



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

**A report on**

**Llanvihangel Crucorney Primary School**

**Pandy  
Abergavenny  
Monmouthshire  
NP7 8DL**

**Date of inspection: January 2023**

**by**

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

## About Llanvihangel Crucorney Primary School

|  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Name of provider   | Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School |
| Local authority  | Monmouthshire County Council       |
| Language of the provider   | English                            |
| Type of school   | Primary                            |
| Religious character  | *                                  |
| Number of pupils on roll   | 72                                 |
| Pupils of statutory school age   | 60                                 |
| Number in nursery classes  | 0                                  |
| 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 23.0%) | 7.9%                               |
| 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 16.1%)               | 8.3%                               |
| Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home   | 0.0%                               |
| Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language  | *                                  |
| Date of headteacher appointment  | 01/09/2019                         |
| Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)  | 07/09/2015                         |
| Start date of inspection   | 23/01/2023                         |

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](https://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

The headteacher demonstrates strong leadership and, along with other school leaders, works well towards fulfilling their vision to provide a caring, thoughtful, happy and secure environment for pupils. This culture enables most pupils to develop their confidence and self-assurance effectively. They are supported successfully by keen teachers and helpful support staff, who encourage pupils to develop a range of skills appropriately. As a result, most pupils make good progress from where they start.

Llanvihangel is a happy school where nearly all pupils treat each other, staff and visitors with politeness and respect. Their behaviour is exceptional and most are generally eager to undertake their tasks enthusiastically. Staff have a good understanding of pupils' needs and, through joint planning, they prepare interesting activities that engage pupils' interests. However, at times, provision does not always allow pupils to develop their independent learning skills well enough. Most younger pupils make good progress in developing their language, mathematics and digital skills. They talk confidently to adults about their work and enjoy taking part in a variety of learning experiences. As they travel through the school, most older pupils become very articulate and read well for pleasure and research. Most continue to make sound progress in a range of skills. However, across the school, many pupils do not make the best possible progress in their Welsh speaking skills.

Llanvihangel is federated with another nearby primary school, Llanfoist Fawr. They share the same governing body and the same headteacher, who splits his time between both sites. The governing body discharges its duties diligently, for example by conducting site visits, and governors have a suitable understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. As a federation, leaders ensure that there are many opportunities for all staff to collaborate. For example, by working together they are well on their way to implementing a curriculum that meets pupils' needs and interests and takes good account of local heritage and the needs of the community. Overall, leaders keep the work of the school under review appropriately. They evaluate lessons and the pupils' learning in books across both schools. Moving forward, leaders and staff now recognise that, by refining their approaches to this work, they can focus more sharply on evaluating the difference that teaching makes to pupils' progress and discover what important areas of the school's work need to improve.

## Recommendations

- R1 Improve self-evaluation processes across the federation
- R2 Ensure that teaching is consistently good across the federation of schools
- R3 Improve provision to support pupils to become independent learners
- R4 Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills

## **What happens next**

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

## Main evaluation

### Learning

Most pupils begin school with knowledge, skills and understanding similar to that expected for their stage of development. From these starting points, they make effective progress in many curriculum areas.

In reception and in Year 1, most pupils listen carefully and ask simple questions of others in whole-class sessions. By Year 2, most pupils are confident speakers and express opinions on familiar subjects clearly, such as their favourite types of food. By Year 6, most pupils are highly articulate and make adventurous vocabulary choices in their speech and in their writing. They explain their thoughts and ideas in detail and discuss imagery in lessons with enthusiasm and confidence.

On entry to school, many pupils build their understanding of letters and sounds quickly. They use this effectively to sound out simple words, such as car and van, confidently. By Year 2, most read age-appropriate texts accurately and a few read highly effectively, recognising that they can use different voices for different characters. By Year 4, most pupils read with fluency and expression and many older pupils read complex texts independently and for sustained periods. They read non-fiction texts closely, scanning for specific information. Many can infer ideas that are not stated explicitly in the text, for instance to form a view on the personality or actions of a character.

