



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

A report on

Archdeacon Griffiths C.I.W. Primary School

**Llyswen
Brecon
Powys
LD3 0YB**

Date of inspection: October 2024

by

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

About Archdeacon Griffiths C.I.W. Primary School

Name of provider	Archdeacon Griffiths C.I.W. Primary School
Local authority	Powys County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	130
Pupils of statutory school age	111
Number in nursery classes	*
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%)	5.0%
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%)	5%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	2%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2016
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	23/09/2019
Start date of inspection	21/10/2024

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

Archdeacon Griffiths School provides a supportive and nurturing environment where pupils feel safe and valued. Staff and leaders work diligently to develop positive relationships across the school. As a result, pupils behave very well, feel safe in school and demonstrate respect toward their peers, staff, and visitors. While most pupils begin with strong oracy, numeracy, and social skills, a lack of support and challenge in classes hinders the progress of a minority. The school supports pupils with additional learning needs effectively.

The school provides valuable outdoor learning experiences, especially for younger pupils, helping them learn independently through engaging tasks. However, as they move through the school pupils have too few opportunities to develop problem-solving skills and independent learning strategies. Teachers question pupils helpfully and provide beneficial verbal feedback that supports them well. However, pupils often spend too much time listening passively in lessons and this limits their learning and slows their progress. Teachers do not always provide activities that challenge or support pupils well enough.

Most pupils communicate confidently and have strong reading and oracy skills. However, they have limited opportunities to use these skills in leadership roles or be involved in decision-making. Many pupils writing skills develop appropriately. However, the feedback they receive does not help them improve their spelling and punctuation well enough.

Many pupils make sound progress in developing their early mathematical skills and they build on their early understanding of number effectively as they move through the school. However, mathematics teaching does not help pupils to develop strong enough understanding of underlying concepts. Many pupils' digital skills are strong.

Leaders are developing the curriculum in line with national priorities. Their development of expressive arts is particularly creative. Teachers promote an appreciation of Welsh culture and identity, for instance through visits to local places and the frequent use of the Welsh language. However, opportunities for pupils to develop and awareness of different relationships and sexualities is limited.

While school leadership work effectively to develop an inclusive culture at the school, they do not consistently evaluate teaching and pupils' learning well enough. They do not always work systematically or well enough to ensure that improvement strategies are effective in bringing about positive change. Governors support school leaders diligently and are working to develop a better knowledge of the progress that pupils make and the school's teaching and learning priorities. However, their understanding of these areas is currently underdeveloped.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Ensure that leaders at all levels undertake their roles effectively to drive improvements consistently
- R2 Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make better progress in developing their writing and mathematics skills
- R3 Evaluate learning and teaching more robustly and address identified shortcomings rigorously and systematically
- R4 Ensure that pupils have more effective and consistent opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills and their independence

What happens next

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress about 12 months after the publication of this report.

Main evaluation

Archdeacon Griffiths school promotes a strong culture of well-being, where pupils feel safe and supported. Leaders and staff are committed to ensuring that the school is a nurturing environment where pupils benefit from interesting experiences. Throughout the school there are warm and positive relationships between staff and pupils. As a result, pupil behaviour is a notable strength of the school. Pupils are polite, courteous, and respectful towards their peers, staff, and visitors.

Most pupils begin at the school with strong oracy, numeracy, and social skills. As they progress, many continue to develop their skills and understanding appropriately. However, in a majority of classes teachers do not always pitch activities at the right level to challenge or support all pupils well enough and this slows the pace of pupils' progress.

Teachers provide exciting opportunities for the youngest pupils to explore the outdoor learning environment and to learn independently through a range of focused tasks. However, as pupils move through the school, teachers do not provide them with sufficient opportunities to develop their independent learning skills or to engage in activities, such as problem-solving, regularly enough. As a result, pupils are often over-reliant on adults and not confident to take the initiative, for instance to try different ways of approaching a task when they face challenges or difficulties.

Most teachers use questioning effectively to encourage pupils to share their thoughts and ideas and to check that pupils understand tasks. They address misconceptions promptly and generally give pupils helpful verbal feedback. However, in a majority of lessons, pupils spend too much time listening to adults and this slows the pace of learning. In these sessions, pupils lack sufficient time to engage purposefully in tasks, and this prevents them from making better progress.

