YR EGLWYS YNG NGHYMRU THE CHURCH IN WALES

Section 50 Inspection of Church in Wales Schools Report Proforma

Rhayader Voluntary Controlled Church in Wales School

Ysgol yr Eglwys yng Nghymru Rhaeadr

Rhayader
Powys
LD6 5LT

Diocese: Swansea and Brecon
Local authority: Powys
Dates of inspection: 5th June 2025
Date of last inspection: 13th December 2022
School's unique reference number: 666/3036
Headteacher: Linda Crockett
Inspector's name and number: Jennie Downes

School Context

Rhayader Church in Wales Primary School holds a significant position in the historic town of Rhayader, located in the heart of Wales. The school team fosters a purposeful environment where each child's learning journey is central to school life. As a dual-stream school, it equally values the Welsh and English languages. With 220 pupils, the school has an average of 10% FSM and ALN of 10%. Approximately 5% are of ethnic minority background.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Rhayader VC as a Church in Wales school

'Everyone Matters ~ Mae Pawb yn Cyfri'

I have come that you may have life in all its fullness John 10:10.

Rhayader School is committed to providing learners with the support they need to become ambitious, creative contributors who are ethical and healthy. The school's mission is 'to nurture and enable every child to thrive and to become the person they are fully capable of being'. The well-being of all is of the highest priority, with the school leadership team recognising that everyone is 'called to live a full life in mind, body, heart and spirit.'

Parents share how the school and community blend seamlessly as 'one' and describe 'the spirit of collaboration'. They depict the whole school as a nurturing and inclusive space filled with care and compassion, explaining how all staff seek to ensure that everyone is valued and all are considered as part of the school family.

Welsh Christian culture and heritage are integral to the school's identity. A clear learning pathway is provided for learners from the pre-school setting and the Cylch Meithrin into the dual-stream primary environment. The school's expansive 'Ysgol Coedwig' learning areas include a designated wooded environmental area, forest paths, forest school, a prayer space, wildlife, and a vegetable garden. The wealth of outdoor, experiential learning opportunities ensures all learners are given opportunities to grow and learn. The highly skilled school team work together to ensure every learner is empowered to succeed on their learning journey.

The school's work on human rights is well-developed, supporting learner agency and the values of respect, justice, compassion, and community. The governors, leadership team and all staff work collaboratively to ensure and support community cohesion. The strong interdependent ethic is evident in every aspect of life at Rhayader Church in Wales Primary School. The culture is described as 'a tapestry', with everyone contributing to the ethos, through their role in building a safe, nurturing community where learners can experience 'the fullness of life' in a school environment where 'Everyone matters- Mae pawb yn cyfri'.

Established strengths

Strong, purposeful leadership and development of community cohesion

The Christian vision at the heart of the school life

An embracing of Cynefin through the outdoor environment

Aspirational distributive leadership

Recommendations

Consider developing a more interdisciplinary approach to RVE through the sublenses.

Continue to develop and embrace learners' spiritual response to their Cynefin through the landscape, music, art and literature of Wales.

Seek to develop strong links with colleagues from the Church in Wales Education Team to support further development as a Church in Wales School.

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

The vision 'Everyone Matters ~ Mae Pawb yn Cyfri' is fully embodied at Rhayader Church in Wales Primary School. Throughout the school, learners demonstrate care, respect and understanding towards one another and to the natural environment. Parents share how their children 'blossom' through the relationships they build at school and how empathy is fostered through positive role modelling of attitudes such as compassion and respect. Learners possess a good understanding of each other's differing needs and recognise the importance of trust, as well as the necessity of taking responsibility for their actions and their

response to the actions of others. The learners value the trust placed in them and respond positively to the sense of responsibility that accompanies it.

Christian values underpin the school's core mission, which is to nurture and support all learners within a caring and inclusive Church in Wales school context. The unique and extensive outdoor learning environment is fully utilised to support the four purposes of learning. Learning from the environment and developing an understanding of the natural world are integral to life at Rhayader School. Learners take pride in the fact that each class is named after birdlife in the local area. The 'Barcud Coch' Red Kite can be seen in the skies above the school grounds, and children speak proudly of their sightings of the very rare White-tailed Kite.

