



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

A report on

Ysgol Trefonnen Church in Wales Community Primary

**Trefonnen Lane
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5EP**

Date of inspection: June 2022

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Trefonnen Church in Wales Community Primary

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| Name of provider | Ysgol Trefonnen Church in Wales Community Primary |
| Local authority | Cyngor Sir Powys |
| Language of the provider | Cymraeg |
| Type of school | Primary |
| Religious character | Church in Wales |
| Number of pupils on roll | 208 |
| Pupils of statutory school age | 177 |
| Number in nursery classes | * |
| Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 21.3%) | 28.1% |
| Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 22.2%) | 27.7% |
| Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home | 16.4% |
| Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language | * |
| Date of headteacher appointment | 01/09/2013 |
| Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable) | 01/10/2013 |
| Start date of inspection | 28/06/2022 |

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

Ysgol Trefonnen Church in Wales Community Primary is a safe, nurturing and vibrant place for pupils, staff and visitors to be. Pupils love coming to school and are proud to be a part of such an inclusive and supportive learning community. The staff know and respect every child as an individual. This respect works both ways, and in classrooms the professional relationships between pupils and staff are effective. In turn, this helps pupils to take responsibility for their progress and behaviour and contributes to their positive attitudes to learning. The school is a diverse community and pupils develop confidence in their own, individual identity, while also developing a healthy respect for others. Pupils say that they feel safe, secure, and happy at the school.

Most pupils make good progress across the school, including those with additional learning needs. There is a strong focus on developing literacy and numeracy in all classes, particularly following the pandemic, and teachers and support staff work well together to make sure pupils achieve well in using these skills. However, pupils do not apply their problem solving skills in numeracy frequently enough and older pupils do not refine pieces of extended writing sufficiently to develop their writing skills to the full.

The headteacher provides strong, purposeful leadership. She values the opinions of staff, pupils, parents and governors, and makes sure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities. School leaders set a positive and ambitious tone for the school's work. They place a high priority on supporting pupils and families to thrive. Partnerships with parents and specialist agencies are highly effective and make a profoundly positive difference to the school community. Leaders ensure that the school is inclusive, treating all pupils and all families with care, courtesy and respect through its actions and the opportunities it provides. Leaders know the school well overall and have identified important areas of the school's work that they want to improve. This includes improving the quality of teachers' feedback so that pupils understand where and how they can improve their work

Recommendations

- R1 Improve older pupils' extended writing skills
- R2 Improve the quality of teachers' feedback so that pupils understand where and how they can improve their work
- R3 Provide opportunity to apply numeracy skills to problem solving activities in real life context

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to the impact of school based community projects on the wellbeing of pupils and families for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main evaluation

Learning

Most pupils make solid progress in learning and acquiring skills during their time at school. They develop well from their starting points, and specific groups of pupils, such as those with additional learning needs (ALN), make strong progress in accordance with their individual targets.

In the English stream, most pupils' listening and speaking skills develop well. Most pupils in the reception classes talk happily with their friends and adults alike. By Year 2 most pupils discuss what they are doing confidently and with good vocabulary in English. In Years 3 and 4, many pupils discuss at length the advantages of protecting trees and how they provide us with essential oxygen to live. They begin to read English using phonic skills from reception upwards and, by Year 6, many are confident, fluent readers. Many pupils in Year 6 infer meaning beyond the text, demonstrate higher-order skills, such as skimming, and refer to elements of the text to support their opinions on the characters. Many pupils engage well in Welsh activities in lessons and around the school. They are enthusiastic about developing their Welsh language skills and make appropriate progress from their starting points. They respond appropriately to general phrases, such as 'bore da, sut wyt ti?' However, the development of Welsh reading in the English stream is limited.

In the Welsh stream most, pupils develop their listening skills effectively. Nearly all the younger pupils develop their Welsh well by immersion in the language and by responding to simple commands, for example 'dewch i eistedd ar y mat'. Most pupils understand basic sentences and respond to questions appropriately. By Year 2 a few pupils develop their oracy skills further through simple conversations. By Year 6, many pupils in the Welsh stream speak clearly and confidently and discuss their work enthusiastically in Welsh and English. By Year 2 many pupils make good use of their phonic skills to confidently read sentence picture books. Many develop Welsh reading skills appropriately, using their understanding of phonics to sound out and decode unfamiliar words. By Year 6 many pupils read increasingly challenging texts confidently in Welsh and English. They use fiction and factual books with increasing confidence whilst a few more able pupils appreciate implicit themes in books.

