



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

A report on

**St Chad's Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School
Hanmer
Wrexham
SY13 3DG**

Date of inspection: September 2019

by

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

About St Chad's Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School

Saint Chad's School is a voluntary-aided Church in Wales primary school in the village of Hanmer, approximately nine miles south-east of Wrexham. There are 76 pupils on roll, aged from 3 to 11 years, including 11 part-time nursery pupils. There are three mixed-age classes at the school.

English is the predominant language for nearly all pupils. A very few pupils speak Welsh at home. The three-year average of pupils eligible for free school meals is around 4%, which is much lower than the Wales average of 18%. The school identifies around 5% of pupils as having special educational needs, which is much lower than the national average of 21%.

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 her post in 2012. The school's previous inspection was in June 2014.

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

Staff create a happy, caring and inclusive ethos at the school, which fosters a supportive learning environment for pupils. The positive relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are a strength of the school. As a result, nearly all pupils enjoy the school's life and work, behave well and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They display excellent manners, treat their peers, staff and visitors with respect and show pride in their school.

Teachers provide rich and interesting learning experiences for pupils, which meet most pupils' needs successfully. Staff use the high-quality outdoor environment very well to provide stimulating and challenging activities that engage pupils fully. During their time at the school, most pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well.

The headteacher provides effective leadership, which provides a clear strategic direction for the school. Staff are dedicated and enthusiastic and show a strong commitment to promoting continuous and sustainable improvements. Governors have a sound understanding of the school and use their knowledge purposefully to challenge the school and hold it to account for standards.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Challenge all pupils in key stage 2 to improve and guide their own learning in order to achieve to the best of their ability
- R2 Sharpen monitoring procedures so that they focus more clearly on pupil outcomes
- R3 Improve pupils' spelling and punctuation skills in key stage 2
- R4 Strengthen opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to develop their ICT data handling skills across the curriculum

What happens next

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

Main findings

Standards: Good

During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning and achieve well.

Across the school, nearly all pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other. From an early age, pupils in the foundation phase talk purposefully during activities and play sessions. They communicate confidently, using a high level of vocabulary. For example, when rebuilding their collapsed den in forest school, pupils explain knowledgeably what they need to do to make it stronger, so it does not fall again. In key stage 2, most pupils are confident and articulate speakers who share ideas or talk about their responsibilities in school confidently. Nearly all are keen to share their work and use a good range of vocabulary. Most pupils interact well with each other and come to mutual decisions for example when identifying features on maps.

Most pupils in the foundation phase enjoy reading and develop their reading skills well. By Year 2, many read familiar texts fluently. They correct themselves when they make mistakes and look for clues in the pictures to help them to tackle difficult or unfamiliar words successfully. They enjoy talking about the books they are reading, and many show a good understanding of what they have read. Most pupils in key stage 2 read at the level expected for their age. Many enjoy reading and do so with increasingly confidence. By Year 6, many apply their reading skills well in different subjects. They use reference material effectively, skimming and scanning successfully to locate information, for example when researching information about countries in Europe. The most able readers use inference and deduction appropriately to support their understanding.

In the foundation phase, many pupils develop their writing skills successfully. By Year 2, they write an increasing range of sentences effectively, and develop their ideas creatively and imaginatively when writing stories about dragons, for example. Most pupils in key stage 2, write for a variety of purposes. By Year 6, the majority write well and include effective descriptions to enrich their imaginative writing about Odysseus and the Cyclops, for example. A majority make effective use of redrafting and editing techniques to improve their writing. However, there are too many common spelling and punctuation errors in the work of a minority of pupils in key stage 2.

Most pupils' numeracy skills are developing well across the school. In the foundation phase, nearly all pupils understand mathematical concepts well. For example, in Year 1 and 2, pupils count confidently in 2s, 5s and 10s to create a tally chart when stock-taking pizza ingredients. Most pupils apply their skills well in real life situations. For example, Nursery and Reception pupils use real money during a visit to the local shop and Year 1 and 2 use their measuring skills to weigh ingredients accurately when making fish cakes. Most pupils in key stage 2 make good progress in practising their skills in a range of mathematics. They have a good understanding of the four rules of number and apply them successfully to solve problems for example when planning a holiday abroad. Many pupils apply their numeracy skills well across the curriculum, for example when calculating how many paving stones would be needed to line the paths in the local churchyard.

