



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

A report on

**Hawarden Village Voluntary Aided Church In Wales Primary
School**

**Cross Tree Lane
Hawarden
Deeside
Flintshire
CH5 3PY**

Date of inspection: April 2024

by

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

This inspection was undertaken as part of trying out our new inspection arrangements. As a result, this report may be slightly different in format to other published reports for providers in the sector.

About Hawarden Village Voluntary Aided Church In Wales Primary School

Name of provider	Hawarden Village Voluntary Aided Church In Wales Primary School
Local authority	Flintshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Religious character	Church in Wales
Number of pupils on roll	421
Pupils of statutory school age	343
Number in nursery classes	36
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 23.7%)	5.6%
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 13.2%)	3.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	1.8%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language (categories A-C)	1.7%
Date of headteacher appointment	30/05/2016
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/04/2015
Start date of inspection	29/04/2024

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

The school's support for pupils' well-being is a strength, and as a result all pupils feel safe and respected. Staff have strong positive relationships with pupils and provide effective support for them to build on their learning. The behaviour of all pupils is excellent and they attend school regularly.

Leaders and staff have developed a strong culture of reading and provide structured support to develop pupils' mathematical skills. As a result, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make strong progress in their mathematical and literacy skills. Provision to develop pupils' digital skills and their numeracy skills across the curriculum is underdeveloped. The school's curriculum takes account of the history of the local area and reflects the Curriculum for Wales successfully.

Teachers plan a range of engaging learning experiences for pupils to develop their skills across the curriculum and they monitor their progress effectively. Younger pupils enjoy a broad range of activities, which help them develop their independent learning skills appropriately. However, older pupils do not have enough opportunities to lead their own learning. Most pupils take pride in their work and make worthwhile improvements following feedback from their peers and staff.

The headteacher and senior leaders work purposefully with the governing body to secure improvements for the school. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and learning and plan strategic actions to bring about improvement. They work collaboratively with parents and range of external agencies to support pupils' needs.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Develop older pupils as effective independent learners
- R2 Develop pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum

What happens next

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

Main findings

Hawarden Village Church in Wales Primary School achieves its aim to create a happy, valuing, and caring environment for pupils and staff. Its approach to supporting well-being is a strength and the care and support pupils receive is highly effective. All pupils feel safe and respected. They attend school regularly and their behaviour is exemplary. Across the school, staff use thoughtful and consistent approaches to supporting pupils' emotional needs. Pupils learn to use a range of effective self-regulation strategies, for example to help them deal with conflict successfully.

The school has developed its curriculum to align with the principles and purposes of Curriculum for Wales. This reflects the school's community well, for example through learning about historical figures such as William Gladstone. Staff plan an engaging variety of stimulating learning experiences that motivate and enthuse pupils. As a result, most pupils develop their knowledge of the rich history of Hawarden village and the local area. Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills linked to Welsh culture, for example by designing Celtic costumes. During the school's annual careers week, older pupils meet visitors from the local community who discuss their chosen careers and the training they undertook to get them there. This enables pupils to learn first-hand about the world of work.

Staff build positive working relationships with pupils. They engage pupils well in learning experiences and support them to focus on their work successfully. Teachers build thoughtfully on pupils' learning to ensure that they make strong progress. Staff monitor pupils' progress closely. They use questioning effectively to check and probe pupils' knowledge and understanding and challenge their thinking to extend learning further. Most pupils take pride in their work and respond well to verbal feedback from teachers and their peers. This enables most older pupils to make worthwhile improvements to their written work.

Most pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make strong progress in developing their literacy and mathematical skills from their individual starting points. Staff develop younger pupils' communication skills consistently well, by modelling speaking and listening effectively. The school has developed a strong culture of reading. From a very young age, nearly all pupils make strong progress in their speaking and reading skills. Many older pupils use digital skills to present their research findings, for example about the moon landings. However, other important aspects of pupils' digital skills are underdeveloped such as their use of databases and spreadsheets. Staff have a sharp focus on the development of pupils' mathematical skills that supports most pupils to master key concepts effectively. Although pupils make good progress with their mathematical skills, opportunities for pupils to further develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum are at an earlier stage of development.

Leaders collaborate exceptionally well with staff and external agencies to meet the needs of pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) well. Staff plan and implement a broad range of targeted support programmes that develop pupils' literacy and

mathematical skills effectively. They monitor pupils' targets and progress carefully and, as a result, the school meets the needs of all pupils well.

Staff provide an effective choice of activities for younger pupils and regularly encourage them to problem solve, for example when using their mathematical skills to open a combination lock. This enables most younger pupils to develop their independent learning skills appropriately. Nearly all older pupils demonstrate a mature attitude to learning in lessons. They ask inquiring questions and persevere when faced with appropriately challenging work. However, teachers do not provide older pupils with enough opportunities to lead their own learning, such as deciding how and what they learn. This means that they do not develop their independent skills as well as they could.

The headteacher has a clear vision and, along with other leaders, has high expectations for pupils and staff. School leaders ensure that the school's self-evaluation and monitoring processes are robust. They use a variety of evidence, including the monitoring of pupils' written work, to make decisions about the schools' strengths and areas for improvement accurately. As a result of this, staff have improved pupils' writing skills and they apply these in their work across the curriculum effectively. For example, older pupils write letters from soldiers describing conditions in the trenches during World War 1.

Leaders have a sound understanding of the quality of teaching and learning. They support staff development effectively through a range of worthwhile professional learning closely linked to the school's priorities for improvement. For example, a recent focus on developing the skills of staff in teaching Welsh has benefited pupils, who now have the skills and confidence to use the Welsh language effectively in everyday situations.

Governors have a clear understanding of their role and offer a good balance of support and challenge to leaders. They bring a wealth of skills and experiences that support the school's improvements. They work well in partnership with staff and pupils to uphold the school's values successfully, for example to celebrate pupils' differences.

Cameo: Effective pupil leadership helps to make positive changes

The school has a broad range of highly effective pupil leadership groups who have a good understanding of the needs of the school. They meet regularly to set appropriate targets and review their progress against current priorities. The groups communicate well with staff and pupils, for instance through assemblies, and meet with members of the governing body to keep them up to date with their plans. They make positive contributions to the school's safeguarding culture, for example by carrying out health and safety tours of the school site. Older pupil leaders ensure that their good work will continue by introducing and training younger pupils to lead future groups.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils 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 use of the pupil development grant.

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

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