



Diocese of St. Asaph

Inspection of a Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School

under Section 50 of the Education Act 2005

**Ysgol y Llan Church in Wales
Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Whitford, Holywell, Flintshire, CH8 9AN

School's Unique Reference Number: 6643320

LEA Flintshire County Council

Date of Inspection 18th – 19th March 2013

Head teacher Mrs Kath Royles

Chair of Governors Mrs Olwen Farmer

Section 50 Inspector: Mrs Christine Robinson

Date of publication April 2013



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The inspector would like to thank the head teacher, staff, governors, parents and pupils for the opportunity to be part of the life of the school, and to thank them for their cooperation and consideration during the inspection.

Characteristics of the school

Ysgol y Llan serves the large rural parish of Whitford, and in addition some pupils come from further afield.

The school was founded in 1740, rebuilt in 1928 and extensively remodelled in 2002-2003. There are currently 113 children on roll including Nursery and Early Entitlement. The children are organised into four classrooms mixed age groups.

The school has developed strong links with the Parish Church, where the children attend weekly for worship.

No pupil is withdrawn for Collective Worship or Religious Education.

2. Summary

Two acts of Collective Worship and four religious education lessons were observed.

The three Key Questions were judged as follows:

1.	Does the school have a distinctive Christian character and is this reflected in the experience of the learners?	Good
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2.	How does the school's Christian character impact on the wellbeing of each pupil and the whole school community?	Excellent
3.	How well is the school led and managed as a Church school?	Good

N.B. Estyn's four point scale is used: Excellent, Good, Adequate and Unsatisfactory

"Does the school fulfil its statutory requirements for Collective Worship, Religious Education, admissions and information for Parents?"

YES.

3. Remarks on the Key Questions

3.1 Does the school have a distinctive Christian character and is this reflected in the experience of learners?

3.1.1 How distinctive is the school's Christian character?

As soon as you enter this school you are immediately aware of the distinctive Christian character underpinning its life and work. This character has a very positive impact on pupils, enabling them to feel part of the church school community. The mission statement has been carefully and thoughtfully developed, and is visible in the foyer alongside other quality displays, which also extend to the corridors and classrooms embedding the Christian ethos. Careful use is made of space for reflection in most class areas.

The children respect their school and understand how Christian values are important to them and enable them to flourish as individuals. The whole school environment is used to encourage spiritual development. They are proud to be pupils at Ysgol y Llan.

Rating for this element: **GOOD**

3.1.2 What is the impact of Collective Worship on the whole school community?

Much thought has been placed on the planning and implementation of Collective Worship since the last inspection. All teaching staff are involved in leading worship and careful evaluations are made by staff and children.

Anglican responses are integral to worship, Biblical references are used and prayers are spontaneously offered by the children. All children enjoy singing; they enter the hall and leave respectfully. The special table has a cloth denoting the Church season, a cross and a candle which is lit at the commencement of the service and extinguished to mark the ending of worship. The school is successfully extending the range of responses through trialling a new programme.

Each week the children attend worship at the Parish Church which is led by the Vicar, Curate or Head teacher. Parents and friends are also invited. This is a very positive feature. Communion services are also held and many of the older children become confirmed.

Collective Worship is certainly quality time, it is exemplary.

Rating for this element: **EXCELLENT**

3.1.3 How does the school's curriculum support its Christian character?

Religious Education follows the Church in Wales syllabus.

The scheme of work is relevant and time allocated to the subject is appropriate. Children enjoy learning and have a positive attitude. They are keen to participate and their achievements are recognised by staff. The Skills Framework is integral to learning, standards are good and children are encouraged to listen to other children. They are confident in their use of ICT to further their learning and the school provides good resources to enable this. A variety of teaching and learning approaches enhance the experiences of learners and there is good use of Cwricwlwm Cymreig. Tasks are generally matched to ability, although the need for greater care to be placed on differentiation should be considered. The Cathedral and Church are used as learning resources, as are visitors with local, national and international links. Comments in children's books are positive and sometimes give direction for a "way forward". The school recognises the need to keep a focus on standards in this subject.

Rating for this element: **Good**

3.2 How does the school's Christian character impact on the wellbeing of each pupil and the whole school community?

3.2.1 How effective is the school in shaping spiritual and moral development?

The school effectively promotes spiritual and moral development. Relevant and meaningful policies are in place. The head teacher, alongside all staff, has established a secure and caring environment which allows the children to flourish. Within the school children are respected and respect and Christian values are a strength and a pivot.