In the youngest class, many pupils develop their writing skills quickly. In Year 1, they write recounts using a clear structure and providing a good level of detail. By Year 2, many pupils write confidently for different purposes, such as a detailed account of a woodland walk. They structure their writing well, for example writing chronologically when recounting a school trip. By Year 4, most pupils show a good understanding of the features of different writing styles, for instance persuasive writing when writing to promote a circus event. Many older pupils write effectively, showing a clear sense of purpose and using an appropriately wide vocabulary to enliven their writing. For example, many write a detailed and thoughtful biography of a famous person, such as Isambard Kingdom Brunel, creating a life map of facts about a character before writing about them. Most older pupils apply their writing skills across the curriculum confidently and creatively.

In reception, most pupils begin to develop a basic understanding of a few Welsh words and phrases. By Year 2, many pupils have an adequate grasp of a broader range of phrases. For example, most can reply when asked how they are, and can count to 20. A majority of pupils know words for a few items of clothing and for a few types of weather, but few can use them in a sentence confidently. Progress remains slow through the middle part of the school. In Years 3 and 4, a majority of pupils recall in part a few simple sentences related to their current topic, for example where they live and who lives with them. By Year 6, many pupils use similar sentences, but include a little more detail. Overall, most pupils' understanding of Welsh is not sufficiently strong.

In the youngest class, nearly all reception age pupils develop useful early number skills and count confidently and accurately. By Year 1, nearly all demonstrate a good understanding of adding on and counting backwards. They learn different strategies for addition subtraction successfully. For example, they subtract numbers from 10 using a number line. By Year 3, most pupils use different methods to solve simple number problems, such as halving and doubling. Many explain the different strategies they use thoughtfully. By Year 6 most pupils have a strong understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They understand the importance of place value and use this to multiply and divide numbers by 100 and 1,000, including those with decimals, quickly. However, in general, pupils do not have regular opportunities to develop the wider range of maths skills or to apply these skills in their work across the curriculum.

In Year 1, many pupils use laptops confidently to record their work, for example to write simple stories. By Year 2, most pupils use a range of apps confidently, such as a spelling app, to help them develop skills in literacy. Many draw pictures on laptops and tablet computers and add words or sentences to annotate their work. Most take photos of things they have done and upload them suitably. However, a majority need support to save and to find their previous work. Most Year 3 and Year 4 pupils can log onto digital devices confidently. They research on tablet computers efficiently and access their online classroom successfully to access and complete their work. By Year 6, most pupils use a good range of apps to support and present their wider work. They access homework online and respond using word-processing apps, for example to write about different countries. However, pupils do not have a sufficient understanding of important areas, such as spreadsheets and databases.

Most pupils develop their physical skills well. For example, pupils in Year 2 show good physical control when building ambitious brick models of dragons. Most pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 show good body control in gymnastics lessons. Most pupils develop their creative skills strongly. For instance, pupils in Year 1 use the work of local artist, Jeremy Thomas, as a stimulus to create colourful and distinctive street scenes.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

Nearly all pupils are proud to belong to Llanvihangel School. The pupils feel safe and secure and the strong, friendly ethos permeates right through the school. Most pupils feel that relationships between staff and pupils, and between each other, are positive and supportive. Nearly all pupils are developing an awareness of how to live a healthy lifestyle and are aware of how to make healthy eating choices. For example, the children actively take part in the 'golden pineapple' snack award and show pride when the award is won by their class.

Many pupils enjoy participating in physical activities such as gymnastics and swimming. They feel that they are challenged to improve their personal best during the daily mile. Many older pupils enjoy participating in the after-school netball club. Younger pupils enjoy taking part in lunchtime sports sessions led by the school's sports ambassadors.

