



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

A report on

Llanelwedd C.I.W. School

**Llanelwedd
Builth Wells
LD2 3TY**

Date of inspection: November 2022

by

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

About Llanelwedd C.I.W. School

Name of provider	Llanelwedd C.I.W. School
Local authority	Powys County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Church in Wales
Number of pupils on roll	104
Pupils of statutory school age	94
Number in nursery classes	10
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%)	11.2%
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%)	12.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2010
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	11/11/2013
Start date of inspection	21/11/2022

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

Llanelwedd Primary School is a caring place for pupils, staff and visitors. A sense of trust pervades the school. All pupils, their families and visitors receive a warm welcome. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They and their parents are very proud to be a part of such a supportive learning environment. Teachers and support staff are always on hand to help pupils and take very good care of their well-being, which is a notable strength of the school.

Pupils know that adults in the school expect them to behave well and to respect everyone in the school and the community. The headteacher and the team of teachers and support staff are good role models for the pupils, they want the best for all the pupils in Llanelwedd. They offer pupils a wide range of interesting, authentic learning experiences, which help to make learning exciting. Many pupils are making good progress and achieving well. However, teachers often do not challenge pupils enough and this results in a few pupils not achieving what they are capable of and sometimes losing interest in their learning. Pupils collaborate very well and by the time they reach the older year groups, they are articulate and express themselves clearly. Their engagement in their learning and positive behaviour are notable strengths of the school.

The headteacher provides supportive leadership and generally knows the school well. He leads the school using a very collegiate approach. However, the leadership skills of other members of staff are underdeveloped. The headteacher has correctly identified key areas of the school's work that need improvement, such as pupils' Welsh oracy skills, which are currently limited to basic words and phrases. The headteacher values the opinions of staff, pupils, parents and governors and uses these well to evaluate and improve the school.

Recommendations

- R1 Address the health and safety issue raised during the inspection
- R2 Increase leadership capacity by devolving responsibilities across all levels of staff
- R3 Ensure that teachers provide sufficient challenge for pupils of all abilities
- 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

On entry to the school, most pupils' skills correspond with what is expected for their age. Many pupils, including pupils with additional learning needs and those eligible for free school meals, make good progress in the development of their knowledge, skills and understanding from their starting points during their time at the school. However, a few pupils do not make as much progress as they could as the learning tasks are not always challenging enough.

Most pupils discuss their work effectively and work well in pairs and groups. They listen attentively to others' contributions and respond appropriately. Most pupils speak clearly, confidently and articulately through the medium of English in a wide range of contexts. They give purposeful regard to their audience and make good use of technical language, for example Year 3 and Year 4 pupils use the word 'tributaries' when discussing pollution along the River Wye. However, most pupils do not make sufficient progress in the development of their Welsh oracy skills. As a result, their ability to converse with adults and peers is limited to basic words and phrases and this restricts their ability to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills across the curriculum in Welsh.

Most pupils make good progress in the acquisition and development of their reading skills. For example, Year 2 pupils use decoding skills well to read unfamiliar words accurately and answer literal questions about the text confidently. They show a sound knowledge of what authors and illustrators do. Year 4 pupils read complex books with developing fluency and successfully use punctuation to aid expression. They know how to use the blurb to inform their understanding of the summary of the book's contents. Year 6 pupils discuss favourite authors enthusiastically, justify their choice and make deductions from the text using higher order reading skills effectively.

Pupils across all age groups make good progress in the development of their writing skills. Most pupils apply their skills well across a range of contexts. For instance, Year 1 pupils use simple phrases to write a thank you card to farmers that visit the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show. Pupils in Year 4 write extensively, they generally spell words accurately, punctuation is appropriate and speech marks are used purposefully. Year 6 pupils write using full and extended sentences. Their spelling of complex words is generally accurate and they skilfully use a comprehensive range of punctuation including colons. They write across an extensive range of texts and contexts, for example when creating a biography of a famous scientist and a World War One diary.

Many pupils make good progress in the development of their mathematical skills across the age groups. For example, most older pupils calculate accurately using the four operations. Many pupils develop and apply their numeracy skills across a range of curricular areas. For example, pupils in Year 6 measure time to hundredths of a second to help them test a scientific hypothesis and calculate the average across a range of readings to increase the reliability of their data.

