



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**The Bishop Of Llandaff Church in Wales High School
Rookwood Close
Llandaff
Cardiff
CF5 2NR**

Date of inspection: October 2011

by

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



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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Context

The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School is an 11-18 co-educational, voluntary-aided comprehensive school in the north-west of Cardiff. There are 1,236 pupils on roll, including 276 in the sixth form.

Pupils come from a wide geographical area, including Barry, Llantwit Major and Bridgend to the west, and Llantrisant and Pontypridd to the north. The large majority come from the city of Cardiff. The three main feeder primary schools are Llandaff City, St Fagan's and All Saints in Barry.

Four percent of pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is higher than the national average. There is an additional teaching facility for autism at the school called the Marion Centre. One of the centre's three classes is temporarily located in The Hollies Special School in Pentwyn, but has The Bishop of Llandaff staff.

Just under 6% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, compared to the national average of 17.4%. Very few pupils are looked after by the local authority.

The vast majority of pupils have English as their first language. Around 10% of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Around 1% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for The Bishop Of Llandaff Church in Wales High School is £3,967, which compares with a maximum of £4,823 and a minimum of £3,807 for secondary schools in Cardiff. The school has the 18th highest budget per pupil out of the 20 secondary schools in Cardiff.

Summary

The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Adequate

Current performance

The current performance of The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School is good because:

- pupils' attainment is very good, especially at key stage 4;
- standards of behaviour and attendance rates are high;
- pupils show positive attitudes to learning, and relationships between school staff and learners are good;
- the whole-school ethos and the provision for pupils' wellbeing are strengths; and
- the school works well in partnerships with other providers in the Faith-Based Network to provide a wide range of options for 14 to 19-year-old learners.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- there has generally been a pattern of improvement in pupil attainment, especially at key stage 4;
- there are suitable systems for performance management of staff and the line management of subject departments;
- the school has an appropriate range of procedures for monitoring and evaluation;
- managers make effective use of data as a means of evaluating performance; and
- the school has made good progress in addressing many of the recommendations identified in the previous inspection report.

However:

- the school's self-evaluation report does not provide a sufficiently realistic picture of current performance and does not link well with improvement planning;
- leaders have not had enough impact on improving the progress pupils make in a minority of lessons; and
- there has not been enough progress since the previous inspection in the key areas of improving the quality of marking and challenging higher ability pupils in classes.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the staff and governors of The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School need to:

- R1 improve the achievements and progress of pupils of higher ability, especially in mixed-ability classes;
- R2 ensure that teaching provides consistent opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their literacy skills to a higher level in their work across subjects;
- R3 ensure more consistency in the quality of assessment and its impact on the standard of pupils' work;
- R4 increase the rigour of monitoring and evaluation, ensuring a focus on the progress pupils make in lessons, especially in developing and using literacy skills; and
- R5 improve the quality of whole-school improvement planning.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

In key stage 3, the proportion of pupils gaining level 5 or above in English, mathematics and science in combination is well above the average for the family of schools and places the school in the top 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals. There is a similar pattern of high attainment in the core subjects individually and in a minority of the non-core subjects. There is generally too much variation in attainment at level 6 or above in the non-core subjects.

Attainment in key stage 4 is generally higher than that of the family of schools and above expectations. There has been a continuing trend of improvements in attainment over the last four years. Performance in level 2 threshold (equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C) including English or Welsh and mathematics has been consistently well above the averages for the family of schools and for similar schools in terms of free-school-meal benchmarks.

The performance of different groups of learners is generally good. However, the proportion of key stage 3 boys attaining level 6 or above in English and in mathematics is significantly lower than that of girls. The attainment of pupils entitled to free school meals as a group improved in 2010, unlike the trend in previous years.

In the sixth form, performance has generally been around the Wales average over recent years. Attainment levels at grades A* to C are high.

No pupils have failed to gain at least one recognised qualification at the end of key stage 4 in the last four years.