Nearly all pupils behave exceptionally well during lessons, school activities and breaks. Most pupils develop useful skills to help the regulate their emotions. Nearly

all pupils come to school eager and ready to learn. They settle well and engage in their tasks quickly. Most pupils demonstrate high levels of motivation and pride in their work, They show resilience when challenges are difficult and contribute confidently when working in a group. Most pupils persevere and maintain concentration to complete tasks successfully.

Most pupils are confident to ask for help when required and show respect for their teachers and peers. When given the opportunity, most pupils value the feedback given by their teachers and respond to it positively. However, pupils do not always receive feedback with a specific focus for next steps in learning and, as a result, cannot use the feedback effectively to improve their work.

Most pupils collaborate well and pupils view this as an opportunity to produce their best work. For example, when considering reversible changes in materials, pupils discuss appropriate methods to help solve the problem. Younger pupils collaborate well using a story map to retell the story of Mary Jones and her bible.

Most pupils have a good understanding of sustainability and how their actions can have a positive effect on their community, for example through their work to recycle unwanted items of clothing. Most pupils learn how to be ethical citizens and understand the importance of caring for their environment, for instance through activities such as litter picking and composting.

Nearly all pupils understand and follow school rules. They feel that the school's reward system is helpful and that it encourages pupils to do their best. Most pupils feel that their views are listened to. For example, their influence on school leaders led to the purchase of a buddy bench for the school playground. Although most pupils are aware that pupil groups meet to discuss school issues, overall, they lack a good understanding of how the pupil voice system works in the school.

Nearly all learners show an awareness of equity and the need to show care towards others. They enjoy celebrating each other's achievements both inside and outside school. For example, they relish the opportunity to share their individual talents such as horse jumping, skiing and swimming. Whilst a majority of pupils are aware of children's rights, they have not yet developed a full understanding of what this means. Most pupils are developing their entrepreneurial skills well, for example when making and selling Welsh cakes and their own grown daffodils and celebrating their Welsh culture with parents and carers.

## **Teaching and learning experiences**

There is a shared vision for the curriculum across the federation, which takes appropriate account of the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales. Systematic professional learning and collaboration between federation staff and stakeholders support the development of the school's curriculum appropriately. This is an ongoing process and staff continue to refine their planning to improve their curriculum provision. Across the school, teachers plan a range of suitable lessons around a central theme. This provides an appropriate vehicle for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding well.

Teachers are beginning to use the school's progression planning documents such as the 'pillars of learning' suitably to ensure continuity and appropriate development of pupil skills. They are beginning to work together to develop a shared understanding of what progress in skills and learning looks like as pupils move through the school.

Opportunities for pupils to choose how and what they learn are appropriate. Teachers use pupils' ideas and questions at the beginning of class topics to steer and guide planned learning. As a result, nearly all pupils enjoy and are engaged in their learning.

There is a consistent approach to the development of literacy and number skills across the school. Teachers provide good opportunities to develop pupils' oral and written skills and, as a result, pupils make good progress in these areas. The provision for developing pupils' oracy skills in English is a particular strength. A range of experiences and activities ensure that pupils build on their confidence as they progress through the school. Whilst provision for the development of pupils' numeracy skills generally develops appropriately in focused mathematics sessions, opportunities for pupils to apply these skills across the curriculum are less well developed.

Staff plan and organise a good range of trips and visits to support pupils' learning. These are successful in widening pupils' experiences, for example when taking part in residential trips. The school uses a range of outside providers well to enhance the curriculum. For example, many pupils successfully develop their skills in music using a variety of instruments as they progress through the school.

Staff establish highly positive working relationships with pupils. This creates a calm, hardworking environment and allows pupils to feel confident that they can ask questions and request help with their learning. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well in lessons and nearly all pupils are attentive and respectful. Across the federation, support staff provide worthwhile individual, group and class support including specific work to address individual pupils' learning needs.

The majority of teachers use the indoor classroom effectively to enhance the curriculum and create engaging environments for pupils. For example, in the reception and Year 1 classroom, teachers plan learning environments that promote independence in pupil learning. However, in a few classrooms and outdoors, current arrangements limit the opportunities for pupils to be able to access learning independently and to be sufficiently challenged.