The children regularly support local, national and international charities, and have built up strong links with schools in Africa and India. The School Council is actively involved in moving the school forward and works diligently alongside the Eco Committee, with great focus to promote the school alongside the local and world environment. They have a very mature and professional approach to their responsibilities and, encouraged by staff, make a positive impact.

The school has developed culture boxes to focus the children's learning on the greater world. Alongside this, Global Citizenship is an area that is being developed and one that the senior management team recognise as one that they would like to sustain and develop further.

Parents are kept well-informed through a weekly newsletter, website and meetings. They recognise the care and quality that the school gives, and value the way the school keeps them informed and deals with any concerns. A few parents would value even more detailed information about what is being taught in Religious Education.

Rating for this element: **Excellent**

3.2.2 How well does the school develop pupils' personal qualities and achievements?

The school is a calm place where behaviour is outstandingly good. There are many systems in place to recognise and reward children. Special weekly assemblies celebrate achievements and the children are proud of their and other's successes. Rewards are also given out to children who show the Christian value that has been highlighted each half term. There are school ambassadors who link with other schools and members of Eco and School Council committees from across the ages. Class responsibilities are shared. The successes of all children are praised and their views are listened to and valued. Children are proud to belong to their school community and readily support each other. Respect for all is a strength.

The children at Ysgol y Llan have a voice, they are trusted and respected.

Rating for this element: **Excellent**

3.2.3 To what extent do the Christian values underpin wellbeing?

Pupils voice that they feel safe and happy, that they enjoy being at their school, that their voice is heard and that they are listened to and respected by other children and staff.

Progress is carefully monitored and provision for additional needs is met. Relevant policies are established and reviewed as necessary. The school environment is continually being developed to encourage spiritual development.

Effective safeguarding and equal opportunity policies are in place.

Parents are also welcomed and listened to.

Rating for this element: **Good**

3.3 How well is the school led and managed as a Church school?

3.3.1 How effective is the school at securing distributed and sustained Church school leadership?

This area is continually being secured and staff work together to promote the Christian character of the school. The head teacher has taken responsibility for Collective Worship and taken seriously the need to develop resources and raise standards. This has been achieved to an excellent standard.

Religious Education is good. It is monitored regularly and there is a focus on training and implication. There is the need to continue working along with the Diocesan

Officer for Schools to further enhance the quality of learning and challenge the more able.

The self-evaluation report shows a perceptive awareness of where the school is and the way forward. Governors are kept informed and are involved in the school.

The Vicar, Curate and Bishop's Visitor make a valued, focussed contribution to the Worship and school life.

Rating for this element: **Good**

3.3.2 How effective is leadership and management in securing the wellbeing of the school community?

The head teacher works tirelessly alongside other members of staff, governors, parents and the Diocese. Her management skills are very good and she has a secure understanding of how the school works alongside how to take it forward. She is very dedicated and shows great respect to all and gives support. She has, alongside other stakeholders, promoted the Christian values which are now securely embedded in the whole school life.

Pupils take a pride in their environment and are actively involved in improving this. The recent addition of a Peace Garden is an outstanding feature which is respected by all children.

At Ysgol y Llan the children are given a quality education.

Rating for this element: Excellent

3.3.3 How well does the leadership and management of the school secure and support a sense of Christian belonging within and beyond the Church in Wales?

There are close, well-established links with the Parish church and these links benefit by the church being so close to the school. The weekly service at the church is appreciated by children, staff and parents and there is good attendance of families at the monthly Family Communion service. Older children are given the opportunity to be confirmed and many are.

The Church is also used as a valuable learning environment.

The School prospectus informs the parents of their right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship and Religious Education.

Rating for this element: **Good**

3.4 Parents' Questionnaire.

Many parents completed the questionnaire. All knew that this was a church school. They also respected this element and the provision made for their children. They acknowledged the information they received about their children. A few indicated that they would welcome more information about what the children were studying in Religious Education.

4. Strengths

Ysgol y Llan's established strengths are:

- o The distinctive Christian ethos which underpins and contributes greatly to the whole school environment.
- o The consistently outstanding quality of Collective Worship.
- o The secure, inclusive environment of the school .
- o The effective learning environment.
- o The dedication and commitment of the head teacher.
- o The care the children and staff show to each other.

4. Focus for Development

1. To continue to develop Global Citizenship.
2. To work with the Diocese to review planning and implementation of Religious Education ensuring provision for Able and Talented.
3. To share good practice in Collective Worship.

The content of this report should be considered alongside Estyn's Section 28 report.

Head teacher: Mrs Kath Royles
Chair of Governors Mrs Olwen Farmer
Vicar: Rev Graham Beckett
Dates of Section 50 Inspection: March 2013
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Christine Robinson