Pupils work well in lessons. They are attentive and committed to learning, and make good progress in achieving lesson aims. The progress made by pupils with additional learning needs is very good. Pupils who receive additional support for reading and numeracy also make very good progress. However, in a minority of lessons, higher ability pupils in mixed ability classes do not achieve as well as they could.

Pupils have good literacy skills. They express themselves clearly, speak with confidence and offer responses willingly in lessons. Many pupils make good progress in the use of specialist terms and vocabulary. Standards of listening are very good. In a minority of lessons, pupils do not use their speaking skills to produce more extended responses to exchange ideas and develop their thinking.

Pupils read a broad range of texts with understanding to support their learning. They cope well with tasks that require them to engage in extended reading in classes. Most read with a good level of fluency and accuracy. Apler pupils' use of high-level reading skills, such as inference, deduction and drawing conclusions in a range of contexts across the curriculum, is not sufficiently developed.

Pupils' writing displays a good grasp of punctuation and grammar. They generally make good progress in writing at length in their own words for a range of purposes. However, in a minority of subjects, pupils do not make enough use of a range of writing skills to develop their thinking and to consolidate their knowledge and understanding.

Pupils make good use of their numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support their learning in subjects across the curriculum.

In Welsh, attainment at level 5 in key stage 3 compares favourably with that of other schools in the family, although not enough pupils attain the higher levels. At key stage 4, the percentage of pupils attaining a GCSE grade A* to C in Welsh second language generally compares favourably with that of other schools in the family. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning Welsh and apply themselves well to learning the language. At times, they do not make enough progress in Welsh lessons in using sentence patterns and applying previous learning with increasing independence.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils feel safe and secure, and the school deals well with bullying. Pupils have positive attitudes to healthy living and know how to keep healthy. They participate regularly in physical education activities and sport. Many pupils take part in extra-curricular activities. High numbers participate in the Duke of Edinburgh provision and gain qualifications. This is a particularly strong feature.

Pupils show enjoyment and participate very well in their learning. They concentrate fully in lessons and persevere well when faced with difficulties. They work together well in pairs and groups. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. Pupils show a high level of respect for their peers, staff and visitors and relate well to each other and to staff.

Attendance rates have been consistently high over the past three years. Punctuality to lessons is generally good. Instances of permanent exclusions have been very rare over the last three years and the numbers of fixed-term exclusions are low.

The Young Evaluators group, set up in January 2011, has undertaken lesson observations and is beginning to have an impact on matters relating to teaching and learning. It has fed back findings from interviews with staff and pupil focus groups. The school council has been effective in contributing to changes to the school uniform and the school magazine. This year, together with members of the Young Evaluators group, it has also been involved in staff appointments.

The development of pupils' social and life skills is a strength of the school. Pupils are confident learners. They also have high standards of interpersonal skills. They have the skills needed to improve their own learning, are thoughtful and questioning about their work, and show very good problem solving skills.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which meets the needs and aspirations of learners and of the Christian community well. The key stage 4 and post-16 curriculum meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure and provide a wide range of options through collaboration as part of the Cardiff Faith-Based Learning Network. A recent development has been the introduction of the Welsh Baccalaureate provision at post-16. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.

A very good feature of the school is the provision it makes for the least able to develop their literacy and numeracy. These pupils benefit considerably from additional support, 'catch-up' programmes and learning resource centre reading sessions, which have a positive impact upon outcomes. However, planning for progression in the development of skills, and processes to monitor and evaluate the impact of literacy and numeracy strategies across the curriculum, are not fully developed. Provision for work-related education and careers guidance is good.

As a result of recent developments in the provision for Welsh, all key stage 4 pupils now follow the full GCSE course in Welsh second language. This is a significant strength of provision. The planned use of incidental Welsh is growing as a result of initiatives such as the 'Tocynnau Iaith' reward scheme. There is also use of Welsh in assemblies and Eucharists. The school makes good provision for the Welsh dimension. The school Eisteddfod, which is linked to the house system, is a major event on the school calendar.