Many pupils across both streams develop solid writing skills. Many reception pupils begin to record their ideas through mark making on paper and other media make good progress with forming legible letters. By Year 2, most pupils write simple sentences accurately and use capital letters and full stops correctly. A few pupils self-edit their work to correct mistakes and make improvements. By Year 6 the pupils in both streams continue to develop their writing skills appropriately and many pupils write short sentences in Welsh and English, using correct grammar that develop into short extracts. Many pupils by the end of year 6 display an understanding of the reader and they use words for effect. Most words are spelt correctly, and the beginning of sentences are varied. For example, in Year 6, pupils wrote a letter from a First World War soldier to his family whilst in the trenches. Overall, older pupils do not refine pieces of extended writing sufficiently to develop their writing skills to the full. Throughout the school the quality of handwriting and the presentation of written work is too often careless.

Across the school, many pupils develop their numeracy skills successfully. Younger pupils develop a sound understanding of number, for example when creating a pictogram of pupils' eye colour. By Year 4, many pupils work confidently with multiplication to solve simple problems. By Year 6, they find factors of a given number, use grid multiplication techniques and work with percentages. A majority of pupils in Year 6 are starting to use their numeracy skills in real world situations, for example calculating the cheapest hotel to stay at in Llandrindod Wells when percentage discounts are applied. However, overall, pupils do not apply their problem solving skills in numeracy frequently enough or to a high enough level.

Pupils' creative skills develop well throughout the school. Most use a variety of materials skilfully to produce artwork, films, puppets and musical compositions. For example, Year 1 pupils make impressive drawings based on the work of Giuseppe Arcimboldo, and experiment with paint to emulate the style of Rhiannon Roberts. In Years 3 to 6, most pupils benefitted by participating in the creative 'Cynefin' project. As part of the project pupils created puppets to further understand issues such as racism and the importance of tolerance. This had a positive effect on developing pupils' creativity skills and well-being skills

Most pupils benefit physically from the forest school lessons, they enjoy the experience of being outdoors and effectively developing their well-being. Many children also make use of the varied and interesting provision outside during playtime, for instance using the adventure trail to develop their physical skills.

Throughout the school, pupils make effective progress in developing and using their digital skills. During their time at the school, pupils of all ages use a wide range of technology and technological equipment to advance their learning. They apply their digital skills at a level appropriate to their age and stage of development for a wide range of purposes. For example, pupils create short films to persuade people to visit Llandrindod Wells.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils are polite and courteous, and they interact confidently with both their peers and adults. They are co-operative and helpful. Most pupils behave well in class, when moving around the building and at break times. They understand and respond well to the school's procedures to encourage positive behaviour.

Most pupils feel safe and cared for and have a strong sense of belonging. They are confident that adults and other pupils will help them if they have a problem. Pupils are keen to attend school and enjoy the wide variety of learning experiences provided for them. They understand their role in caring for each other, such as when being on hand to console a friend that is feeling upset. Generally, pupils start the day feeling understood and cared for due to the well-structured way that all staff welcome the pupils into school.

Pupils with positions of responsibility across the school show pride in their roles and take their duties seriously. The School Council meets regularly and shares its ideas and actions with other pupils. Members of the Criw Cymraeg encourage the use of Welsh around the school and organise fundraising events to buy more Welsh resources. The Eco Council ensured a successful collaboration between pupil voice

groups when organising a peaceful protest around Llandrindod Wells to raise awareness of plastic pollution in our oceans. The hard work undertaken by the school's pupil voice groups is captured each term in the school newspaper. This has become an effective way to share some of the schools' achievements with the local community.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily. When given the opportunity, pupils take part in physical exercise activities enthusiastically, for example whilst using the gym trail during break times and during forest school activities. Most understand the dangers that may arise in their everyday lives and know what steps to take to stay safe. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of staying safe online. For instance, Year 6 pupils outline the dangers that may arise as a result of unsuitable use of the internet.

A strong feature of the school is the positive, caring working relationship that exists amongst pupils, and between adults and pupils. Pupils feel safe and valued. They develop high levels of trust and appreciation for teachers and support staff. Pupils' support for one another is mature and thoughtful. They help one another to manage their feelings by talking and by using strategies to calm and relax themselves, such as listening to music or spending time with animals during the popular visit of the pop-up farm.

When given the opportunity, many pupils respond suitably to feedback from adults and their peers to improve their work and develop their skills further. Pupils are beginning to consider how well they are progressing with their learning and to think for themselves what their next steps should be. This skill is less well developed in the oldest pupils.