In the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress in developing their spoken Welsh and use Welsh confidently as part of class routines. They ask and respond to simple questions independently following basic patterns, for example to talk about themselves, describe the weather and discuss topic work. In key stage 2, many pupils respond appropriately to familiar questions, for example when sharing personal information. By the end of the key stage 2, many read short texts accurately and write well using familiar vocabulary and sentence patterns, for example when writing about themselves. However, pupils in key stage 2 do not use their oral Welsh language skills confidently enough in other areas of the curriculum and around the school. This limits the progress they make.

Many pupils make purposeful use of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support their work across the curriculum. By Year 2, many pupils use a suitable range of applications on tablet computers to support their learning. For example, they use a simple animation program well to present their findings about the moon landing. They use a simple database confidently to record the ingredients for a pizza. Many pupils in key stage 2 use the internet effectively, for example when locating features on a local map or to search for information, and create multimedia presentations to present their findings on Ancient Greece. However, pupils' ability to use databases and spreadsheets independently to collect, store and manipulate data is limited.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school and are confident in the school environment. They show care and respect for one another and for adults. The warmth and strength of the working relationships between pupils and staff mean that pupils feel safe in school and know what to do if they are worried or anxious. Nearly all pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and demonstrate excellent manners; always greeting people and holding doors open for others. They show respect for adults and for one another, listen carefully to what their friends and teachers say and respond to their ideas considerately. Nearly all pupils show care and concern for each other at lunchtime and play well together. Year 6 pupils take great pride in their responsibility of supporting younger members of the school at lunchtime.

Nearly all pupils are proud of their school and are keen to share their work. Most have positive attitudes towards their learning. Many are hardworking and enthusiastic learners, who work together well, and stay diligently on task for extended periods. This contributes successfully to the ethos of effective learning in the school and has a positive effect on many pupils' standards and wellbeing. However, key stage 2 pupils' skills in improving and guiding their own learning are only just beginning to develop.

Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibilities, such as becoming members of the various pupil voice groups in the school and take their responsibilities seriously. For example, digital leaders play a vital role in helping pupils to understand the importance of staying safe online by leading online safety sessions. Criw Cymraeg encourage the use of Welsh across the school by leading a weekly assembly and sharing 'Patrwn Cymraeg yr wythnos'. This has a positive impact on pupils' enthusiasm for the language.

Many pupils are developing well as ethically informed citizens. They take pride in the outdoor areas and ensure they are well cared for. Many pupils have a good understanding of issues relating to the wider world and how their actions have an impact on the environment. For example, when using the water resources in the outdoor area, foundation phase pupils understand not to waste water and that it is their responsibility to reuse the collected rainwater where possible. Older pupils talk with authority about the role of trees in providing oxygen and taking in carbon dioxide. Members of the school council are proud of their involvement in organising fundraising activities for local and national charities and are excited about their preparations towards hosting a lunch following the harvest service at the church. This has positive effect on most pupils' awareness of the needs of others in their community and the wider world.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of being active and living a healthy lifestyle. Many participate enthusiastically and energetically in a wide range of physical activity. This has a positive effect on their fitness and wellbeing. Nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of attending school regularly and punctually.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Teachers and support staff work well together to plan and deliver a wide range of learning experiences that engage most pupils' interest effectively. Teachers know the pupils well and provide them with effective support while they work and interact with their peers. The good working relationship between adults and pupils has a positive effect on pupils' standards and wellbeing. Staff use the high-quality outdoor environment very well to provide stimulating and challenging activities that engage pupils fully. This has a very positive effect on pupils' creative and problem-solving skills.

