



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

A report on

**Archdeacon Griffiths C.I.W. Primary School
Llyswen
Brecon
Powys
LD3 0YB**

Date of inspection: September 2019

by

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

About Archdeacon Griffiths C.I.W. Primary School

Archdeacon Griffiths Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School is in the village of Llyswen, in Powys local authority. There are 121 pupils on roll, aged from 3 to 11. The school has five classes.

The three-year rolling average of pupils eligible for free school meals is around 1%, which is well below the national average of 18%. The school identifies around 17% of pupils as having special educational needs, which is below the national average of 21%. Very few pupils come from an ethnic minority background and very few speak Welsh at home.

Estyn does not inspect religious education or the religious content of collective worship when it is a school with a religious character. Instead, the governing body is required by law to arrange for religious education and collective worship to be inspected separately.

The headteacher took up the post in 2006. The school's previous inspection was in March 2013.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

The school has a warm family atmosphere and works very closely with parents to ensure pupils' wellbeing. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure and they enjoy coming to school. A majority of pupils make sound progress as they move through the school, but a minority do not always achieve as well as they could.

Staff and teachers care for pupils well. They develop effective working relationships and help pupils to feel confident in the school environment. Many teachers plan and deliver interesting learning experiences for pupils. However, teaching is not always suitably challenging and teachers' expectations of pupils' capabilities are not always high enough.

Leaders succeed in creating an inclusive community for all pupils. All members of staff work as a team and have a clear understanding of their roles. Members of the governing body are very supportive of the school's work. The school has addressed areas for development successfully in the past, but leaders have not always ensured that the school has sustained these improvements. Links between self-evaluation and school priorities are not always clear and the improvement processes do not focus sharply enough on pupils' standards.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement

Recommendations

- R1 Strengthen the school's processes to evaluate its performance and to plan for improvement
- R2 Improve pupils' reading and writing skills at key stage 2
- R3 Develop pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum
- R4 Improve pupils' confidence and skills in speaking Welsh
- R5 Improve the quality of teaching to ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate level of challenge

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will review the school's progress.

Main findings

Standards: Adequate and needs improvement

As pupils move through the school, many make suitable progress from their starting points, including those with special educational needs. However, more able pupils do not always make enough progress.

In the foundation phase, many pupils listen closely to adults and each other and respond clearly and enthusiastically to questions. By Year 2, many develop their speaking skills well and provide clear explanations, for example when asked to identify various aspects of the food chain. Many pupils develop their early reading skills well to tackle unfamiliar words. Many spell simple words accurately and develop a suitable understanding of how to punctuate their work correctly. By Year 2, many write engaging pieces of prose, for example about going on a safari.

Throughout key stage 2, many pupils have effective listening skills and they speak purposefully in class, for example when discussing their proposed new project on designing a toy robot. Many pupils use their reading skills appropriately to find information on a variety of topics. However, as pupils move through the key stage they do not make the progress in their reading of which they are capable. They do not make inferences from the texts when reading fiction and they rarely read non-fiction books. A minority do not show enjoyment in reading. Across key stage 2, many pupils write in a suitable range of genres. Older pupils use an impressive range of vocabulary, for example when writing about why children should eat less junk food or describing the legend of the Welsh national notes. However, across the key stage, too many pupils do not spell words accurately and they do not write independently and at length to the standard of which they are capable often enough. On occasions, pupils do not present their work neatly, especially in topic books.

Across the school, many pupils develop a basic understanding of Welsh words and phrases. By Year 6, a minority of pupils use a few simple words and phrases confidently. A majority exchange simple information about themselves and their friends, for example asking their name and where they live. Throughout the school, pupils do not have a strong enough understanding or recall of words and phrases that they have practised previously. Most pupils lack the skills and confidence to speak Welsh, especially outside of Welsh lessons. A minority of pupils read simple Welsh texts suitably.

In the foundation phase, many pupils make solid progress in developing their mathematical skills. By Year 2, many have an appropriate understanding of number skills and use standard units to measure length accurately. In key stage 2, many pupils use a limited range of methods appropriately to solve a variety of word problems. On a few occasions, they apply these skills suitably to real-life situations, such as when estimating a specific amount of money raised in school and calculating the total cost of building a robot. Many pupils use suitable methods to check their answers. However, across the school, pupils do not always develop their mathematical skills to a high enough level, especially in problem solving and reasoning. In general, pupils do not apply their numeracy skills well enough in their work across the curriculum

Most pupils develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills well as they progress through the school. For example, in the foundation phase, many pupils use a drawing application to produce basic pictures independently and use word-processing software to develop typing skills effectively. In key stage 2, most pupils use a range of presentation software confidently. Many older pupils use spreadsheet and database software successfully. For example, pupils produce a scatter graph to represent data about lung capacity and they create and interrogate a database on birds in the local environment.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school and feel happy and valued. They know whom to speak to if they have any concerns or worries and how to keep themselves safe online. For example, pupils participate in an internet safety day and explore the legal ages of various social media platforms.

