



YR EGLWYS
YNG NGHYMRU



THE CHURCH
IN WALES

Gwella Inspection of Church in Wales Schools Report

St. Mary's Voluntary Aided Primary School

Ruabon,
Wrexham,
North Wales.
LL14 6LE



Diocese: St Asaph

Local authority: Wrexham LL146LE

Dates of inspection: 3rd and 5th October 2016

Date of last inspection: November 2009

School's unique reference number: 6653341

Headteacher: Mrs Nicola Booth B.A. Q.T.S. N.P.Q.H.

Inspector's name: Mr Gareth Williams M.Ed.

School context

St. Mary's is a voluntary aided Church-in-Wales primary school situated in a rural setting, in the village of Ruabon close to Wrexham. The school caters for boys and girls aged 3-11 years. The school has 199 pupils on roll plus 27 part-time nursery children. The catchment area is described by the school as varied, covering a broad range of privately owned housing to council owned/rented properties. Nine point three per cent of pupils come from ethnic backgrounds, mainly Eastern European countries. At present 9.0% of pupils are registered for free school meals. There are 17 pupils which have English as an Additional Language. There are 16.1% of pupils which have been identified as having Additional Learning Needs. At this moment in time no child has been withdrawn from Religious Education or Collective Worship.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Mary's as a Church in Wales school are good

The school incorporates its church school status naturally into all aspects of school life, enjoying good links with the church and community it serves. There is a strong ethos of love and care within the school. The children value and enjoy their membership of the school. The Reverend Kate visits the school on a fortnightly basis to conduct school services and advise on religious issues, also conducting a weekly after school club with the help of Reverend Trish. The Reverend Stuart is also a supportive member of the school team. Pupils are curious, questioning and reflective about the world they live in, spiritual issues and moral challenges. They are given many opportunities to contribute to their learning environment and the wider world. All this is done with reflection and appreciation of the world God has created.

Established strengths

- The excellent behaviour and attitude of the children.
- The children of St. Mary's school are supported by all adults to secure their full potential.
- The Christian leadership of the Head teacher and management team.
- The planning, recording and delivery of Collective Worship.

Focus for development

- To continue to refine the planning and delivery of R.E. in line with current initiatives.
- To further develop the role of the R.E. Curriculum coordinator.
- Realise plans to develop an outside prayer/reflection area.
- To develop a portfolio of assessed work in order to standardise R.E. provision.

The prospects for Improvement in the future are good.

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

St. Mary's has a genuine Christian caring ethos permeating throughout the school, which impacts positively on the health and well-being of staff and pupils alike, providing a very good basis for teaching and learning to take place. Christian values and artefacts are displayed prominently throughout the school and Collective Worship focuses on school values.

During R.E. lessons pupils are encouraged to ask questions appropriate to their age/ability, reflecting upon the meaning and messages, and consider how these have an impact on their own lives. Pupils, staff, parents and the wider community share a very good relationship. This enables the children to feel, safe, secure and valued as individuals, and ensures that they are in the best position to embrace the curriculum and achieve their potential. Using a variety of teaching and learning styles staff ensure that all pupils are engaged and given opportunities for spiritual reflection. R.E. lessons are delivered as part of the regular weekly timetable. Curriculum provision is monitored by the subject leader, the Headteacher and the vicar as governor with responsibility for R.E.

During Collective Worship pupils use a variety of prayers, songs and affirmations from an early age. The vicar leads worship fortnightly. Pupils are given time for reflection during Collective Worship and are invited to join in prayers. Pupils are starting to lead Collective Worship in class where the Inspectors observed a very good service led by three of the older children. Foundation Phase and Key Stage Two teachers plan, organise lead and evaluate Collective Worship on a regular basis. The school attends St. Mary's church several times during the year for special services.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good

Thanks to the detailed planning and recording which ensures that worship meshes with the teaching themes as well as the church year, worship is a positive experience for pupils and an essential part of school life. Staff regularly attend worship and are actively involved with its delivery. The children have opportunities to plan, participate and lead worship in many different ways. They are also invited to contribute to the worship by writing their thoughts on "leaves" which are displayed on the "thinking tree" situated in the entrance hall. The school makes good use of Welsh during Collective Worship in prayers, hymns and instructions. Time is also set aside within Collective Worship to share and celebrate individual talent and achievement.

Collective Worship at St. Mary's school is delivered on a daily basis. Pupils regularly plan and lead class services as well as at key times throughout the Christian calendar in church; parents are also invited to attend these events. The Christian ethos of the school is reflected through the provision of focus points with Christian symbols and appropriate music, Anglican responses and prayers and a time for reflection.

Christian values are at the heart of the school and its varied activities. Three candles are lit and a special song is sung to signify the start and finish of Collective Worship. The school incorporates the Church year in its long term plans. The local vicar leads Collective Worship every fortnight in school. In St. Mary's the children are encouraged to model their behaviour on the Christian values and teachings through Biblical stories and are encouraged to live these out in their everyday lives. The caring attitude of the older children on the yard is an excellent example of Christian values in action.

The school aims to ensure that the acts of Collective Worship are interactive, as and when appropriate. Questions are asked and pupils are encouraged to participate, either through verbal contributions, reading prayers and stories and taking time to reflect on the current theme. The children at appropriate ages are involved in the continual evaluation of Collective Worship.

