

Ysgol Trelawnyd

Church in Wales (Aided) Primary School
London Road
Trelawnyd
Flintshire
LL18 6DL

Diocese: St Asaph
Local authority: Flintshire
Dates of inspection: 30th April 2015
Date of last inspection: January 2010
School's unique reference number: 664 3316
Headteacher: Mrs J Borthwick
Section 50 Inspector: Miss S Jesson



School context

Trelawnyd Church in Wales Aided School has 95 pupils from the local area which is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. The school has well maintained grounds which are continually developed and utilised by the school. All pupils come from homes where English is the main language, reflecting the linguistic nature of the community. At the time of Inspection no children are withdrawn from Religious Education or worship. The school was inspected by Estyn in January and has started to implement recommendations. All areas for development from the previous Section 50 Inspection have been addressed.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ysgol Trelawnyd as a Church in Wales Aided Primary School are good.

Ysgol Trelawnyd has a warm friendly atmosphere where the children are cared for and supported by all adults. The classroom displays value the children's work and achievements whilst displays throughout the school reflect the school's commitment to Christian values. All children are valued and encouraged to reach their potential as citizens of Wales and the wider world. The school has strong links with the local church, visiting for both performances and acts of worship giving the children a well-balanced attitude towards the experience of visiting the church. The vicar is a regular visitor to the school for both acts of worship, religious education and pastoral support.

Established strengths and excellence

- The children at Ysgol Trelawnyd are supported by all adults to reach their potential, develop a positive self-image and begin to express their own opinions and feelings.
- The school's ethos and mission statements have a prominent place in all documentation
- Planning is thorough with a balance of written and practical activities.
- Good use is made of ICT during lessons and to support learners.
- The school has a clear and thorough Section 50 self-evaluation document which is being addressed.
- The school has Fairtrade status, linking Christian values and personal practise.

Focus for development

- The school's Self Evaluation Report for RE refers to developing a portfolio of standardised work for RE which when completed will impact on standards.
- The marking of children's work should include next steps in children's spiritual development or skills being developed, to give children a clear understanding of what is expected and how they can express themselves and move forward.
- Involving the children, through school council, in the development of RE and finding out about other faiths would be an exciting way forward.
- The school recognises the need to challenge more able pupils.

The school should contact the Diocesan Office for support in implementing these small and areas for development.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners

The school's Smiley School Code approach to behaviour is reflected in the children's interaction and manner with staff, visitors and their peers. The initiative begins in Early Years with rules and expectations being added and adapted as children move through the school. Through their work on the school council, children are becoming independent thinkers by using well-considered ideas and strategies. The school council is proud of the school, confidently discussing areas of excellence and how they are moving forward. They are secure in their role sharing ideas for fundraising and new challenges. Religious Education plays an important role defining the distinctive Christian character within the school. The school participates in pilgrimages and walks on a regular basis to churches and religious sites in the area. Governors and members of the community have attended these and are proud of the children, their reflections and behaviour at these times.

The impact and effectiveness of collective worship on the school community is good.

One act of whole school acts of worship was observed with Years 1-6. The worship begins as the children enter with quiet reflection to a peaceful piece of music. The worship leader then asked children to share their thoughts which were appropriate and considerate. Children who volunteered their reflections received a reflection stone to hold throughout the worship. The children joined in singing 'Abba, Father' which was well known and added to the general atmosphere of peaceful thoughtfulness. The key elements of worship are a natural and embedded feature. The children were involved throughout, giving responses, sharing thoughts and volunteering to participate. The inclusion of children reading their own prayers as an integral part of the service is an excellent feature. The service ended with the reflection stones being dropped in a bucket of water, children were encouraged to say a short prayer as they did so.

Staff and clergy are involved in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship with involvement from other religious groups. Children are involved in planning and delivery, understanding the importance of sharing the worship as Christians, not only performing. The school meets the statutory requirements for Collective Worship. The school is looking for ways to develop worship at church and outdoors in its cycle. Incidental Welsh is used in worship. The Bible as a holy book is referred to in worship, though explicit Bible verses were not read during this act of worship, they could be used to strengthen this aspect of the service.

