YR EGLWYS yng NGHYMRU THE CHURCH IN WALES

# Section 50 Inspection of Church in Wales Schools Report Proforma

**Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School / Ysgol yr Eglwys yng Nghymru Llanelwedd**

Nr Builth Wells
Powys
LD2 3TY

**Diocese: Swansea & Brecon**

Local authority: Powys
Dates of inspection: 1st April 2024
Date of last inspection: November 2013
School's unique reference number: 400555
Headteacher: Adam Shearman
Inspector's name and number: Jennie Downes

## School context

Llanelwedd Church in Wales VC Primary School is a thriving village school. It is a place where children are encouraged to flourish, to take pride in themselves and their community. The school maintains a positive link with the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society.

The NOR is 116 (including nursery). The FSM average is 12%, the school identifies 23% as ALN.

EAL learners are supported and currently there are no learners with Welsh as a first language.

## The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ysgol Llanelwedd as a Church in Wales school

**Believe and Achieve**

The vision of Ysgol Llanelwedd is: To create a happy, inclusive school family where all children and staff believe and achieve together to become the people God meant us to be. The aim being that 'Children in our school will develop ambitious minds, resilience, compassion and have love for one another and for God'.

Creating a culture of positive relationship and connection is integral to Ysgol Llanelwedd. Christian values are holistically embedded through every aspect of school life. Encouraged to develop a sense of personal pride in themselves and their role in the local, national and global community, learners are developing as responsible, ethical citizens. All in the school community are confident and proud of their friendly school and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging. With pride, the children describe how their school logo design incorporates the school's uniqueness: the image of a Celtic cross and the belltower, encircled by a rainbow and a dove carrying an olive branch. The learners explain how they believe 'God gives us the courage and the strength. He made everything in the world'.

Stewardship is an important part of life in Ysgol Llanelwedd. Throughout the school, learners of all ages understand and respect their interdependent relationship with nature. Learners explain how they help prepare the school pond for the tadpoles to thrive and litter pick to protect the natural environment. The school's link with the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society has developed into a positive and mutually supportive partnership.

The school's annual Christmas tree is gifted by the Royal Welsh Festival. The older learners explain how they decorate the tree with Jesse Tree decorations, depicting different Bible stories. The children explain how the values of 'trust, respect, belonging and community' are 'everywhere' in the school community. The strong family ethos with a focus on children's well-being is evident throughout Ysgol Llanelwedd.

**Established strengths**

- The strong Christian ethos built on respect, relationship and a genuine commitment to allow children to flourish.
- The development of Big Questions and thematic learning.

**Development points**

- Develop opportunities for staff to visit other Church in Wales schools and to share best practice.
- To focus on planning of RVE within thematic learning and to use the sub lenses to support progression.
- Maintain Foundation Governance in line with Instrument of Government

**The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is meeting the needs of all learners including the contribution of Religion, values and ethics to the Christian Character of the school**

Learners are encouraged to engage with the world around them through the four purposes of Curriculum for Wales. The Humanities statements are beginning to be used to develop authentic learning links within the mandatory element of RVE. Teachers plan in creative ways using the local context of the landscape, environment and heritage of Wales. Exploring Welsh social history through coal mining, older learners are encouraged to develop their critical thinking skills. Exploring the impact of Welsh mining events on life in the past, learners' respond with compassion. While exploring the impact of Welsh mining events on life in the past, learners respond with compassion, expressing their emotions creatively through descriptive writing. Through enquiry-based learning learners think about the long-term effect of fossil fuel on the global environment.

The co-operative ethos is evident when the children of Ysgol Llanelwedd work together to problem-solve. Throughout the school, all learners are encouraged to be inquisitive and creative. The values of responsibility, communication and cooperation are particularly visible during break-times when learners engage in imaginative play together.