The acts of worship include celebrations of other cultures and faiths and are underpinned by the school's Christian Values.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The school has worked hard to ensure that Religious Education has its rightful place in the school's curriculum. Good planning strategies make the most of cross-curricular links and encourage pupils to develop their skills. Information technology is used well and lessons are exciting, enabling pupils to

have a good breadth of knowledge and understanding. By planning together in key stages in conjunction with the subject co-ordinator staff ensure that there is continuity and progression throughout the school. Over the last year teachers' planning in R.E. has been updated following the new Diocesan scheme and the Literacy and Numeracy Framework. Assessment, recording and reporting elements of religious education are in place and firmly embedded .

Pupils' knowledge and achievement is good. Clear learning objectives and success criteria are set at the start of each lesson throughout the school, appropriate to the age of the pupils. During feedback sessions with the teachers pupils help set themselves suitable targets. Marking provides the pupils with regular feedback relating their specific targets and the success criteria of the lesson, linked to self and peer assessment. The implementation of half-termly feedback sessions has enhanced the pupils' learning to understand their areas for improvement. There are also examples of excellent teaching within the delivery of this subject.

There is a strong church element within religious education which underpins the spiritual life of the school and it is good to see the Holy Spirit having a place in the curriculum. The local vicar, curate and the Bishop's Visitor are an excellent resource for the subject and their role here and in several other areas of the school's life and community is highly valued.

The outdoor environment has been developed over the years and the foundation phase regularly use it to enhance teaching and learning across the curriculum. Plans are underway for developing a more effective use of the outdoor space for R.E. by providing a specific prayer area. All the governors, staff and the vicar are aware of the statutory requirements for Collective Worship, which are met in full.

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

The Head teacher has been in post since 2013. During this time her drive and tireless enthusiasm has been instrumental in ensuring that the school building has been renovated as well as restructuring curriculum delivery. It is clear that she considers her role to be part of her Christian ministry and calling. The Christian ethos of the school is effectively communicated and modelled throughout the school day to pupils, parents and visitors as well as to the local community, who all share this vision.

The church is very much part of school life and has very close links. During special times of the Christian year pupils take part and lead services in the church. The Head teacher and staff ensure that Collective Worship is planned, monitored, assessed and reviewed.

Religious Education as well as other aspects of the curriculum are informed by distinctive Christian values that contribute to learners' good behaviour and attitudes together with their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As one learner commented, "all the staff here help you to do the best that you can."

The leadership team share a common goal for the academic improvement and wellbeing of all the pupils. The ethos is one where pupils and staff feel secure and cared for. All the staff aim to give pupils the best education they can, spiritually and academically. The Governing Body as "critical friends" willingly give their time whenever possible to ensure pupils and staff are supported and guided. The governors are fully committed to the Christian values of the school.

The school fulfils all the statutory requirements for Collective Worship.

The school fulfils all the statutory requirements for Religious Education.

*The content of this report should be considered alongside the Estyn team's Section 28 report. I would like to thank the Estyn inspection team for their co operation. I would also like to thank the Headteacher, Staff, Governors and Pupils of St Mary's school for their welcome and cooperation.
Mr Gareth Williams M.Ed. and Mrs Fay Green BA QTS.*

Report under Section 50 of the Education Act 2005 Arolwg o dan Adran 50 o Ddeddf Addysg 2005

Parents' Questionnaire - Holiadur Rhieni

There were 71 responses - Yr oedd 71 ymateb

	YES / YDWYF	NO / NAC YDWYF	
Are you aware that this is a church school?	71		<i>A ydych yn ymwybodol mai Ysgol Eglwys yw hon?</i>
Do you believe that the school is a place which is built upon clear Christian values?	71		<i>A ydych o'r farn fod yr ysgol yn sefydliad sydd wedi ei adeiladu ar sylfaen Gristionogol glir?</i>
This is a Church School, that is a school with a Christian character. Was this fact important when you were choosing a school for your child/children?	66	5	<i>Ysgol Eglwys, sef ysgol gyda chymeriad Cristionogol, yw hon. A oedd y ffaith yma yn bwysig wrth I chi ddewis ysgol i'ch plentyn/plant?</i>

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
The school has a distinctive Christian character	43	24	4			Mae cymeriad Cristnogol nodedig yn perthyn i'r ysgol
The school's distinctive Christian character makes a significant contribution to pupils' education	43	20	7	1		<i>Mae cymeriad Cristionogol nodedig yn gwneud cyfraniad awyddocaol I addysg y disgyblion.</i>
Pupils find Collective Worship a valuable experience	40	24	7			Ym marn y disgyblion, mae'r addoli ar y cyd yn brofiad gwerthfawr
The school has effective links with the local church and other faith communities	55	16				Mae gan yr ysgol gysylltiadau effeithiol â'r eglwys leol a chymunedau ffydd eraill.
The school keeps parents well informed about the work that pupils do in Religious Education	45	17	7	1	1	Mae'r ysgol yn hysbysu'r rhieni yn dda am y gwaith a wna'r disgyblion mewn Addysg Grefyddol
The school encourages pupils to care for God's Creation(the environment) as well as for themselves	51	14	6			Mae'r ysgol yn hybu'r disgyblion i ofalu am Greadigaeth Duw (yr amgylchfed), yn ogystal â'n nhw eu hunain..
The school encourages pupils to consider people in other countries, and how they can assist them, when help is required	52	13	6			Mae'r ysgol yn hybu'r disgyblion i ystyried pobl mewn gwledydd eraill, a sut fedran nhw eu cynorthwyo pan bo angen.
The school ensures links are made with the local community	47	18	6			Mae gan yr ysgol gysylltiadau effeithiol â'r gymuned leol..
	Cytuno'n llwyr	Cytuno	Ynail na'r llall	Anghytuno	Anghytun o'n llwyr	