Teachers use a variety of effective teaching methods, which motivate pupils to learn. They share clear learning objectives with pupils. This ensures that most pupils understand what they need to do to be successful. Support staff work alongside teachers skilfully and contribute effectively to pupils' learning. This ensures valuable support for individuals and specific groups of pupils. In a minority of classes, where teaching is at its best, imaginative presentations and the pace of lessons are a strong feature of teaching. In these classes, teachers have very high expectations and use open-ended questions very successfully to encourage pupils to think for themselves. As a result, pupils have the confidence to try, and undertake tasks enthusiastically and independently. This strengthens their commitment to their work successfully. In a few classes, where teaching is less effective, teachers do not always match tasks well enough to the wide range of ability within the class in order to challenge all pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. Occasionally, they guide activities too much, which limits opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. The school has recently strengthened its use of assessment for learning strategies. Teachers provide pupils with valuable feedback during lessons and encourage them to persevere and reflect further on how to improve their work. However, it is too early to measure the impact on pupil outcomes in key stage 2.

Foundation phase provision is embedded firmly in the school. Teachers include pupils' ideas successfully to plan an effective balance of activities led by staff and opportunities for pupils to work independently in the learning areas. From the outset,

teachers provide stimulating tasks and experiences that engage nearly all pupils' interest effectively. These activities provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills effectively across the areas of learning. Key stage 2 teachers provide a range of valuable learning experiences that meet many pupils' needs effectively. They provide cross-curricular themes and interesting work programmes that expand many pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding well. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills effectively across the curriculum, for example during their study of the local church. As a result, most pupils transfer and apply these skills confidently. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills to find, develop and present information. However, opportunities to develop key stage 2 pupils' data-handling skills have not been developed effectively enough for them to apply these skills regularly across the curriculum. The school has considered carefully requirements of the Digital Competence Framework and has begun to address gaps in its current provision.

Overall, teachers support pupils to develop their Welsh language skills appropriately. In the foundation phase, all pupils are exposed to the Welsh language daily. As a result, many use Welsh confidently as part of class routines. In key stage 2, teachers develop pupils' Welsh language skills well during specific Welsh language lessons. However, provision to enable pupils to practise and enhance these skills outside of Welsh lessons is inconsistent. There are worthwhile opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture and heritage of Wales. A good example of this is the recent study of Welsh rebels such as Owain Glyndwr. A residential visit to the Urdd Centre in Cardiff promotes pupils' understanding of the culture and modern economy of Wales and develops their self-esteem and independence well.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Staff create a safe, happy and caring community that nurtures pupils' personal social, spiritual and cultural skills well. It provides a calm, welcoming environment that reflects its Christian ethos and has a very positive effect on pupils' wellbeing and behaviour. There is a positive sense of an inclusive community within the school and the locality, which encourages pupils to develop values such as loyalty, respect, responsibility and a sense of belonging. Staff members know their pupils very well and respond sensitively and skilfully to their individual needs. This builds pupils' confidence and self-esteem very well.

Staff give a high priority to promoting the wellbeing of all pupils and providing support for vulnerable pupils. Teaching assistants meet individuals and groups of pupils at the start of the school day and encourage them to talk about how they feel. This helps pupils to manage their feelings and raises their self-esteem so that they look forward positively to the school day. The school provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their understanding of a range of social skills, moral issues, and spiritual awareness.

School leaders track and monitor pupils' progress purposefully as they move through the school. Staff use the information from these processes suitably to respond to the needs of pupils and specific groups who need additional support. The school provides well for pupils who have special educational needs, and this has a positive effect on their progress. The individual education plans for these pupils include

specific targets for improvement and staff provide well-planned support to help them achieve well. Staff work effectively with specialist agencies that provide them with valuable support and guidance to address the needs of specific pupils. Pupils who need extra support with basic skills in reading and numeracy benefit from useful intervention programmes delivered by skilled teaching assistants. As a result, nearly all pupils who receive additional support make good progress towards their individual targets.