Fostering a close relationship with St Matthew's Church the whole school community are invited to experience the Christian message. The learners of Ysgol Llanelwedd enjoy spending time in the church. They share how the symbols in the church represent God and 'looking up at the roof is like a Noah's Arc'. A visit to the church inspired a whole-class project on stained-glass. The learner-led creative project included discovering how stained glass is made, creating their own stained-glass and hosting an exhibition of their glass panels for families and the community.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community**

Ysgol Llanelwedd VC Church in Wales Primary school has a warm and child-friendly Christian distinctiveness. Remaining true to their vision, the school song written in collaboration with learners and the singer song-writer Bronwen Lewis, is both reflective and lively. The learners' Criw Cymraeg helped develop the song which includes wording from the school vision: 'Being the people God meant us to be'.

The school provides regular and worthwhile opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development through planned collective worship. Staff ensure learners are supported to be actively involved in worship based on exploring Christian values such as forgiveness, honesty, love and peace.

Learners enjoy 'gathering together' to engage with abstract and spiritual concepts from within the Christian faith. With the Vicar they ask searching questions about the empty tomb and consider the symbolism of the Easter Egg. The learners enjoy interactive storytelling and the 'Lego' Bible. Their response to the hymn, 'Lord of the Dance' is joyful. In class, learners consider the Easter message as they use natural materials to create Easter Gardens.

The children speak of how they enjoy their many experiences of visiting the church. Sharing memories of how the younger learners take part in Nativity plays in church. Learners, staff and families all speak of the special atmosphere in the church during 'Carols by Candlelight' during advent. These are events learners are invited to take part in as they move on through the school. The relationship with church is identified as one of special significance, with special time for Christian celebrations following the liturgical year marked in the school calendar.

The many special memories learners share include walking to church with the whole school, singing, and 'seeing the beautiful colours' in the windows. Learners have opportunities to discuss their own beliefs and values through leaving messages and prayers to the global community on the school's special 'Meaning Tree'.

The younger learners share how the teachers 'help all the time' through teaching ways to be calm, to reflect and to breathe.

**The effectiveness of the leadership of the school as a church school**

The headteacher of Ysgol Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary school is an experienced leader with executive responsibility for two village schools. In 2022 the headteacher was invited to be part of an international network of school leaders, working with professionals across the globe including Canada, America and Europe. The impact of this professional dialogue has been a strategic, whole school focus on relationship. Evidence of the impact of professional networking can be seen in the school development focus on role modelling, the use of disciplined questions and development of the school as a professional learning community. There is a genuine commitment to whole school wellbeing, through ensuring all are valued for their contribution to the school community.

The Senior Leadership team of Ysgol Llanelwedd Church in Wales school work collaboratively with colleagues to support the development of pedagogy which aligns to the principles of Curriculum for Wales. An enquiry-based learning approach is being embedded into the school's curriculum design. 'Big Questions' are used within whole school themes such as, "How can learning about the past help us to make better choices?' and 'Where do we belong?' Evidence of the impact of learning can be seen in the display of learners' posters highlighting issues of importance to themselves and their local community. This approach is supporting Priority 1 of the school development focus on purposeful planning. As a next step the school is looking to develop RVE using the sub lenses for planning within the Humanities Area of Learning.

Learners' connection to the farming community and the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society fosters a strong sense of Cynefin. The school encourages all to have a sense of belonging and to feel a valued part of the community. This authentic commitment to Cynefin is demonstrated by the leadership team of Ysgol Llanelwedd Church in Wales school. The headteacher's compassionate leadership fosters a supportive and caring learning environment where all stakeholders are valued and given a voice.

The governors' strategic vision for the school is strong and roots the school in the Christian foundation. This is evidenced in the new design of the school logo. The community of Ysgol Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary school looks forward to a positive future, one where the school's links to the community are maintained and where the well-being continues to be at the heart of the school vision, a place where all are encouraged to: Believe and Achieve.

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| **The school meets the statutory requirement for collective acts of worship** | **Y** |
| **The school meets the statutory requirement for religion, values and ethics (where inspected)** | N/A |
| **Religion, values and ethics is objective, critical and pluralistic** | **Y** |