Many opportunities exist for pupils to develop their understanding of aspects of global citizenship, including an understanding of the wider world. Education for sustainable development is promoted effectively.

Teaching: Adequate

Teachers have good up-to-date subject knowledge. Most use a common lesson planning format effectively to plan lessons with clear aims and objectives.

Many teachers ensure that pupils understand the key objectives of the lesson and they check the extent of pupils' learning at the end of the lesson. The majority use well-thought-out sequences of activities to challenge and extend pupils' learning and skills. Teachers and support staff work very well together to support individual pupils' needs. However, in a minority of lessons, activities are not well matched to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities, especially the more able.

Most teachers provide good verbal feedback to pupils in lessons. In many cases, teachers put an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' abilities to critically evaluate their own and other pupils' work against explicit assessment criteria.

Most teachers mark pupils' work regularly. However, there is too much variability in the quality of written feedback, especially in the extent that it shows clearly what

pupils need to do to make further progress. The degree to which teachers review targets with pupils or follow up whether pupils have responded to marked work is too variable within and between departments.

Teachers regularly undertake more formal assessments of pupils' work and record the outcomes efficiently. Most teachers have a good understanding of the data for their classes and department, and of departmental targets.

The school keeps parents and carers well informed about their children's progress through annual parents' meetings and twice-yearly reports.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has good systems in place to support and guide pupils and provides an effective caring environment. It meets pupils' learning, behavioural, emotional and social needs very well. Provision for pupils' wellbeing is good. Many pupils make good use of the wide range of physical activities offered during lunchtime and after school. However, many pupils believe that the school offers a limited range of healthy eating options.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Pupils gain a good understanding of diversity and community living through a whole-school approach that encourages social development. Pupils develop appropriate moral values such as respect, honesty and fairness. Pupils benefit from a very good personal and social education programme, which covers a wide variety of topics. The school works effectively with a wide range of specialist services including Women's Aid, Oxfam and Trading Standards. Teachers use the 'Getting On Together' programme effectively to challenge extremism and promote integration.

Regular assemblies and Parish Prayers allow pupils time to develop their beliefs and values very effectively and provide good opportunities for reflection. The small number of pupils from other faiths are supported well and are encouraged to follow their own beliefs. They are fully integrated into the culture of the school.

The school provides very good provision for pupils with additional learning needs. Support is specific to the individual pupil and an effective team of teaching assistants work with the special educational needs co-ordinator to provide both academic and pastoral support.

The Marion Centre has good provision for pupils with autism. The school provides good support for the parents of these pupils, and keeps them fully informed and involved in their child's education. Pupils from the Marion Centre take an active part in the school and attend a variety of classes, assemblies and other activities.

The school provides a wide range of information and suitable advice for pupils and makes good use of newsletters, leaflets and text messages to convey information.

The school has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a very inclusive community, offering pupils equality of access to all aspects of school life and work. This is part of an all-pervading Christian ethos that promotes a multi-faith approach to tolerance and compassion. The arrangements for addressing all forms of oppressive behaviour are particularly effective. The school challenges stereotypes in pupils' attitudes and expectations.

The school's accommodation provides a suitable environment to meet the needs of the pupils. However, a few classrooms are limited in space and many of the toilets are in need of refurbishment. All pupils with disabilities have full access to all parts of the school's buildings.

The school buildings and grounds are well maintained and the deterioration in the fabric of the older parts of the school is subject to a suitable rolling programme of renovation.

There is an appropriate level of good quality learning resources across the school.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

Leaders at all levels share a strong sense of common purpose. They promote effectively behaviours and values that contribute positively to creating a caring school ethos.

The school has clear and well-defined management structures. Staff at all levels are clear about their roles and responsibilities, and these are clearly linked to the school's strategic aims. The extended leadership team provides useful experience for aspiring leaders to develop their leadership skills. There are well-organised line management arrangements. Senior leaders make effective use of performance data to challenging underperformance successfully and to drive improvements in weaker areas. Many middle leaders lead their teams effectively and are further developing their accountability through a more rigorous use of data.