The school establishes productive relationships with parents. Teachers communicate effectively with parents using many effective lines of communication, including an on-line platform that enables parents to see what their child has achieved in school. Parents value this development and, as a result, they are increasingly aware of what they can do at home to support their children's learning. The headteacher consults parents well about issues of importance and the school responds appropriately. For example, teachers have made changes to end of term reports at the suggestion of parents.

Teachers make good use of the community and visitors to school to enrich pupils' learning and stimulate their enthusiasm. They use the local area well to enhance pupils' learning in humanities and science and technology lessons. For example, all pupils visit the church to carry out various investigations and the Hanmer Estate to take part in the bluebell walk. This contributes effectively to their understanding of their local area, history and culture. Older pupils take part in residential visits to Cardiff and an outdoor activity centre. These activities promote the development of their social skills well. Pupil-led assemblies, such as the harvest festival, provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their moral awareness and improve their performance skills.

Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to take on a wide variety of responsibilities, for example as members of the school council, criw Cymraeg and digital leaders. As a result, many pupils understand how their actions contribute to the wider benefit of the community. Staff use the extensive outdoor areas very well to promote pupils' physical and mental wellbeing and enhance their appreciation and learning of the environment and wildlife. Staff have developed an exciting forest school area which supports learning in the outdoors and encourages pupils to learn about current environmental issues very well. For example, pupils talk with authority about the role of trees in providing oxygen and taking in carbon dioxide

There are good opportunities for pupils to learn how to be healthy within the curriculum and through a wide range of extra-curricular clubs such as football and drama. These promote the importance of physical fitness well. The school has appropriate arrangements to promote the importance of healthy eating and drinking and the benefits of regular exercise. There are useful arrangements with local police to ensure pupils are aware of issues around staying safe online. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher provides effective leadership, which ensures that the school has a clear strategic direction and promotes a close-knit and inclusive community. She has a clear vision, which is based on ensuring a range of rich learning experiences for

pupils in a happy, supportive and safe environment. The headteacher works successfully with pupils, staff, governors and parents to implement this vision successfully. The promotes warm, friendly and supportive working relationships between adults and pupils effectively which has a positive effect on pupils' standards and wellbeing.

Members of staff work together effectively as a team. They fulfil their roles successfully and support the headteacher conscientiously. Teachers meet regularly to discuss pupil progress and school improvement objectives purposefully. This ensures that the school's day-to-day systems work well and place a clear focus on the work of all staff. They show a strong commitment to promoting continuous and sustainable improvements.

The governing body is well informed, effective and committed to supporting the school. Governors understand the school's context, its strengths and priorities for improvement. They participate effectively in monitoring, self-evaluation and strategic planning processes. They carry out learning walks, scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations to support their role in helping to create whole school strategic direction. As a result, they hold the school to account successfully.

The school has suitable processes to evaluate its performance and to plan for improvement. Self-evaluation procedures give leaders a suitable understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. For example, the emphasis on improving pupils' oracy, reading and Welsh skills over the past year has raised standards in these areas successfully across the school. Leaders use a suitable range of information to identify areas for improvements. However, these priorities do not always focus clearly enough on standards or ensure that leaders have effective means to monitor and evaluate progress and impact on outcomes for pupils.

The headteacher ensures valuable opportunities for staff to benefit from professional learning activities that are relevant to achieving the school's priorities. A good example of this is the enthusiasm with which volunteers have accessed training to improve their qualifications as teaching assistants. This supports their professional development effectively and equips them to lead on aspects such as the high-quality forest school initiative. This contributes effectively to improvements in teaching and learning, and pupils' wellbeing. The school makes effective use of strategic partnerships with other local schools to support the professional learning of staff and to build capacity for improvement, for example in improving feedback to pupils.

The school uses its available resources effectively to provide varied and rich learning experiences for pupils. They allocate funding appropriately to support the school's priorities and monitor expenditure carefully. The school uses a range of grants purposefully, including the pupil development grant, to raise standards of literacy and numeracy, and develop pupils' wellbeing successfully.

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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