Section 50 Inspection Report – Church in Wales Schools

Llanfairfechan Infants' School
Diocese: Bangor
Local Authority: Conwy
Inspection dates: 7 May 2025
Date of last inspection: November 2019
Unique school reference number: 6623020
Headteacher: Mr. Matthew Jones
Inspector's name: Mr Neil Roberts B.Ed.

School context

Llanfairfechan Infants' School is a controlled mixed gender Infants' school based in the town of Llanfairfechan, which teaches learners aged 3 to 7, with 109 pupils on roll. It is a category 2T – transition to category 2 – bilingual school. Over 90% of pupils come from predominantly English-speaking backgrounds. The school has four classes: two Year 1 and 2 classes, a reception class and an afternoon only Nursery class. There is also a play group on site. The Headteacher was appointed in September 2015 and is also leader of the primary school in the village. There are 4 teachers and 6 teaching assistants providing support in classes and in intervention groups.
The school identified around 8% of pupils as having Additional Learning Needs. The FSM indicator is 24.7%.
At time of inspection, no child had been withdrawn from Collective Worship.

The distinctive and effective characteristics of Llanfairfechan Infants' School as a Church in Wales school

Ysgol Babanod Llanfairfechan is a happy and welcoming school, with a strong Christian growth and an inclusive family feeling based on shared Christian values. These values have been identified and developed collaboratively and are often displayed in school. The school's core values ensure that its distinctly Christian nature is central to everything it does. They strongly influence the lives of the entire school community. Values such as kindness, patience and forgiveness are the day-to-day foundations, fostering a sense of belonging. The attitudes and behaviour of the children are positively influenced by these values. The pupils treasure their childhood at school and enjoy learning. They are encouraged to grow and develop as kind, caring and tolerant individuals – and this is reflected in their excellent behaviour. An ethos of love, care and respect for one another is a warm and nurturing source where all children feel safe, valued and encouraged to

develop holistically. They are placed at the heart of everything the school does and are given numerous opportunities to contribute to their learning experiences.

The school promotes its Christian status in accordance with its Trust Deed and its partnership with the church, diocese and local community. It is committed to ensuring that the legacy of this Christian foundation remains at the heart of school life. There is a clear belief that, by collaborating with all stakeholders, the school community will learn the importance of living through Christian values through regular and considerate Collective Worship, daily prayers, along with well-planned, purposeful and stimulating RVE experiences.

The school's characterisation as a Church in Wales school is evident through signs, symbols, displays and objects in entrances, classrooms and communal areas. Reflection areas in each classroom are welcoming and unique, providing opportunities for prayer, storytelling, and consideration of the relevance of Christian values in daily life. Each class is a stimulating learning area with a number of resources for study – including Bibles and other religious literature.

Llanfairfechan Infants' School promotes a very good understanding of the Christian faith and helps to foster respect for other cultures, religions and ways of life.

Established strengths

- The school's well-established Christian ethos provides a caring, happy, and stimulating learning environment.
- Christian values are deeply reflected in school life and have a positive impact on all members of the school community;
- The respectful and inclusive nature of the school and the support given to all pupils to achieve their full potential.
- Close links with the parish church reinforce the Christian character of the school.

Recommendations

- To continue to develop the RVE curriculum, including the idea of Cynefin, ensuring regular reflection and review.
- To encourage pupils to plan and lead Collective Worship for the whole school on a regular basis.
- To share the school's good practice and develop further links with other Church in Wales schools and the wider education community.
- Consult with the Diocese to secure support and training to further develop the role of the Governing Body.

The school through its distinct Christian significance meets everyone's needs, including the contribution of Religion, values and ethics to the Christian character of the school.

Llanfairfechan Infants' School has a strong and well-established Christian culture and heritage, and is extremely proud of its status as a Church in Wales school and its relationship with the parish church. It effectively promotes its church status to parents, guardians and the wider community. The Bishop of Bangor strengthens the church status of the school through a welcoming letter in the descriptive programme, which praises the distinctly Christian nature of the school and its loving, caring and respectful ethos, based on shared core Christian values.