In many classes, teachers deliver lessons at an appropriate pace. They share the lesson aim clearly and use a suitable range of interesting resources to engage pupils' interest. In the most successful lessons, teachers plan highly engaging activities set in real-life contexts for learning.

Most teachers have high expectations of pupils and generally plan activities that meet pupil needs well. However, in a few lessons, the pace of learning is too slow, or the teacher over-directs learning. As a result, a few pupils occasionally lose focus or become disengaged in their learning. This hinders their progress and capacity to develop their independence.



Across the school, a majority of teachers use questioning effectively to check pupil understanding and to move learning forward. They generally provide appropriate opportunities to review and discuss learning at different points during lessons. However, across the school, the quality of teachers' oral and written responses to pupils' work is inconsistent. As a result, not all pupils improve their work following feedback. Overall, evaluation of pupils' learning relies too heavily on summative assessment, rather than on teachers' ongoing evaluations of pupil progress in lessons and over time.

Across the school, teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to celebrate the culture of Wales. For example, older pupils study the work of local artists in collaboration with Cyfarthfa Castle art gallery. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their oracy skills in Welsh are limited.

### **Care, support and guidance**

The school is a very caring community, and this contributes to the happy and nurturing ethos pupils experience. Teaching staff have strong relationships with pupils and, as a result, pupils are well behaved, polite and respectful. Support staff make a highly effective contribution to pupil well-being. For example, the staff that provide emotional literacy support give thoughtful care and guidance to individual pupils. Pupils and the wider community are very proud of the school and all pupils feel safe and secure in the small school environment but also well supported by the federation of the two schools.

Through the range of pupil voice groups, the school provides ample opportunities for all pupils to be involved in the life of the school and to participate in decision-making. For example, school council members are involved with monitoring pupils' well-being in classes alongside the headteacher. They report their findings back to individual classes and display them in the main hall for all to see.

Across the federation, the additional learning needs co-ordinators work closely in partnership to ensure consistency in additional learning needs systems. Early training has provided staff with a basic understanding of changes to additional learning needs provision in Wales. However, implementation of approaches to support additional learning needs reform is at a fairly early stage of development. Teaching assistants and outside agencies provide effective support for learners with additional learning needs and those who need extra help in other areas. Whilst the school is providing an appropriate range of universal support for pupils, staff do not always carefully monitor the impact of individual interventions on pupils' progress.

Leaders and staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This is enhanced by the school's charter that focuses on being respectful, kind, understanding of each other, having ambition and being confident. Work in class helps pupils to understand important issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion and the values of empathy and compassion. For example, Year 4 pupils learn about what makes the world a better place, and older pupils studied the impact of Nelson Mandela on apartheid in South Africa.

Staff support pupils to develop a good understanding of their rights as children and strategies to help them to understand and regulate their emotions. They promote

pupils' spiritual and moral development successfully, for example through daily assemblies and by providing opportunities to learn about faiths from around the world. The school encourages pupils to help others less fortunate than themselves, for example through work with a local foodbank and national charities.

The school curriculum helps pupils to develop an effective understanding of their Welsh identity, heritage and culture, and how they relate to the wider world. Older pupils study the impact of mining in Merthyr during the Victorian period and the impact the iron works had on the lifestyles of boys and girls. They study some of the historical characters at that time, which culminated in them writing creative persuasive letters to the Home Secretary to ask for a posthumous pardon for 'Dic Penderyn'. Older pupils worked collaboratively with the curators at Cyfartha Museum to develop an understanding of the industrial landscape of the past.

Pupils benefit from the good partnerships developed within the local community, such as with the local care home and community centre. This helps them develop as ethical citizens. The establishment of the federation has increased opportunities for pupils to represent their school in sporting activities. For instance, the combined ski team competed in the Llangrannog Welsh schools' championships. However, currently there are very few opportunities for pupils to take part in other extra-curricular activities.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders ensure that there are robust policies and procedures in place, which all staff follow to ensure the safety of pupils and staff. The school curriculum supports pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including online. This is supported by outside agencies who regularly visit the school. The school robustly monitors attendance, including the attendance of vulnerable groups. There are well-established procedures in place to promote good levels of attendance.