There is an efficient system of regular meetings involving school staff that are focused appropriately on teaching and learning. These meetings form part of a well-developed strategy for communication across the school that effectively shares ideas about teaching and learning, develops improvement strategies and supports pupils' needs.

Governors visit the school on a regular basis and have a broad understanding of how well the school is performing. They are well informed about aspects of the work of the school, and offer support and challenge. However, governors do not have a clear enough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.

The school takes good account of national and local priorities. It has drawn effectively on the School Effectiveness Framework to develop policies and plans, and has developed suitable 14-19 learning pathways. There is a strong commitment to

improving the provision for Welsh. The school has responded effectively to the local authority's Children and Young People's Plan.

Improving quality: Adequate

The school has an appropriate range of procedures for gathering first-hand evidence about the quality of teaching and learning, including regular monitoring of lessons, peer observations, and book scrutiny. However, the analysis of outcomes does not always focus sufficiently on pupils' progress in their learning, or identify clear strategies for improvement.

The school's self-evaluation report is an informative document that gives a detailed account of all aspects of the school's life and work. It draws well on the views of pupils and parents. However, the self-evaluation report is too positive. Areas for improvement are not drawn effectively from analysis, and the judgements contained within the report do not always reflect quality and standards in the school accurately enough.

Subject heads of department analyse data and monitor performance effectively to inform their departmental evaluations. Senior leaders review these evaluations rigorously. Most departmental improvement plans clearly identify areas for development and, in the best cases, identify clear strategies and success criteria. In a few departments, these evaluation procedures have helped teachers to improve their practice and this has had a positive impact on pupils' learning. However, links between whole-school plans and departmental plans are not yet systematic enough.

The school development plan is closely linked to strategic goals and states clear priorities. However, it does not effectively use information from self-evaluation activities to set appropriately focused or challenging targets, or to outline robust strategies for improvement.

The school has successfully addressed many recommendations from the previous inspection report. However, progress has been slow in some areas and there has not been enough improvement in key areas, especially the quality of marking and ensuring higher ability pupils are sufficiently challenged in classes.

The school provides teachers with good opportunities to develop and share their professional knowledge. The Learning Group and peer observation, in particular, have had a positive impact on the practice of a few departments. However, these initiatives have not impacted enough on teaching and learning across the school.

Partnership working: Good

The school has effective partnership working. A strong feature is the range of transition activities with its partner primary schools, especially for pupils with additional learning needs and those in the Marion Centre.

The school has substantial links with parents. Parents have many opportunities to review and comment upon a range of school policies.

The school works closely with other providers in the Faith-Based Learning Network to extend the range of courses, especially vocational courses in key stages 4 and the sixth form. There are effective quality assurance procedures in place for the collaborative provision, including lesson observations and gathering the views of pupils across providers. This has resulted in continuous improvements in provision.

The school has good links with a range of partners in the local community. Strong links have also been established with clergy and church youth workers from a range of religious denominations.

Resource management: Good

The school is appropriately staffed to teach the curriculum effectively. The development of joint courses by the Faith-Based Learning Network supports the efficient use of staff and resources in key stage 4 and in the sixth form. Support staff are effectively deployed to support pupils with additional learning needs.

The governors, headteacher and bursar work well together to keep spending under review, and to ensure that cost-effective programmes are in place. In the last three years, significant improvements have been made to the school's accommodation, in particular the addition of the Marion Centre and the new Astro turf facilities.

The school has had a deficit budget for the past three years, equal to around 3% of its budget. However, there is a local authority approved plan in place to eliminate this budget deficit by 2013.

Taking into account the good pupil outcomes and the range and efficiency of provision for 14 to 19-year-olds, the school offers good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

In key stage 3, the proportion of learners gaining the expected level (level 5 or above) in English, mathematics and science in combination has consistently been significantly higher than the average for the family of schools and has placed the school in the top 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals. Performance has been well above expectations. The pattern of high attainment is broadly reflected in the core subjects individually and in a minority of the non-core subjects.