Many pupils make appropriate progress in the development of their digital skills and apply their skills across the curriculum well. For instance, Year 2 pupils develop their coding skills whilst programming a device to navigate from a starting point on a floor map to discover the pirate's treasure. Pupils in Year 4 use a word processing package to present information about the River Congo and Year 5 pupils create a multimedia presentation about insects.

In general, most pupils make good progress in the development of their physical skills. For example, pupils in the middle years of the school develop their strength and co-ordination by purposeful use of the outdoor climbing equipment. Older pupils increase their endurance by participating in the running club and improve their racquet skills during badminton sessions.

Nearly all pupils make good progress across the school in the development of their creative skills, for example pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 design pirate ships using natural materials and test them for flotation. Year 5 pupils use a method inspired by the Inuit people to carve a 3D sculpture out of soap.

However, despite some recent improvement, the standard of presentation of the majority of pupils' work is not sufficiently high. For example, handwriting is often untidy and bar charts are not presented accurately enough.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

The school is an inclusive learning community where everyone is valued, ensuring nearly all pupils are polite and courteous. Most pupils respond well to the school's positive approach to behaviour management and as a result almost all arrive at school happy and enthusiastic for the day ahead. Nearly all pupils behave well in class, are calm and responsible when moving around the building and show kindness towards each other. Younger and older pupils play happily together and engage enthusiastically and cooperatively at break times and lunchtimes.

Pupil well-being is a priority at the school. The use of yoga, well-being check-ins when pupils arrive in school and the availability of trained teaching assistants supports most pupils' well-being effectively. Pupils know that there are adults they can speak to if they need help or support and as a result nearly all pupils feel safe and secure in school.

Most pupils have a strong understanding of the need to keep fit and eat healthily. They explain why it is beneficial to eat a balanced diet and why it is not sensible to drink sugary drinks. Most pupils enjoy taking part in physical activities and enthusiastically attend a range of extra-curricular sporting activities including badminton, cyclocross, judo and karate. Most older pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe online and engage enthusiastically in online safety week supported by the school's police liaison officer who visits regularly to further raise awareness of the issues around cyber bullying.

Most pupils are ready to learn and collaborate together well in class, and many speak confidently and clearly when discussing their work. They are eager to share their views and ask and answer questions posed by visitors and their classmates. They co-operate well when working in pairs and small groups and value the views and

opinions of others. Many pupils are developing their enterprising and problem-solving skills in different contexts. For instance, older pupils, as part of their project on Bloodheart, dissect a pig's heart in order to examine how blood circulates through the body before conducting research on how diet and exercise can affect the heart.

Pupils have good opportunities to take on a range of leadership roles within the school. Older pupils engage in a wide range of roles, for example as 'energy savers' or eco champions. As a result, most pupils are developing as responsible individuals who show care and consideration for their school and the environment. Pupil leadership groups have recently been reintroduced and are beginning to have an impact on school life. For example, the Super School Committee arranges recycling activities, healthy fruit promotion, composting and monitors electricity usage by turning off lights in empty classrooms around the school.

Nearly all pupils engage enthusiastically with new experiences and ideas. Most younger pupils persevere and work together to look for solutions when faced with challenge, such as when working together to provide assistance for a local farmer who asked for help with recycling rubbish left on his farm. Nearly all pupils value and respond to the positive verbal feedback they receive from adults and are aware of what they do well. When given the appropriate opportunities, a minority of pupils are starting to understand how to improve their own work. However, this is an area for further development.

Teaching and learning experiences

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school that has been developed collaboratively with staff and the governing body. The school is at the early stages of the planning and delivery of enriching and engaging learning activities that embody the principles and ethos of the new Curriculum for Wales. Teachers make good use of off-site visits, including residential trips, to enhance the curriculum and pupils' learning experiences.

Across the school, pupils are beginning to purposefully influence the direction of their learning. For example, reception and Year 1 pupils ask the big question 'What grows?' at the start of their topic work and suggest activities that they would like to complete as part of their learning. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about their tasks.