Owing to the coronavirus pandemic, inspectors will not report pupils' rates of attendance during the academic years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. Inspectors will, however, consider the school's provision for monitoring and improving attendance as part of inspection area 4 (care, support and guidance).

Teaching and learning experiences

Across the school, teachers develop positive working relationships with pupils and create a supportive learning environment. They encourage respect and understanding which leads to the positive ethos the school.

The preparation for the new curriculum is thorough and inclusive and takes account of the school's vision and values. Leaders are managing the transition well to equip the staff with the knowledge and understanding of how the curriculum is changing. The school is collaborating with staff, pupils and parents to ensure a sound understanding of the new curriculum.

Teachers' planning sets out clear termly themes for classes and considers the needs and interests of the pupils. Pupils are involved in the planning of topics with emphasis on following their interests. For example, one class produced videos about 'Saving the Forests' after expressing an interest in COP26. Although pupils are regularly involved in gathering ideas about their learning often the learning activities in the classroom are teacher led.

In the majority of lessons teachers carefully plan work to suit the age and ability of the pupils. In many classes appropriately differentiated tasks are provided for pupils. However, problem-solving activities and writing tasks are not always challenging enough. Questioning by the teacher in most classes is good, allowing pupils to explain their understanding of the learning and develop into confident speakers.

The majority of the learning experiences throughout the school are varied and interesting providing pupils with opportunities to develop a range of skills whilst having fun, for example creating a comic strip and writing and recording a news report. Learning throughout the day is organised to ensure pupils experience a variety of activities each day. This encourages pupils to engage in learning. However, the older pupils would benefit from longer periods of time to apply their skills to extended learning tasks.

Pupils are given many beneficial opportunities to read. They read to adults individually, take part in group guided reading sessions and are encouraged to read with family members at home and in school, for example during Family Friday reading sessions. The school provides many learning interesting opportunities for pupils to develop good literacy, numeracy, and digital skills. Adults model the Welsh and English language effectively, which makes a beneficial contribution to developing their oracy skills. Staff are highly supportive of the development of the social and emotional skills, showing understanding and care for all their pupils.

Teachers' questioning is good throughout the school and provides valuable information for teachers to assess pupils' understanding and the skills they have developed. Oral feedback to pupils is positive, celebrating success but does not always provide ideas and support for older pupils to move forward in their learning. Reports to parents are clear and informative giving information about pupils' learning skills, social skills, progress made and targets for the future.

The school is well resourced, and most resources are used effectively to support learning and recreation. The well designed outside learning areas provide exceptional opportunities for pupils to learn, socialise and play, for example developing physical skills in the woodland trail, on bikes, and in the forest area.

Pupils have appropriate opportunities to learn about the history and culture of Wales, for example by studying the local area and performing in an annual Eisteddfod. The weekly Welsh language pattern supports the pupils in the English stream well, helping to develop their fluency and confidence when speaking in Welsh. Criw Cymraeg proactively work to improve the Welsh language throughout the school in lessons and during playtimes. For example, they have raised money for new playground equipment, and they encourage Welsh conversation during playtimes.

Care, support and guidance

The school knows its pupils, their backgrounds, and the local community very well. All staff place a high priority on the well-being of pupils. This strong focus on improving pupil well-being is a key aspect of the school's provision.

The school ethos is consistently reinforced with pupils during all aspects of school life. All staff support pupils to develop a strong awareness of the school values and,

as a result, nearly all pupils have developed respect, understanding and tolerance towards others. Adults ensure that pupils regularly consider values such as honesty, sustainability, and respect through a varied curriculum. The school provides beneficial opportunities to develop pupils' moral and spiritual understanding during assemblies and classroom activities.

Staff have developed a range of effective systems to ensure that pupils and their families receive the encouragement and support they need. For example, the school employs a family liaison officer to deliver specific support to identified pupils and their parents. The family liaison team works hard to secure funding from local businesses and are key in arranging community fund-raising activities. Funding is used appropriately to provide a wide range of help to families. For example, the school sources and sensitively provides food and clothing for families through projects such as Grub Club, Community Fridge and Food Store.

The school has a comprehensive range of strategies and process to promote and support positive rates of attendance. It shows a high level of commitment to keeping learners safe through its culture, ethos and the learning experiences it provides.

Leaders have ensured that there are robust procedures to identify pupils' additional needs and monitor the impact of regular interventions thoroughly. There is swift identification and support for pupils with ALN and tailored provision to meet their individual needs both in the classroom and in support groups. The school provides a wide range of beneficial support to help pupils emotionally and in their learning. For example, pupils experience the calming effect of being with animals during Alpaca walks, attend play therapy and have access to the 'Little Haven' room where staff support emotional and behavioural needs. The school works successfully with a range of external agencies to address the needs of the pupils.