Attainment at level 6 or above is generally favourable in the core subjects, especially in science, but is variable in the remaining non-core subjects. Attainment at level 7 or above has been in the lower 50% in mathematics and in art. In English reading and writing at key stage 3, attainment compares favourably with that of the family of schools, but has been lower than the family average in oracy over the past three years.

In key stage 4, overall performance is higher than the average for the family of schools and compares very well when compared with that of schools with similar levels of free school meals. There has been a continuing trend of improvements in attainment over the last four years. Performance in level 2 including English or Welsh and mathematics has been consistently well above that of the family of schools and expectations. This has placed the school regularly in the top 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals. There had been a trend of reduction in the proportions of pupils attaining at level 1 (equivalent to a GCSE at grade D to G), but in 2011 this was reversed and attainment was 100%. Pupils generally make good progress by the end of key stage 4 taking into account their attainments at the end of key stage 2.

No pupils have failed to gain at least one recognised qualification at the end of key stage 4 in the last four years.

In the sixth form, the proportion of students gaining the level 3 threshold (equivalent to two A levels at grade A* to E) and the average wider points score (comprising all qualifications approved for use in Wales at the age of 18) has been around the Wales averages between 2008 and 2010. Attainment levels at grades A* to C are high.

Girls perform better than boys at key stage 3, but the gap is generally similar to national and family averages. In 2011, the proportion of boys attaining level 5 or above in English reading and writing was significantly lower than that of girls. There was also a significant gap at level 6 or above in English and in mathematics. At key stage 4, boys generally attain significantly better than girls, unlike the family and national trends.

At key stage 3, pupils entitled to free school meals as a group do not attain as well as the other pupils, but there has been a clear trend of improvement and the gap in performance is not significant when compared to the family and Wales figures. There had been a widening gap in the performance of pupils entitled to free school meals at key stage 4 until 2010, when it was less than the family average.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Estyn received responses from 345 learners, selected at random from across the age range.

Nearly all learners state that they feel safe in school, and most indicate that the school deals well with bullying and that they have someone to turn to if they have any problems. Almost all learners consider that they are doing well. Most say that staff help them to learn and make progress, and encourage them to take responsibility. A majority of learners say that they received good advice when choosing courses for key stage 4 and the sixth form. This proportion is lower than the average for secondary schools.

A majority of learners state that the school teaches them to be healthy, which is lower than the average for secondary schools. Most indicate that there are plenty of opportunities to get regular exercise.

Most learners confirm that the school helps them to understand and respect people from other backgrounds. Many feel that staff treat them fairly and with respect.

The majority of learners feel that the school takes account of their views. Many learners state that pupils behave well and that they can get on with their work.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Estyn received 139 responses to the parent questionnaire. Most parents gave positive or very positive responses to the questions.

Almost all parents are satisfied with the school. They state that it is well run and that their children are safe and like the school. Most parents indicate that their children were helped to settle in well when they started school. Many parents consider that there is a good range of extra-curricular activities and that their children are encouraged to be healthy. Most feel comfortable about approaching the school to discuss matters about their child's education and wellbeing.

Most parents believe that their children are making good progress. They consider staff expectations to be good and many feel that homework reinforces learning. Most indicate that teaching is good and that staff support their children well. They feel that their children are well prepared for moving on to the next school or college.

Most parents feel well informed about their children's progress and believe that staff treat all children fairly and with respect. Most also believe that pupils behave well in the school, which is higher than the average for other secondary schools.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Iolo Dafydd	Reporting Inspector
Gill Sims	Team Inspector
Penny Lewis	Team Inspector
Sarah Lewis	Team Inspector
Angus Dunphy	Team Inspector
Maggie Turford	Team Inspector
Ted Tipper	Lay Inspector
Ian Kilcoyne	Peer Inspector
Sarah Parry	School Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11