The school has appropriate arrangements in place to promote healthy eating and to encourage children to live healthily. For example, there are ample water fountains for pupils around the school.

### **Leadership and management**

The federation's headteacher has successfully created and implemented a clear vision for the education and well-being of pupils. This supports pupils to feel valued and to receive the encouragement they need to develop a love of learning. In a relatively short period of time and through a pandemic, he has established a caring culture, where pupils feel safe and secure and enjoy being at school. Nearly all staff have a good understanding of the needs of individual pupils and the local community. There is a shared team culture and a shared commitment to doing the best for all pupils. As a result, most pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.

Currently, the headteacher spends half of his time, per week, at Llanfoist and the other half at Llanvihangel. Senior leaders provide strong support to the headteacher and assume responsibility for the day-to-day management of the schools in his absence. The headteacher is keen to develop and build the leadership capacity of all staff in both schools. Those with responsibilities carry out their roles competently and

contribute to strengthening the vision and aims of the federation well. They model professional values and behaviour well and contribute to developing the school priorities purposefully across the federation.

The headteacher works diligently to continue to develop the strong and positive culture of collaboration across the federation. For example, when developing the Curriculum for Wales, all teachers worked closely to research and share their knowledge and expertise, enabling teachers to plan and develop appropriate learning experiences for their pupils. Shared professional learning opportunities support the positive well-being of both teachers and support staff. Pupils collaborate effectively too. For example, they contributed to developing a shared vision for the federation and join together for sporting activities. This overall approach to strategic leadership promotes teamwork effectively and supports the drive for equity and consistency.

Leaders undertake a range of self-evaluation activity including learning walks and looking at pupils' books. They involve staff and, at times, pupils in this work. However, there is generally an over-reliance on using information from standardised tests to identify areas for improvement. Leaders and other staff do not currently evaluate the effectiveness of the school's teaching and provision by considering the difference it makes to pupils' progress. As a result, they do not always identify aspects of the school's work that need attention, for example the inconsistencies in teaching across both schools and the progress in pupils' Welsh language skills.

Leaders develop effective relations with parents across the federation and give careful thought to adapt its provision to ensure better engagement, for example by asking and responding to parents' views about the best ways to share information. The school collaborates successfully with several partners, for example when sharing best practice within the region, within their cluster, and when developing worthwhile transition links with the secondary school. Of note is the school's enduring work as a lead school for initial teacher education.

Leaders address the impact of poverty and track the progress of learners appropriately. For example, staff offer thoughtful support to the most vulnerable pupils through specific well-being sessions and the school provided hardware and free Wi-Fi to families who were financially challenged through the pandemic. Across the federation, the development of pupils' literacy skills is given a high priority and most pupils have developed effective digital skills.

The federation's governing body demonstrates a strong commitment to supporting the schools and their progress. Governors are well informed about the schools' work by the headteacher and other senior leaders. Governors use their expertise well to support the headteacher to improve the school, for example using their knowledge in matters relating to additional learning needs and when prudently managing the financial arrangements of the two schools. Governors visit the schools often and have a suitable understanding of the federation's strengths and areas for development. Governors understand their duty to promote healthy eating and drinking and strive to ensure that the school complies with legislation.

Leaders and governors encourage a positive culture of safeguarding that permeates the work of the school. There are robust policies that underpin this ethos and all staff follow these thoroughly and conscientiously. Staff undergo regular and purposeful

performance management and professional learning to support their work. The school's finances are managed prudently and leaders ensure that there are suitable resources to support all pupils' learning. Grant funding is used effectively to provide intervention for pupils in literacy, numeracy and well-being and to support vulnerable pupils.

## 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](http://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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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