

A report on

**Archdeacon John Lewis C.I.W. V.A Primary School
Brackla Way
Brackla
CF31 2JS**

Date of inspection: February 2025

by

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

About Archdeacon John Lewis

Name of provider	Archdeacon John Lewis C.I.W. V.A Primary School
Local authority	Bridgend County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Church in Wales
Number of pupils on roll	161
Pupils of statutory school age	123
Number in nursery classes	21
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 22.9%)	20.7%
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 11.1%)	3.5%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	12.2%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2024
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	17/02/2025

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.

Summary

Overall, staff and governors work in close partnership within the local diocese to ensure that Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales V.A. Primary School is fully inclusive. Leaders develop a nurturing environment where, most pupils and staff feel supported and respected.

School leaders, including governors, use a range of monitoring and evaluation activities appropriately to highlight the strengths of the school. However, these activities do not always focus closely enough on identifying areas in need of development.

Elements of the provision for pupils' well-being, such as the work to improve pupils' social awareness and resilience are a strength of the school. As they progress through the school, many pupils begin to take responsibility for their own learning. However, a few instances of poor behaviour disrupt learning and cause distress for too many pupils.

Staff provide effective support for pupils who require additional help in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills. This supports these pupils to access their learning successfully. Suitably detailed individual learning plans provide clear guidance to staff when supporting pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). The majority of pupils with ALN make good progress.

Staff work well collaboratively to ensure that pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills progressively. Many pupils develop as confident and skilful mathematicians, and they apply their numeracy skills well in a range of purposeful activities across the curriculum. Older pupils do not build upon their early Welsh language skills well enough.

The school monitors attendance carefully and actively promotes the importance of regular attendance but, rates of persistent absence are too high.

The recently appointed acting headteacher is working with governors to address long standing issues, for instance in relation to site management. However, over time, governors have not ensured the upkeep of the school premises well enough.

Recommendations

We have made four recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1. Implement consistent and effective approaches to manage instances of poor behaviour and keep the effectiveness of these arrangements under regular review.
- R2. Reduce persistent absence.
- R3. Develop the effectiveness of school leaders in ensuring that monitoring and evaluation activities identify and address important areas for development.
- R4. Improve the Welsh language skills of older pupils.

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Since September 2024, the school has had an acting headteacher. Currently, she is supported by two part-time acting deputy headteachers. Since taking up leadership duties, the acting headteacher has worked swiftly to secure improvements to aspects of the school's work including communication with parents and provision to develop the independence of younger pupils.

The school's leadership team has worked effectively with staff and governors to create a bespoke vision and curriculum for the school. This ensures that pupils receive a broad range of relevant learning experiences that enable them to gain a strong understanding of their local area, Wales and the wider world whilst progressively developing many aspects of their skills. Overall, pupils have worthwhile opportunities to influence their learning.

Teaching provides pupils with good opportunities to work independently and collaboratively. This is particularly effective in younger classes. In many sessions, teaching moves learning along at an appropriate pace, presenting all pupils with the right level of challenge and support. In a few sessions however, teachers in the older classes, provide too much direction which slows progress, particularly for the more able.

Most staff use questioning and feedback effectively. This is particularly strong in the younger classes, where adults challenge and extend pupils' thinking well. Teachers analyse pupils' work closely, identifying areas for development and then adapting their teaching accordingly. Staff help pupils to understand how they can improve as they work successfully. For instance, older pupils consider and use feedback from their teachers carefully to make worthwhile improvements to their work.

Most pupils behave well and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Younger pupils demonstrate growing independence and perseverance when problem solving. As they progress through the school, many pupils begin to take responsibility for their own learning. However, a few instances of poor behaviour disrupt learning and cause distress for too many pupils.

Across the school, provision for the development of skills is effective. Staff in the younger classes promote high expectations and model language well. This enables most younger pupils to make accelerated progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills. Over time, most pupils make strong progress with reading skills which they apply well across the curriculum.

Teachers provide a systematic approach to supporting pupils to understand the features of different text types. A wide range of engaging materials helps younger pupils to develop their understanding of and enthusiasm for writing. As they progress, many pupils write for a good range of purposes. However, a minority of older pupils do not use grammar and punctuation accurately.

Younger pupils develop a sound knowledge of mathematical concepts. They quickly learn to group objects so that they can count larger quantities efficiently. Across the school, many pupils extend their mathematical understanding well. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 recall the properties of three-dimensional shapes accurately. Many older pupils work accurately with measure, converting between different units with efficiency by the time they reach Year 6.

Teachers plan useful opportunities for pupils to develop their digital skills. Most pupils use technology competently for a range of purposes, for instance when older pupils make comparisons about heart rates based on digital data.

Staff in the younger classes promote the Welsh language effectively throughout the school day. As a result, younger pupils begin to use and understand a good range of sentence patterns. A minority of older pupils are confident to express themselves in Welsh at an appropriate level. However, in general, as pupils progress through the school, expectations for the use of Welsh reduce and older pupils do not always build upon their prior learning well enough.

Throughout the school, support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' individual development. For instance, when supporting pupils who require a little extra help with their learning. Staff track pupil progress carefully and use this information to design learning plans closely matched to individual needs. As a result, most pupils, including those from challenging socio-economic backgrounds make good progress. The school makes effective use of partnerships with external professionals to design clear and bespoke learning plans for pupils with ALN.

A range of groups provide valuable opportunities for the pupils to develop their leadership skills. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities and learning about the experiences of adult life, for example, through informative visits from local business owners. School staff collaborate well with other local schools to ensure that pupils are fully supported and prepared when moving to high school.

Leaders understand the context of the school community well. They address identified emerging needs successfully through the provision of worthwhile professional development opportunities. For example, recent professional development has improved staff's ability to recognise and support concerns around anxiety and mental health. This is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils and their families. Staff form warm and positive relationships with pupils who in turn feel respected and valued. Staff utilise an effective range of intervention strategies such as trauma informed practice well to promote pupil well-being.

School leaders and governors monitor the school's work through a range of approaches. Through this work, they highlight many of the school's strengths, such as how well marking and feedback strategies move pupils' learning forward. Governors allocate the school's finances well and ensure that grants are used appropriately to reduce barriers to learning for pupils. Over time however, leaders and governors have not identified important areas for development in the school's provision. These include issues relating to site safety and ineffective arrangements for securing consistently high standards of pupils' behaviour.

Parents and carers receive regular attendance updates and additional support is offered to families where required. However, despite the school's best efforts, rates of persistent absence remain too high.

School leaders develop strong partnerships with parents, partner schools and the wider community. A strong relationship with the diocese enhances pupils spiritual, and moral development well. The church provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop positive inter-generational links. The school has an active parent teacher association. They organise a good range of events, such as school fetes that provide opportunities for meaningful class enterprise projects.

Estyn does not inspect denominational 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 denominational religious education and collective worship to be inspected separately.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern

The school's arrangements for site management give cause for concern and have been brought to the attention of the local authority

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carers 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

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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