The school provides many worthwhile opportunities for pupils to be active during the school day and make healthy lifestyle choices. As a result, pupils eat healthy snacks and take part in the daily mile. School staff and a team of volunteers involve the pupils and their families in many exciting projects to improve pupils' health and well-being. For example, families are given gardening produce from the school vegetable plot and pupils can take part in the 'Summer Food and Fun Club'.

Staff offer a variety of enrichment activities including a sign language club and the Monday Garden Club where older children have opportunities to grow fresh produce which is distributed to families within the school. The school participates in local events including the town carnival where the pupils designed and decorated a float which was based on the community and its diversity. The school celebrates many cultures and languages including English, Welsh, Thai, Portuguese, and sign language. Pupils who have learnt sign language regularly perform during school assemblies.

There are numerous opportunities for pupils to influence the life of the school and develop their leadership skills by taking on additional responsibilities as a school councillor or a member of Criw Cymraeg. The Criw Cymraeg proactively work to improve the Welsh language throughout the school in lessons and during playtimes. For example, they have raised money for new playground equipment, and they encourage Welsh conversation during playtimes.

The school celebrates its Welsh heritage positively. Learning opportunities based on the local area are a common feature in the school, for example older pupils design leaflets to show what Llandrindod offers. In addition, the school holds events to celebrate St. David's Day, where children can perform in the Eisteddfod.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides strong, effective, and purposeful leadership. She places pupils' well-being and a creative curriculum at the heart of the school's vision and philosophy and communicates this effectively to all staff and stakeholders.

The headteacher sets appropriate high expectations which helps to ensure that most pupils maintain high standards and that they develop positive and enthusiastic attitudes to learning. Staff work well as a team in support of the headteacher's vision for the school. Staff focus particularly well on ensuring that pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. They carry out their responsibilities enthusiastically to support pupils' learning and wellbeing, which includes running numerous beneficial after-school clubs. The school links effectively with parents and the wider local community to promote a stimulating and supportive learning experiences for pupils, for example by working in collaboration with a local business to produce craft boxes for families of the community.

Leaders collaborated effectively during the pandemic to establish strong systems to ensure the continuity of learning for pupils. The headteacher set clear expectations of leaders and other staff and they reacted quickly throughout the pandemic to adapt approaches to meet the needs of pupils and the community. For example, they used an effective combination of live teaching and check-in sessions alongside independent learning tasks to engage pupils and support their progress.

Regular staff meetings have a clear focus on the school's priorities for improvement. All staff have a good understanding of the school's strengths and its areas for improvement. The school addresses national priorities effectively, which includes positive changes in readiness for curriculum for Wales.

The school's processes to evaluate its effectiveness are purposeful and based on a wide range of first-hand evidence. The systems to gather information on the quality of the school's provision include listening to pupils and parents, lesson observations, learning walks and thorough work scrutiny. As a result, leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They use this information well to plan improvements, such as successfully concentrating on developing pupil's oracy skills after the pandemic. They make sure that all staff work together to focus on areas that the school has identified as a priority and to evaluate purposefully the progress of planned improvements.

Procedures to manage the performance of staff are worthwhile. Leaders develop staff's knowledge and skills effectively. They manage resources successfully to support pupils and to promote regular improvements across the school. Leaders ensure that all staff have access to relevant opportunities to support their professional development, such as Welsh sabbatical courses, and they link these closely to school improvement priorities.

The governing body is knowledgeable and supports the school well. Governors are supportive of the headteacher and hold her to account rigorously as critical friends. Senior leaders inform the governors effectively about the standards that pupils achieve. They arrange for them to participate in activities to gain direct understanding of the work of the school, which benefits school improvement. For example, governors undertake learning walks and look at the quality of pupils' work alongside teachers to develop a valuable understanding of the school's current practices. Overall, leaders have a focus on supporting its pupils and their well-being, by working appropriately with pupils' parents and governors to promote an effective culture of safeguarding with sound arrangements for healthy eating and drinking.

The headteacher, with the support of the governing body, monitors spending plans rigorously. Leaders use the pupil development grant effectively to provide support for identified pupils. The school employs skilful teaching and support staff to deliver a range of interventions to these pupils to ensure that they make good progress in their learning. Additional, designated funding is used purposefully, for example to fund expert provision to help individuals dealing with anxiety. Leaders monitor the impact of additional provision and resources closely to ensure that all pupils make good progress.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer 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/carers 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' well-being, 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)

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:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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