pupils demonstrate increased confidence in mathematical reasoning, problem-solving and explaining their thinking. 4. High-quality questioning and mathematical discussion are evident in mathematics lessons across all year groups. 5. Teachers confidently use pre-teaching, scaffolding and challenge to ensure appropriate support and stretch for all learners. 6. Collaborative moderation strengthens consistency in teacher assessment and expectations across the school. 7. Professional learning and coaching improve staff subject knowledge and confidence in mathematics pedagogy. 8. Parents have increased understanding of mathematical methods and are better equipped to support learning at home. 9. Formative assessment and pupil progress data are used effectively to inform teaching, identify timely interventions and demonstrate improved attainment and progress in mathematics. 10. MER activities confirm consistently high-quality mathematics teaching and positive pupil attitudes towards mathematics.
Priority 4: Teaching and Learning – Welsh Language Development (Year 2) ***Strengthen Welsh language provision through increased staff confidence, purposeful language use and consistent progression.***	**Strengthen Welsh language provision by increasing staff confidence and fluency, embedding the Welsh Language Continuum, and creating purposeful opportunities for pupils to use Welsh naturally across the curriculum and throughout school life.**	1. Staff confidence and fluency in Welsh continue to improve through sustained professional learning. 2. The Welsh Language Continuum is used consistently to support planning, teaching and assessment. 3. Welsh is used naturally and purposefully throughout the school day across a range of curriculum areas. 4. Pupils demonstrate increased confidence in speaking and responding in Welsh in both formal and informal situations. 5. Classroom environments consistently promote and celebrate the Welsh language through high-quality displays, vocabulary and routines. 6. Authentic opportunities to use Welsh are embedded through pupil leadership, enrichment activities, community links and school events. 7. Cluster collaboration strengthens professional practice and supports consistency in Welsh language teaching. 8. Monitoring activities demonstrate increasing quality and frequency of Welsh language use across the school. 9. Assessment information shows clear progression in pupils' Welsh language skills across all year groups. 10. Pupil voice reflects increased confidence, enjoyment and willingness to use Welsh independently.

5. Relevant Milestones

Priority	Autumn 2026	Spring 2027	Summer 2027
Phonics and Reading (Year 1) ***Raise standards in reading through a whole-school culture of reading and high-quality foundational literacy.***	• A consistent whole-school approach to phonics and reading (including GGR in Years 4 – 6) is established • Monster Phonics and Superhero Spelling are implemented. • Baseline assessments and end of term assessment completed and pupils requiring additional support identified. • Observations of Monster Phonics sessions across N-Y3 completed. • Phonics resources audited.	• Phonics and reading practice is increasingly embedded and consistent • Assessment demonstrates progress, interventions are responsive to need, and teaching increasingly develops fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. - Parent workshops about the Monster Phonics approach and how parents can support at home effective.	• Assessment and MER demonstrate improved reading outcomes and reduced gaps, with high-quality phonics and reading provision embedded, increased pupil engagement in reading and a sustainable whole-school culture of reading established.
Teaching and Learning – (Year 1 – Renewed Focus) ***Strengthen high-quality teaching and learning through consistency, excellence and authentic learning.***	• A clear and shared pedagogical approach is established, with the Teaching & Learning Charter, Learning Toolbox and EDIT Time understood by all staff. • Expectations for independence and learning environments are defined progressively across the school.	• Instruction coaching is established. • MER and coaching demonstrate increased consistency in high-quality teaching, with pupils showing greater independence and metacognition. • Structured dialogue, effective questioning, formative assessment and purposeful feedback are increasingly embedded across classrooms.	• MER, assessment information and pupil voice demonstrate reduced variability in teaching and improved pupil outcomes. • Pupils demonstrate increased independence, resilience, reflection and ownership of learning, while authentic learning experiences enable them to apply their knowledge and skills confidently across meaningful contexts.
Teaching and Learning – Mathematics (Year 2)- ***Embed and deepen high-quality mathematics teaching through White Rose Maths.***	• Staff have deepened their understanding of Teaching for Mastery and White Rose pedagogy, with CPD completed on CPA, journaling and effective use of manipulatives. • Baseline assessment is established through the new tracker, and adaptive planning increasingly responds to pupils' strengths and needs.	• MER demonstrates that CPA, mathematical discussion, reasoning and problem-solving are increasingly embedded. • Teachers confidently adapt White Rose materials, use formative assessment to inform flexible grouping and provide appropriate scaffolding and challenge. - Collaboration and moderation strengthen consistency across the school.	• Assessment data, books, pupil voice and MER demonstrate improved mathematical confidence, reasoning and attainment. • Pupils increasingly explain, represent and justify their thinking, while teachers demonstrate consistently high-quality, responsive use of White Rose Maths. •
Teaching and Learning – Welsh Language Development (Year 2) ***Strengthen***	• Baselines are established for each class and the Welsh Language Continuum is mapped progressively across the school. • Staff have access to agreed language mats and	• Listening to Learners and MER demonstrate increased pupil and staff confidence and fluency, with Welsh increasingly used beyond incidental phrases.	• MER, assessment and pupil voice demonstrate clear progression in Welsh oracy and increased independent and spontaneous use of Welsh.

Welsh language provision through increased staff confidence, purposeful language use and consistent progression.	resources and demonstrate increased confidence in using Welsh routinely and purposefully throughout the school day.	• Pupils experience purposeful Welsh across curriculum areas and staff increasingly model and encourage spontaneous language.	• Pupils confidently use Welsh in a wider range of formal and informal contexts, and consistent bilingual practice is embedded across the school.