The behaviour of most pupils in classes, assemblies and at break times is good. They are polite and courteous towards staff, peers and visitors. Nearly all pupils care for each other sensitively and play together maturely. They move around the school in a calm and orderly manner and treat adults and other pupils with high levels of respect.

Across the school, most pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. They are conscientious and sustain their concentration for longer periods as they become older. They listen attentively to their teachers' instructions and move between activities sensibly. When talking about their work, pupils are articulate and eager to share their opinions. Many pupils contribute well to what they want to learn and share their ideas effectively with staff. For example, older foundation phase pupils work with adults to plan weekly challenge tasks and key stage 2 pupils collaborate and suggest activities during termly 'epic planning days'. However, pupils do not always display perseverance and resilience when they face challenges in their work.

Many pupils take their responsibilities seriously and display a good understanding of the purpose of leadership roles. They are active members of a range of effective committees, such as the school council, healthy schools team and the Criw Cymraeg. For example, the school council help with the planning and purchase of playground equipment and the healthy schools team establish a successful happy heads and healthy hearts club.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of keeping physically active and living a healthy lifestyle. They have a good understanding of the benefits of eating and drinking healthily. Most pupils are keen to take part in physical education lessons and respond positively to the extra-curricular clubs, such as rugby, hockey and netball, that help to develop their health and fitness. However, these sporting clubs are limited to older pupils.

Most pupils are developing well as ethically informed citizens. For example, a multi-cultural club successfully develops pupils' awareness of life in other countries. This has a positive impact on their understanding of the needs, values and cultures of others across the world.

Over time, pupils' attendance when compared with that in similar schools has not been consistently favourable. However, nearly all pupils are punctual and understand the importance of attending school regularly.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

All members of staff create positive working relationships with pupils. They are supportive and respectful in their interactions with pupils. All teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively. They use a range of strategies appropriately to gain pupils' attention and to sustain an engaging pace of learning. Most teachers share learning intentions carefully with pupils and provide clear instructions that enable them to tackle their tasks confidently.

Teachers use probing questions well to develop pupils' thinking skills and to extend their knowledge and understanding. Teaching assistants work conscientiously and many lead a range of effective programmes to support pupils' learning. However, teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve nor do they adapt the level of challenge well enough to meet their individual needs. As a result, teachers do not always ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable.

The quality of feedback to pupils is variable. In the best practice, teachers' feedback supports pupils to improve pieces of work. On a few occasions, teachers allow pupils time and opportunities to assess the quality of their work and that of their peers. However, this work is at an early stage of development.

The curriculum provides a wide range of learning experiences for pupils so that they engage successfully in their learning. Teachers are beginning to consider how to incorporate the four purposes of Curriculum for Wales into their planning and pupils have increasing opportunities to contribute to the topics they study. Teachers plan approaches that build on pupils' knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. In key stage 2, for example, purposeful planning of topics, in real-life contexts, engages pupils well. For instance, pupils learn about saving the oceans and how plastic is harmful to the environment. However, staff do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Foundation phase staff plan creatively for pupils to use the outdoors to develop their learning and skills. For example, pupils in the reception class participate in role play as vets and those in Year 2 learn about food chains. In addition, foundation phase pupils have many opportunities to improve their skills in the wildlife and water areas and in the mud kitchen. Throughout the foundation phase, teachers ensure a beneficial balance of teacher-led and independent learning activities.

Staff provide pupils with worthwhile opportunities to learn about the culture and heritage of Wales through a range of visits and events, such as the school's annual St David's Day Eisteddfod. The school develops pupils' basic Welsh language skills appropriately, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to use and improve their Welsh skills. The Criw Cymraeg enables pupils to support each other in developing their speaking skills. However, adults do not promote the use of the Welsh language routinely during learning experiences or in informal situations outside of Welsh lessons.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a caring, inclusive community, which promotes effectively the wellbeing of all pupils. Staff have a good understanding of pupils' individual needs and provide a safe and welcoming environment that develops pupils' confidence well. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Staff track and monitor pupils' progress carefully as they move through the school. Leaders use tracking information appropriately to identify groups of learners at risk of underperforming and provide them with effective support. For example, experienced teaching assistants deliver beneficial intervention programmes to support pupils with basic literacy and numeracy skills. However, the tracking and monitoring of more able pupils' progress are at an early stage of development and, as a result, these pupils are not always challenged appropriately in their learning across the curriculum.

