YR EGLWYS YNG NGHYMRU THE CHURCH IN WALES

Section 50 Inspection of Church in Wales Schools Report Proforma

Ysgol Gynradd Wirfoddol a Reolir Glanyfferi/ Ferryside Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Ferryside,
Carmarthen.
Carmarthenshire.
SA17 5TB

Diocese: St. David's.

Local authority: Carmarthenshire.
Dates of inspection: June 10th, 2026
Date of last inspection: April 2013.
School's unique reference number: 6693013
Acting Headteacher: Mrs. Michelle Evans.

Inspector's name: Mr Neil Roberts B.Ed.

School context

Ferryside VC Primary school is a Welsh medium Voluntary Controlled Primary school. Built in 1856, it is a traditional greystone Victorian building situated at the centre of the seaside village of Ferryside, some three miles from the town of Kidwelly and nine miles from Carmarthen. There are currently 24 learners on roll who are taught in two large classrooms situated in the main building. There are two pre-fabricated buildings at the rear of the school which are used for worship, dining and educational activities. There are two full-time teachers. The Acting Headteacher, who was seconded in 2024, is responsible for the Foundation Phase. She is supported by a teaching assistant. KS2 learners are taught by an experienced teacher who is also the ALN Co. She is supported every morning by a teaching assistant. The FSM is 14 %. Attendance for the last academic year was 91%.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ferryside V.C. as a Church in Wales school .

Ferryside VC school is a happy, caring and welcoming Christian place of learning with an inclusive family atmosphere based on shared Christian values. The school has a strong Christian culture and heritage and is very proud of its Church status

at the heart of the community. Its Christian character is distinctive and makes significant contributions to the personal and spiritual development of its learners. The school's ethos and vision are identified within its mission statement, **"Planting today, reaping tomorrow"** in all that they aim to do and become resilient, independent life-long learners who respect and demonstrate the school's values. The school encourages an understanding of the meaning of faith and promotes its values through the experiences it offers to all its learners. Christian values underpin all aspects of school life.

The school is committed to the nurture and care of all learners based on clear Christian principles. Learners are very well supported by all adults to reach their full potential, develop a positive self-image and recognise their importance in God's eyes. Its distinctive character makes it a special place, a safe place, a place of learning and a place of nurture and exploration, Values and attitudes are formed, and every individual is celebrated as unique. Learners value their membership of the school and enjoy learning. They are encouraged to develop as kind, friendly, considerate, tolerant and inquisitive individuals, and this is reflected in their excellent behaviour.

Ferryside VC School effectively promotes the spiritual and moral development of its learners by regular, inspirational and meaningful worship and daily prayer, together with purposeful and enquiring RVE experiences. The school demonstrates and celebrates the Christian faith and helps to foster respect of other cultures, religions and ways of life.

There are clear indications that this is a Church school, reflected in its visual identity and activities. Both classrooms are welcoming and stimulating areas of learning with numerous and relevant resources for learners to examine and enjoy.

Established strengths

- The Christian vision and leadership of the Headteacher which is very well supported by all members of the school community.
- The established Christian ethos of the school which contributes significantly to its caring, happy and nurturing learning environment.
- Very close relationships between the school and the church and clergy which support and strengthen its status.
- The pastoral care and support shown to all learners by staff based on a mutual bond of care and respect.

Recommendations

- To encourage and support learners to plan and lead Collective Worship regularly.

- To continue to develop relationships with other Church in Wales schools to share good practice and work on future projects and developments.
- To further develop the RVE curriculum, ensuring regular review and to seek advice from the Church in Wales and the Diocese.

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

Ferryside VC School's long established Christian culture is based on agreed Christian values and influences and underpins the life of the school. The school acknowledges its heritage and aims to serve its learners by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice, in accordance with the principles of the Church in Wales. It provides a secure and sociable learning environment which impacts positively on the health and wellbeing of learners and staff.

Considerable emphasis is given in promoting a sense of belonging and developing positive values amongst all stakeholders. Skills, knowledge and authentic learning experiences enable learners to discover their community, Wales and the world. Welsh Christian culture is promoted within a strong sense of Cynefin – enriching and extending learners 'experiences. Learners are encouraged and supported to contribute positively to their locality. As a result, they demonstrate pride in their school and community.

A major feature of the school is its family ethos where love and respect for one another are evident. Its inclusive ethos makes learners feel happy, safe and valued. This family spirit is enhanced by respectful relationships between learners and staff. Learners are very well supported, and each child is valued as an important member of the school family, nurtured to reach their full potential. Staff know the children well and work effectively by ensuring that their needs are always prioritised.

Christian values are at the heart of all that the school aims to achieve and are embedded in its traditions, ethos and daily life. Learners are central to everything that the school sets out to do. These core values have an important role on their development, their attitudes and behaviour. They behave very well and show respect, care and consideration towards others. They articulate the distinct characteristics of the school's values and the significant impact they have on their lives. Learners are encouraged to contribute to their learning and work confidently independently and collaboratively. They demonstrate skills that help them to be effective members of the school and community. Pupil voice has a prominent focus and contributes to the Christian vision of the school, empowering learners to have a voice and influence in their learning. They discuss issues in school committees and share ideas confidently and enthusiastically.

The school's links with the church and the community are very strong. Effective use is made of St. Thomas's Church and its convenient location to promote and enhance the school's status. Learners visit regularly to participate in services including Harvest, Christmas and Easter. Although St. Ishmael's church is some distance away, it too is visited during the school year. Church visits include opportunities for planned RVE activities, which have included mock baptisms. These visits strengthen learners' spiritual experiences and links to the community. The close relationship with the churches plays a key role in the life of the community and has an important effect on learners by promoting a sense of belonging and commitment to the community. It provides learners with an understanding of the Christian faith in its true sense. Visits to St. David's cathedral have provided meaningful opportunities to learn about the church and its role in promoting spirituality. The school is very well supported by the community vicar and a Foundation governor who visit the school regularly. Their support and contributions are highly valued.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community.