The school's links with the parish church, St Ffraid's and Christ Church, are strong and well established. Effective use is made of the convenient location of the church to promote and strengthen the Christian status of the school. Children visit the church every term and participate in special services such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter. These visits strengthen the pupils' spiritual experiences and develop links with the local community. They receive good support from parents and local organisations. The relationship between the school and the church plays an important role in the community landscape and has a significant impact on the pupils by encouraging and promoting a sense of belonging and commitment. It has also provided a developing understanding of the values of the Christian faith. Visits to the cathedral in Bangor and engagement in diocesan services have provided meaningful opportunities for the children to include themselves in a wider church context. Learners also have opportunities to learn more about the church and its role in promoting spirituality. They receive excellent support from the Community Minister and the Curate who visit the school regularly. Their contributions are highly appreciated.

A distinctive feature of our school is a close-knit family ethos that is evident through love and respect for one another. The Infants' School is an inclusive learning community where children feel safe, happy and valued. Each child is perceived as an important, unique individual, and is given a specific focus to develop to their full potential. The family feeling is strengthened through positive and respectful relationships between pupils and staff. There is a clear focus on pastoral care. Pupils receive excellent support from staff who know the children well and who work effectively as a team to ensure that the children's needs are always prioritised.

The voice of the pupils is emphasized in the school's way of life. "Circle time" gives children the opportunity to express how Christian values are expressed in their school experiences. The curriculum offers pupils a choice, supporting independence through thematic activities, with opportunities to make decisions in their own learning.

The school has developed a broad and balanced curriculum informed by pupils, staff and governors. Staff have worked collaboratively to create a range of creative and meaningful learning experiences for all learners. RVE is designed for the developmental stages of Foundation Phase learners, focusing on accessible and

engaging topics such as "Who made the world?", "Why should we care for others?" and "How do people celebrate special occasions?". Such themes foster curiosity and help young learners to engage with fundamental questions related to Christian teachings and wider concepts. RVE lessons are engaging and diverse, using strategies such as role-play, storytelling, and learning through research. Effective classroom organisation encourages independent and collaborative exploration, allowing pupils to work in spaces that promote creativity and self-directed learning. The school's curriculum aligns with its Christian focus and teachings, as well as a wider educational framework – ensuring that learners can develop a good understanding of faith, values and ethics. Pupils learn to appreciate and respect diversity in the world around them. Learners have a positive attitude and they listen carefully. They have a good knowledge of the main aspects of Christianity and the Bible and a good awareness of the importance of notable days in the Church calendar. There is a clear focus on Welsh Christian culture and heritage.

Pupils are encouraged to do what they can to help others. They show care and compassion with a commitment to helping others in need. They are proud of their efforts to support local charities, such as creating a Christmas hamper for a local household, support for local food banks and the Rotary "End Polio Now" project. National and international benefits have also been supported, including an appeal for families in Poland and families affected by war in Ukraine. These actions have given them an understanding of the needs of other people in the wider world.

The impact of collective worship on the school community

Collective Worship for the whole school is held daily and follows a specific Christian structure. Collective Worship is a special occasion and an integral part of the school day, allowing all members of the school community to come together as one Christian family, and providing opportunities for prayer, celebration and reflection. The inclusiveness of Collective Worship is a notable strength. Pupils actively participate, but do not currently plan or lead worship on a regular basis. Collective Worship is designed to be spiritual, joyful, and engaging, consisting of storytelling, singing, role-playing, and simple and meaningful prayers that are accessible to young children. Acts of worship reflect the broad traditions of the Anglican Church. The school's Christian ethos is reflected in the provision of a focal point with Christian signs, displays, artefact, hymns or songs, prayers and a moment of reflection. A candle is lit to indicate the beginning of worship and then extinguished at the end. Children listen attentively, respond well when questions are asked, and participate enthusiastically when asked. Pupils sing very well and obviously enjoy it. They value singing as a special form of prayer. The singing is full of joy and supports the Christian ethos of the school in an excellent manner. Very good use is made of the Welsh language in prayers, songs, responses and instruction. Emphasis is placed on celebrating important occasions in the Christian life and history of Wales. In addition to the Christian focus, worship also fosters an awareness that life involves choices in terms of beliefs, attitudes, behaviour, and

relationships. Festivals from other cultures are recognized and celebrated. These events are consistently grounded in the school's Christian values.

Collective Worship is led by all teaching staff and clergy, who contribute significantly to the provision of worship. The Curate's weekly visit plays an important role in enriching Collective Worship, offering theological depth and meaning, while strengthening the school's connection with the wider church community and supporting the Christian ethos. Pupils have been encouraged to contribute to writing prayers together, and this has resulted in prayer boxes being placed in all classes. Meetings have also been held between the Curate and the learners to form a Worship Group to plan and lead worship in the near future.