Throughout the school, nearly all pupils have strong oracy skills and communicate confidently. Staff model language effectively, which helps pupils to expand their vocabulary and enhances their speaking and listening skills well. Despite this, pupils have too little involvement in planning their learning with and alongside staff. Pupil voice groups have a limited understanding of their roles and purpose. There are few opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills and pupils have a limited impact on the life and work of the school.

Many of the youngest pupils display strong early reading skills, such as a beneficial understanding of letters and sounds. Teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to build on their phonic knowledge and comprehension skills. Many older pupils enjoy reading and develop their fluency and accuracy suitably. Older pupils are beginning to consider texts more thoughtfully, for instance inferring meaning and considering why authors use particular words and phrases.

Many younger pupils write short sentences confidently, attempting to spell simple words using their phonic knowledge well. By Year 4, most pupils adopt a cursive style, presenting their work neatly. Many older pupils write suitably in an appropriate range of genres, such as writing clear recounts of their experiences from coding robots during science week. However, teachers do not always give pupils sufficient opportunities to develop and refine their writing skills. They do not always provide pupils with effective enough feedback on how to improve spelling and punctuation. As a result, a minority do not make sufficient progress in improving their writing skills from their strong starting points.

Teachers develop pupils' understanding of Welsh identity, heritage and culture effectively. For example, they plan visits to local castles and museums to ensure that pupils experience local history at first hand. Many staff use Welsh purposefully during lessons, and in these classes, pupils are beginning to develop their Welsh language skills suitably. However, a majority of pupils do not use a broad enough range of Welsh sentence patterns confidently enough.

Many pupils make sound progress in developing their early mathematical skills. As they move through the school, they build effectively on their early understanding of number to develop a suitable range of strategies to calculate effectively. However, teachers do not ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop a broader range of skills, including an understanding of shape and measure. Mathematics teaching does not consistently help pupils to develop an effective understanding of underlying concepts so that they are able to apply their skills to a range of different mathematical problems well enough.

Most pupils develop a wide range of digital skills effectively. They use these skills to present and enhance their work across all areas of learning. Many older pupils demonstrate strong coding skills, for example to program a robot during science

week. Many pupils are developing a good understanding of how to use artificial intelligence programmes to their advantage, such as how to create successful prompts to search for information.

Leaders address national priorities, such as Curriculum for Wales, thoughtfully and positively. Staff have worked collaboratively to create a progressive curriculum, which reflects the purposes of the Curriculum for Wales well. There are particularly strong opportunities to promote and develop expressive arts, and teachers plan exciting opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills through art, drama, and dance. For example, older pupils demonstrate imagination and originality in dance when creating a performance as part of their work about the Welsh Rugby Union. The curriculum provides suitable opportunities for pupils to reflect on the diverse nature of society including opportunities for pupils to learn about the history and experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. However, opportunities for pupils to develop and awareness of different relationships and sexualities is limited.

Teachers support pupils to develop their physical skills well. For example, younger pupils throw and catch beanbags with accuracy and older pupils develop their skills well through competitions and events.

Leaders promote an inclusive ethos at the school and have a clear vision for a strategic direction that has focused on improving a few areas of pupils' learning positively. However, in general, leaders do not consistently oversee and coordinate the work of the school rigorously enough to ensure that shortcomings are identified clearly and improvement made effectively. Leaders evaluate a few areas of the school's work accurately, such as pupils writing skills, however, they do not consider a sufficiently broad range of evidence to evaluate other areas of learning well enough. Their evaluations of teaching do not identify important areas of practice that require improvement. Improvement strategies do not bring about needed improvement consistently enough.

The governing body supports school leaders well and are dedicated to making the school a supportive learning community. They are beginning to develop their role in helping the school to evaluate its work, for instance in joining leaders on learning walks around the school. However, at present their understanding of pupils' progress and the effectiveness of the school's improvement work is limited.

The headteacher and governing body have ensured that leadership responsibilities are shared suitably across the school, however the impact of these roles is too variable. Leaders are not always clear about how they will improve areas for which they have responsibility.

The school provides strong support for pupils with ALN. Leaders and staff identify and meet their needs carefully. There are a range of intervention strategies in place to support other pupils who may need help with their learning, such as support intervention groups that focus on improving pupils' reading skills. However, leaders not always monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions well enough to ensure that pupils make good enough progress.

Additional information

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

The school's arrangements for site security do not give any cause for concern

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/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

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:

Publications Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.wales