The Urdd Eisteddfod provides a forum for the learners' creativity, with the theme 'Roots' being used to capture a deeper understanding of identity and belonging. The exploration of different faiths and beliefs, including those relevant to Wales, such as 'Y Mari Lwyd', provides evidence of how learners are encouraged to explore and develop an understanding of tradition, religion and belief. The school embraces the UN Charter of Human Rights and the UNCRC Rights of the Child. In this way, the teaching of objective, critical, and pluralistic Religion Values and Ethics (RVE) is being developed. The school's accreditation as a Peace Mala school is a positive recognition of its ethos, based on the teachings of Jesus' commandments and the Golden Rule, to 'Love your neighbour as yourself' and 'Treat others as you would like to be treated'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community

Rhayader Church in Wales Primary School values the role of Collective Worship in fostering the school's Christian identity. The entire school comes together for worship. The learner-led 'Worship Ambassadors' enhance the school's call to worship with music and lighting of the candles. Together, the whole school recites the words of the Trinitarian Prayer in Welsh. The stories of Jesus illustrate the importance of respecting one another and highlight the Christian significance of respecting God. The child-centred worship maintains a sense of fun, and the learners take delight in singing the words of their school song.

The Year Six learners create a banner and bunting filled with words and images that depict their school's distinctive Christian foundation as they prepare to visit Brecon Cathedral for the annual 'Leavers Service' involving the Diocesan Church in Wales Schools. The school follows the Anglican Church liturgical calendar and celebrates the Church's seasons. The school's work with Peace Mala promotes an inclusive and pluralistic understanding of religion, global faiths, and belief traditions. Learners are encouraged to research different faiths and engage in activities such as creating artwork, preparing and tasting food, and participating in interfaith music and dance. The school nurtures positive relationships with the local community and churches in the town, fostering a community-focused approach that emphasises social cohesion as a key strength of its philosophy.

The school's prayer life is sensitive to the unique needs of all learners. The outdoor Prayer Garden, situated under the canopy of the trees, provides a nurturing space for those children who choose to attend the learner-led Prayer Club. The children share how they enjoy having time to sit quietly in this space. Stewardship is evident throughout the school, with learners encouraged to utilise their creative skills by making bird nesting boxes and a Buddy Bench in the school grounds. Natural wooden sculptures enhance the school

environment, and the children take pride in sharing how the tree on their school logo relates to the Lebanon cedar and how the cross in the school foyer was crafted from cedar wood sourced from the school grounds.

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

The Headteacher and Governors collaborate to foster a leadership culture rooted in trust, respect, and integrity. All staff work together to promote the school's ethos and vision, clearly expressing how Christian values shape every aspect of school life. Connections with local churches, alongside the school's strong culture of pastoral family engagement, support those within the school community and beyond. This focus strengthens the school's emphasis on community and its connection to the church's mission.

Relationships with parents are positive and beneficial. Events such as the 'PTFA Festival on the Field' and the school's performance of the 'Lion King' receive support from parents and the local community, fostering a constructive 'community spirit' in Rhayader and the surrounding areas.

The distributive model of leadership emphasises the professional development of all staff. A trust in everyone's contribution to school life ensures the entire school's commitment to working together. There is a clear understanding of learning as a lifelong journey for all, with the Headteacher and Governing Body establishing clear direction and a sense of joint purpose. The development of the school into a cohesive dual-stream learning environment and the collective positive attitude towards achieving this is commendable and supported by the dedication of all staff to assist one another fully.

All learners are encouraged to work towards the four purposes of their learning, and each child's contribution to the life of the school is valued. Problem-solving challenges are integral to the learning experiences, such as through Forest School, where learners apply their numeracy skills in practical and authentic ways. The flourishing vegetable garden exemplifies how older learners contribute to the school environment by planning the layout of the garden using numeracy and research skills in class and translating this into practical outdoor experience.

The school community work effectively to ensure that Rhayader Church in Wales Primary School continues to be a place of learning where:

'Everyone Matters ~ Mae Pawb yn Cyfri'.

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)	**Not applicable**
Religion, values and ethics is objective, critical and pluralistic	**Y**