The school's Christian values are at the heart of Collective Worship. The Collective Worship co-ordinator collaborates with all staff to ensure that worship is carefully planned and the themes are balanced, including the core values of the school and the celebrations of the main holidays in the tradition of the Christian year. These themes are carefully chosen to be relevant to young children and are consistently linked to Christian teachings, making the worship experience a spiritually rich one. Collective Worship shows a thoughtful balance between biblical teachings, moral issues and current events relevant to the lives of the pupils. It also focuses on important occasions in school and community life. Recognizing and celebrating personal achievements and success is something the school does well. Success and diversity are appropriately and regularly recognized.

The school has a good range of resources to support and enrich Collective Worship. Good use is made of stimulating and relevant displays, literature (especially Children's Bibles), music and artefacts to encourage interest and understanding, ensuring that Collective Worship is authentic and engaging. Every opportunity is taken to ensure that acts of worship are interactive when appropriate.

Llanfairfechan Infants' School has a positive and stable process of Collective Worship which is well structured and relevant to the Christian aims, needs and ethos of the school. It is a key part of the daily life of the school, contributing significantly to the personal growth of each pupil – particularly their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

Llanfairfechan Infants' School’s Headteacher provides excellent leadership, and he is determined to move the school forward and extend the school's status as a Church in Wales school. He has a clear Christian vision and sets a clear strategic direction for the school. He has ensured that the Christian nature of the school has been communicated effectively to pupils, parents and the community alike. His vision for the school has permeated the whole school – among staff, governors and the wider school family – who all share this vision. The Headteacher's leadership reflects the school's well-established ethos of care and respect, where

there is a high emphasis on children's happiness and wellbeing – "The child is nurtured through play and laughter."

The Headteacher, the Governing Body and all staff work effectively to promote the ethos and values of the school. All staff participate in the school's strategic planning processes and work together to provide all learners with the best education, care, support and experiences so that they can achieve their full potential. All staff work very well within a strong team ethos, sharing effective Foundation Phase practices to offer meaningful and engaging learning opportunities for all learners. The primary focus is on the school's vision of family unity – an ethos in which all children are valued equally in a safe, loving and happy environment by promoting key Christian values. Members of staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and participate with enthusiasm as a team in the plans to move the school forward. The Headteacher and staff have worked to ensure that Collective Worship, the curriculum and RSE are informed by unique Christian principles that contribute positively to learners' good behaviour and positive attitudes towards learning. The school team is committed to the school's improvement focus. The Headteacher has ensured that the professional development of all staff is considered and prioritised where necessary. Staff are advised and encouraged to attend relevant courses related to RSE, Collective Worship and other curricular matters that reflect the ecclesiastical status of the school.

The Governing Body works effectively to promote the Christian vision of the school. They are very supportive and contribute positively to the life of the school, fulfilling their statutory responsibilities well. They are committed to working as part of the school's team and to supporting its development as a Church in Wales school. The governors visit the school regularly to meet with the Headteacher and staff to offer support, advice and encouragement based on a bond of mutual respect and confidence. They play a vital role in monitoring the Christian characteristics of the school, regularly observing worship and reviewing the curriculum. Governors are also invited to St. Mary's Church and Christ Church to participate in worship on special occasions.

School leaders recognize the importance of developing close partnerships with parents and the local community and strive to ensure that good communication is a high priority. Parents and members of the local community make important and valuable contributions to school life. They are very supportive of the school and greatly appreciate its open door policy. They feel comfortable and confident to meet with staff and governors when needed. The Parents, Teachers and Friends Association has raised significant amounts of money for the school – providing funding to support learning activities and resources for the benefit of all pupils. Plans are underway to raise funds in the near future to develop an outdoor garden for the children in the school yard. Parents are fully informed of their children's progress. Curricular issues, including RER and aspects of Collective Worship, are included in written reports and parent meetings. Most parents are aware of the school's status as a Church in Wales school and are proud to be members of this happy Christian community.

The school is excellently led by each of the leaders, who work effectively as a team to promote its Christian values and ethos for the benefit of each of its pupils.	
The school meets the statutory requirements for collective acts of worship	**YES**
The school meets the statutory requirements for Religion, Values and Ethics (where inspected)	**Not applicable**
Religion, Values and Ethics are objective, critical and pluralistic	**YES**