Teachers interact with pupils in a positive, supportive manner and use a range of sound methods to promote pupils' behaviour. Consequently, most pupils conduct themselves well. In general, teachers use a good range of questioning techniques to confirm pupils' current understanding, prompt ideas and encourage thinking. In the best examples, teachers use pupils' responses proficiently to adapt the course of the learning activities appropriately.

Where teaching is at its best, teachers create effective working environments, supported ably by teaching assistants. In these instances, teachers plan experiences based on interesting learning activities that have an authentic context. For example, pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 respond to a letter from a local resident asking for advice on how to keep healthy following a health scare. This leads them to create a healthy eating and exercise plan following purposeful research and investigative work. Where

the teaching is less effective, introductions are too long and lack pace and tempo. As a result, a few pupils can become restless and lose focus on their learning and, consequently, they make less progress during sessions than they could.

Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to recall prior learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 review phonic sounds at the start of a lesson. They then use the sounds to think of suitable adjectives during the lesson to describe the pirates they have created.

In the best practice, teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to assess their own and peers' work by way of both verbal and written feedback. A minority of pupils respond effectively and make appropriate improvements to their work. In many instances, feedback does not link closely enough to the success criteria that are specific to particular tasks. As a result, pupils do not always have a clear enough understanding of what they have done well and what they need to do to make improvements to their work. The annual reports to parents refer accurately to pupils' attainment and progress and suggest appropriate targets for the next steps in pupils' learning.

In many classes, the tasks provided by teachers do not consistently challenge all pupils appropriately. For example, pupils of all abilities often complete the same tasks and, consequently, a majority do not make as much progress towards their potential as they could.

Teachers ensure that the younger pupils have purposeful access to activities in the outdoor areas that promote independent learning effectively, such as when pupils in reception and Year 1 collect and classify autumn leaves and Year 2 and Year 3 pupils compose and perform sea shanties on the outdoor staging area using instruments of their choice.

In around half the classes, Welsh is modelled appropriately by staff. However, in general, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh oracy skills. Consequently, most pupils make far less progress in developing their Welsh skills when compared to their English skills.

Care, support and guidance

The school is caring and nurturing with an inclusive ethos of mutual respect and trust between pupils and staff. It provides strong support for pupils' emotional well-being. Pupils of all ages have good opportunities to mix socially throughout the school day. This supports nearly all older pupils to develop care for, and empathy towards, younger pupils.

Teachers plan appropriate provision for developing pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyle choices. The school makes purposeful use of visiting members of the community, such as the local police officer, to support pupils in developing their knowledge and understanding of a variety of personal safety issues, for example the danger of talking to unfamiliar adults and how to keep safe online.

The school makes good provision to support pupils' moral and ethical development. Lessons and whole school assemblies provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to

learn about the school's core values and the impact that humans can have on the environment. For instance, pupils throughout the school have a strong awareness of the importance of fairtrade products as well as the impact pollution and recycling has on endangered species.

Staff ensure that pupils' additional learning needs are not a barrier to their progress. Staff provide a wide range of support programmes that successfully help individual pupils to achieve. The co-ordinator for pupils with additional needs robustly tracks the progress of pupils across the school. This ensures that support is tailored to meet pupil needs effectively. The school works with a range of outside agencies to provide enhanced support where appropriate. For example, the school liaises with educational psychologists and local support teams to provide valuable professional learning opportunities for staff to enrich their support of pupils with emotional needs.

Staff warmly welcome new pupils to the school and give beneficial support to younger pupils. This helps the youngest pupils to settle quickly and begin to enjoy socialising with their peers. Staff provide effective support to prepare pupils for change, such as when they move to a new class or move to high school.

The school provides the majority of pupils with suitable opportunities to take on additional responsibilities. For example, Eco Council members enjoy promoting the importance of taking care of the environment when they discuss ways to reduce the use of plastic. As a result, most pupils have a sound understanding of the impact that a range of issues can have on our world.

The majority of pupils develop a sense of their Welsh identity and develop a pride in their country, for example through work with the National Eisteddfod and studies of Welsh artists such as Elfyn Lewis.

There is a very strong safeguarding culture in the school. All staff undertake safeguarding training upon appointment and have regular and useful updates. They are aware of how to report any concerns by sharing information with the designated safeguarding officers and recording accurate accounts using the school's reporting system. Safeguarding procedures at the school give no cause for concern. The school site and buildings are safe and secure. However, traffic on the school site causes a concern for the safety of pupils and leaders have correctly identified the need to provide a separate route for pedestrians and vehicles to access the school's visitor car park behind the school.