There are effective arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs. Staff implement useful education plans for individual pupils and involve parents in reviewing specific targets throughout the year. As a result, these pupils make the expected progress from their individual starting points. The school has benefitted from productive links with outside agencies, such as occupational therapists and specialist nurses. These partnerships strengthen the support that the school provides and contribute successfully to the development of pupils' personal and social skills.

Staff promote pupils' understanding of how to keep healthy and safe effectively. There are appropriate arrangements for healthy eating and drinking. The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities that develop pupils' personal, sporting and musical skills successfully. For example, pupils benefit from valuable visits to the Hay festival to listen to successful authors and from a dynamic partnership with a creative 'beat-boxing' workshop. Older pupils also benefit from visiting a residential activity centre, which helps them to develop their confidence in new and unfamiliar surroundings.

There is a worthwhile range of opportunities for pupils to contribute to pupil voice committees, such as digital leaders and the eco council. These groups are beginning to provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to the school's decision-making process. For example, during 'have your say' days, members from the various committees meet with senior leaders to discuss priorities for the school, such as options for school clubs and reviewing school rules.

The school has productive links with parents, carers and the wider community. For example, staff provide useful newsletters for parents and deal with any concerns that might arise promptly. There are worthwhile opportunities for pupils to compete in the local agricultural show and organised visits from cathedral choristers in the area. These links enable pupils to engage with the creative arts successfully.

The school provides pupils with purposeful opportunities to develop as ethically informed citizens. As a result, most pupils are tolerant, respectful and feel valued within the nurturing ethos of the school. For example, older pupils develop a beneficial understanding of their own and others' attitudes, choices and expectations in a recently set up peer mediation club.

Leadership and management: Adequate and needs improvement

The headteacher and members of staff display a strong commitment to realising the school's vision. Together they have established a strong school ethos that focuses effectively on ensuring the wellbeing of pupils.

There is a strong team ethos in the school and staff work together purposefully to support each other. The headteacher ensures that there are suitable opportunities for their professional development. A minority of teachers conduct research projects in their own time and share new practices through staff meetings. Two teachers also visited another school to explore boys' writing in the foundation phase and this is having a suitable impact on standards in school. However, in general, teachers do not observe one another in school and they do not have sufficient opportunities to work with other schools to view effective practice.

The school's self-evaluation processes make suitable use of a range of first-hand evidence, such as lesson observations, work scrutiny and listening to learners to monitor the school's work. However, the outcomes of these monitoring activities are not always sharp enough to identify important areas for improvement, such as the lack of consistent challenge for pupils. On occasions, when leaders identify appropriate areas for improvement, such as improving pupils' reading and Welsh oracy skills, they do not always follow these up rigorously enough.

When planning for improvement, leaders do not always focus sufficiently on aspects of teaching and learning that require attention or link their priorities closely enough to those they have identified through their self-evaluation processes. Following the last inspection, leaders addressed the school's recommendations swiftly. However, they have not sustained these improvements well enough over time and a number of recommendations continue to be areas for development.

Performance management procedures for teachers and teaching assistants help to support school improvement appropriately, but on occasions performance management objectives do not always link clearly to school improvement processes.

The governing body supports the school well. Governors receive appropriate information about pupils' standards and the quality of the provision. They take an active interest in the life of the school and visit regularly. They take part in learning walks to observe the school at work and scrutinise samples of pupils' work.

The headteacher, with the support of the governing body, manages the school's budget appropriately to support improvements in the quality of the provision. The school has a suitable number of appropriately qualified staff to deliver the curriculum and to ensure pupils' wellbeing. Leaders deploy teaching assistants skilfully to provide effective support to individuals and specific groups of pupils. The school uses the pupil development grant well to support the progress of identified pupils.

The school has exceptional facilities for learning. The foundation phase is welcoming and secure and all classrooms are engaging environments that support pupils' learning well. The school has a well-resourced outdoor learning environment, which includes a multi-use games area, trim trail, an extensive sports field and nature areas. The school is well resourced. For example, it has a new suite of laptops and electronic tablets as well as interactive screens in all classrooms.

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, to listen to them read 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
- visit a broad sample of classes, 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' wellbeing, 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 (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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:

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