Collective Worship at Ferryside VC school is delivered on a daily basis and follows a distinctly Christian structure. It is a special occasion and an integral part of the school day, allowing all members of the school family to gather as one Christian family and providing opportunities for prayer, celebration and reflection. Worship follows a regular weekly pattern. Monday and Tuesday worship is led by the two full-time members of staff, while Wednesday worship is led by the community vicar and a governor. Class worship takes place on Thursdays, while the week ends with worship celebrating success and achievement on Friday.

The school endeavours to ensure that each act of worship is planned to be spiritual, joyful, educational and engaging. As well as having a Christian focus, worship helps to develop an awareness that life involves choices of belief, attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Learners are actively involved in worship but do not currently plan worship on a regular basis.

Acts of worship reflect broad Anglican traditions. The Christian ethos of the school is reflected in the provision of a visual focal point with Christian symbols, artefacts, displays, psalms, hymns or songs, prayers and a moment of reflection. Worship ends with the Lord's Prayer and the School Song/Prayer. Festivals from other cultures are acknowledged appropriately on occasions. These are underpinned by the school's Christian values.

Christian values are at the heart of worship and are prominently displayed during worship and at various locations around the school. Worship is well planned and themes are balanced to include the school's values and observation of the major festivals in the cycle of the Christian year. Worship incorporates key Christian events, Bible stories, Saints and Christian figures- including themes from Welsh

Christian culture. Learners are encouraged to model their behaviour and attitudes on these values and teachings and relate them to their own lives where possible. They are given opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings and time to reflect.

Learners prepare for worship by entering the classroom quietly and respectfully. They listen attentively, respond well when questioned and participate enthusiastically when invited. They enjoy role-play, often read stories and passages from the Bible and use a variety of prayers and affirmations, sometimes using those they have written themselves. Worship demonstrates a thoughtful balance between Biblical teachings, moral issues and current events which may be relevant to learners' lives. When questioned, learners spoke enthusiastically about worship and their involvement, describing their feelings expressively. They display a good understanding of the underlying moral messages from the more familiar stories from the Bible.

The vicar and a Foundation governor visit every Wednesday to lead worship. These occasions are joyfully anticipated by learners and staff and provide a significant contribution to the school's ethos and status. The vicar's lively, engaging and meaningful approach and encouragement help learners to develop a clearer understanding of the worth of Christianity in today's world. Worship is not restricted to the school building; it is often a shared occasion at St Thomas's Church to mark special Christian festivals. Clergy, learners, staff, governors, parents and members of the community join together as one extended school family in celebration.

Collective Worship is a significant feature of the school's spiritual journey, offering engaging experiences that foster reflection, community involvement and personal growth for all its learners.

The effectiveness of the leadership of the school

Ferryside VC school is very well led by the Acting Headteacher, who is ambitious to move the school forward and develop its Church status. Since her secondment in 2024, she has ensured that the Christian nature of the school has been communicated to learners, parents and visitors alike. This vision has permeated the whole school community who share this ambition. Her leadership is reflected in the school's established status and ethos based on the principles of care, respect, nurture and wellbeing for the whole school family. Her focus has centred on the safety and happiness of all learners while recognising their individuality and uniqueness.

The Headteacher, staff and Governing Body work effectively in promoting the status, ethos and values of the school. Despite being small in number, staff work within a strong team ethos, sharing good practice and ideas to provide meaningful and interesting learning opportunities for all children. The prime focus is on the

school's vision of the unity of the family – where all learners are valued equally in a secure, loving and happy environment through the promotion of key Christian values. Staff take on their numerous roles and responsibilities with purpose and enthusiasm in order to move the school forward and for the development of all learners. Staff have ensured that Collective Worship and RVE are informed by Christian principles that contribute positively to learners' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.

The Governing Body have a clear understanding of the purpose and vision of a Church in Wales School and are fully aware of their statutory requirements. They recognise the importance of the Christian ethos of the school, its deep-rooted Christian nature and its focus on the promotion of core Christian values. They work hard to promote this Christian vision of the school. They are very supportive and contribute positively to school life, visiting the school regularly to meet with the Headteacher and staff to offer support, advice, encouragement and constructive challenge based on mutual respect and trust. They care passionately about the wellbeing of all members of the school family. Their visits include activities such as book scrutinies, learning walks, listening and talking to learners, attending worship, reviewing the curriculum and monitoring progress. The Headteacher provides a comprehensive termly report to the Governing Body on all aspects of school life, including details of activities and information pertaining to a Church in Wales school.

Leaders recognise the importance of developing and maintaining good relationships with parents, carers and members of the community and strive to ensure that good communication has a high priority, Parents/carers provide important and valuable contributions to school life and are very supportive. They are very appreciative of the school's "open door" policy and feel confident and comfortable to meet with staff and governors when necessary. Parents/carers are particularly proud of the school's Church status, praising its warm family ethos and its caring, nurturing approach and praising the individual attention afforded to all learners. They value having opportunities to attend worship at school and at church, praising the caring and respectful ethos of these occasions. Members of the local community are also very supportive of the school, recognising its importance at the heart of village life.

Ferryside VC school is very well led and managed, with a clear Christian vision for the school and a sense of purpose for the future. The Acting Headteacher, staff and Governing Body work effectively together to promote and develop its status, ethos and values for the benefit of all its learners.

The school meets the statutory requirement for collective acts of worship	**YES**

Religion, values and ethics is objective, critical and pluralistic	**YES**