The effectiveness of provision for Religious Education is good

The curriculum offers children a variety of opportunities to extend their understanding of the Christian faith through planned and evaluated lessons. There are opportunities built into the curriculum for children to explore and experiment with new learning opportunities, including visiting special/religious places, making and using artefacts and role play. The new curriculum has been embraced and staff are looking for ways to improve the opportunities for more able pupils. Visitors are warmly welcomed to present and discuss their religion from a personal perspective, often making links and comparing practise with Christianity. Religious Education lessons were observed in all four classes.

Foundation Phase lessons included practical activities and opportunities to develop literacy and ICT skills. Both Foundation Phase lessons focused on caring for God's creatures. The Early Years built on the story of the Lost Sheep, focusing on the care and attention shepherds and farmers show their animals as Jesus shows to us. The links made were appropriate for the age of the pupils who were engaged throughout. The stained glass windows made during the session will be a colourful addition to the class, reflecting the school's links with the church. Older children reflected on caring for animals and suggested ways they could do this in school and at home. A variety of activities were used to strengthen children's understanding of their responsibilities in this area. Throughout Foundation Phase the focus is on developing literacy through RE whilst maintaining the key religious message, however this could have been reinforced more throughout the session.

The Key Stage 2 lessons provided opportunities for extended writing showing empathy and understanding. All children were engaged, showing an understanding of the learning

objectives and skills being developed. One lesson was linked to the Arts Council project on Saints, the other focused on values and attributes of heroes. All key stage 2 children were confident to share their ideas and thoughts about their work and were aware of expectations. There were opportunities to express themselves and develop creativity through drawing and extended writing. There were elements of assessment for learning, children sharing their ideas whilst developing note taking skills. The children's recall and understanding of Bible stories and the deeds of personalities in them is very good. There is evidence in both classes of the importance of prayer, with prayer stations and examples of past projects. This reflects and supports the school plan to develop personal reflection and develop spirituality.

There are numerous class books which contain examples of literacy and numeracy in RE, photographs celebrating success and achievement and work from all ages showing the diversity of activities and opportunities provided. The marking of children's work in RE is consistent and positive, often questioning the child. However, the marking does not offer opportunities for further developing a child's spiritual understanding or suggest ways forward such as how they can express themselves more effectively. The quality of work on display in corridors and classrooms is excellent, showing links to literacy and numeracy in RE. Some staff use Welsh phrases naturally as part of the RE lesson. The school meets the statutory requirements for Religious Education.

The school is good at developing the pupils personal qualities and achievements

The whole school community project on 'Values' is celebrated around school. The links made with children's own experiences ensure they have an impact on behaviour and children's relationships with each other. The children take responsibility for their own actions and develop the thinking skills that allow them to become effective members of the community. The children's entrepreneurial skills are developed through fund raising. The children are aware of local charities which are supported and gave examples to show an understanding of the impact of their contributions. This enables all children to learn about the wider world whilst personally making a difference to provision at the school. The school is a Fair Trade school, an achievement to be proud of and celebrate. A number of events have taken place which the children have discussed in detail. The children recognise that their involvement with the project enables farmers to receive a fair price and in turn enable them to care for their families.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good.

The work of the coordinator in both Religious Education and Collective Worship should be commended as the monitoring and evaluation lead directly to the quality of provision. The quantity of evidence is a clear indicator of the provision for both these areas within the curriculum. The school's strong links with other VA schools is developing through assessment and moderation procedures, an excellent way forward. The children on school council are able to discuss the role of the church within school and feel they have been involved in developing the school's links in this area. The school's link with the local church is strong and ever developing. The governors are evidently proud of the school and are very supportive which shows through their day to day commitment. Self-evaluation strategies lead directly to the school's improvement planning. As a result, achievement and distinctiveness have improved and previous good performance has been consolidated for all learners. The whole school community contributes fully to school life which has a clear and distinctive impact on children's well-being.

May I take this opportunity to once again express my sincere thanks to the staff and pupils of Ysgol Trelawnyd for the kindness showed to me during the visits.