Nearly all pupils and parents report that incidents of bullying are extremely rare and, as a result, nearly all pupils feel happy, safe and secure. The school monitors pupils' attendance robustly and aims to ensure the safety of any pupils that are absent are rigorous. The headteacher works closely with partners such as the education welfare service to support good rates of attendance and to improve the attendance of pupils whose absences are causing concern. This is having a positive impact on overall rates of attendance.

The school provides regular and worthwhile opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development through planned collective worship. This is enhanced through very good links with the local church and opportunities for the local minister to support collective worship within the school. Pupils have opportunities to discuss and reflect

on their own beliefs and values as well as other faiths, for example when studying Diwali, Eid and Chinese New Year. Through these experiences pupils share the celebrations of these annual events as well as learn about important cultural activities, such as older pupils participating in a parade around Builth Wells celebrating Prince Llewelyn.

Pupils throughout the school learn about national and international links, providing them with a broader view of Wales and further afield. For example, pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 visit Cardiff to see the International Badminton Festival at Sofia Gardens and have written letters to a twinned school in Carqueiranne, near Toulon in France.

Staff provide pupils with valuable opportunities to widen their sporting experiences by playing in competitive teams. There are regular practices for football and cricket, and pupils engage in inter-school competitions including cross country, football, cricket and athletics. The school provides worthwhile opportunities to extend pupils' learning through, for example, a residential visit to an outdoor pursuits centre in Year 6 and the planning of a study trip to visit a Victorian Christmas market in Presteigne.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school which places pupils' well-being at the centre. He works closely with his staff team to provide supportive leadership that sets clear expectations for pupils' behaviour. This is supported by all staff who act as very positive role models for pupils. There are strong professional working relationships between staff and the headteacher, and this helps to create a happy school for pupils and their families. The partnership between the school and parents is a strength and parents are proud for them and their children to be part of such a warm and caring school community. Nearly all parents speak very highly of the commitment of the headteacher and staff and the care they show for their children.

Leaders model professional behaviours and values that contribute positively to effective collaboration among staff. The headteacher plans a range of learning opportunities for all staff that is supporting the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales. Staff work together well in curriculum teams and are beginning to plan for the new curriculum. In many cases the headteacher aligns professional development successfully with school improvement priorities to ensure staff have the skills to bring about planned refinements to the quality of provision. He links performance management to school improvement priorities adequately. However, planning for the growth of leadership skills at all levels is limited, and this hinders the development of the staff team and their ability to support school improvement.

Overall, leaders know the school's strengths and can identify most of its areas for development accurately. The headteacher involves stakeholders such as governors, pupils and educational partners in his approach to self-evaluation and improvement processes, strengthening his evaluations of the school's work. He uses a range of monitoring activities to track and evaluate pupils' progress. The school is successfully developing a whole-school ethos of self-evaluation and improvement. Staff regularly work collaboratively to review the school's progress against its strategic priorities. In many cases this helps to support good pupil progress. For instance, the recent introduction of 'planning in the moment' in the younger pupils' classes has had a positive impact on improving pupils' independence. Under the leadership of the

headteacher, staff have been successful in making improvements to important aspects of the school's provision, such as the implementation of Welsh Government additional learning needs reforms. However, leaders do not always evaluate the impact of professional learning on pupils' progress rigorously enough.

Governors are experienced, skilled and knowledgeable about the school's work. They gather first-hand evidence through activities, such as listening to learners and learning walks, to help them carry out their roles as critical friends. They are knowledgeable about the school's progress towards its improvement priorities and national priorities. Leaders' financial management of the school is effective. They work well with governors to ensure that improvement priorities are affordable. They monitor expenditure closely and balance short-term and longer-term needs appropriately. Leaders ensure that the pupil development grant is used well to benefit eligible pupils, for example through employing skilful support staff to deliver provision.

Governors are aware of arrangements to promote pupils' healthy eating, drinking and attendance. Leaders and governors ensure that the school has robust safeguarding arrangements.

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

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