Ysgol LLanfachain
Church in Wales VC Primary School
Llanfachain
Powys
SY22 6UQ

Diocese: St Asaph
Local authority: Powys
Dates of inspection: 28th June 2016
Date of last inspection: 21st June 2010
School’s unique reference number: 6663000
Headteacher: Miss S. Chandler
Section 50 Inspector: Miss S Jesson

School context
Llanfachain Church in Wales School has 44 pupils in two classes from the local area, which is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. The school has superb well-maintained grounds, including an orchard, which are cared for by the pupils. All pupils come from homes where English is the main language, reflecting the linguistic nature of the community. Recent changes in leadership, including the absence of the vicar, have led to a delay in the implementation of some elements of the School Development Plan. At the time of Inspection, no children are withdrawn from Religious Education or worship. The school is working with families to promote a greater understanding of shared values to ensure inclusion.

Summary Judgement
The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ysgol Llanfachain as a Church in Wales Primary School are good.
Ysgol Llanfachain has a family atmosphere of shared values based on Jesus’ teaching. These values are promoted and shared with children, teachers, governors and all who use the school. This cohesive approach ensures the children are aware of what the values look like in their school and how Jesus’ message is brought to life every day. The classrooms have areas for children to access artefacts and texts to ensure they have time and space to reflect on the values and messages. Displays throughout the school reflect the school’s commitment to promoting and sharing these core values. The Christian commitment of leaders is shared with the children, enabling them to take part in society as thoughtful, rounded individuals, citizens of Wales and the wider world. Links with the local church are good and are continuing to develop and grow. The children are very proud of their school. They articulate their views on values such as respect and generosity and are able to discuss which value they feel the most valuable to Christians.

Established strengths and excellence
- The values of the school contribute to the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of all pupils. The children know the values and can talk about what they look like in action in this school.
- The school makes links between school worship and ‘Sunday worship in church’ which strengthen children’s understanding of Christianity as a living global faith.
- The leaders’ planned improvements to the school as a Church in Wales school show a clear direction for spiritual development and understanding.
- Innovative teaching of RE, including a creative focus on literacy, numeracy and digital competency.

Focus for development.
- Review Religious Education and Collective Worship policies to reflect the school’s work on Christian values.
- Further develop the teaching of RE, to show how different world faiths are relevant to Christian practice.
- Continue to develop the links with St Garmon’s Church and the wider Diocese to help ensure the children’s understanding of Christianity as a living faith.
- Ensure self-evaluation procedures reflect and evidence all the good work being done, particularly around the area of Christian Values.
- Develop the role of the children in evaluating collective worship.

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

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

‘Values’ are celebrated around school. The vibrant and reflective displays convey a consistent message throughout the school. The values of thankfulness, respect and generosity are seen by the children as a key part of being a member of the school. They acknowledge the work adults do for them and openly discuss what they can do for each other, reflecting Jesus’ work. Religious Education defines the distinctive Christian character within the school.

The curriculum offers children a variety of opportunities to extend their understanding of the Christian faith through planned and evaluated lessons. The inclusion of aspects of the gospels in Religious Education lessons strengthens the message of Jesus and links learning for younger children. There are numerous 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 children are encouraged to share their views and ideas about religion as a natural and embedded part of the RE lessons at Ysgol Llanfechain. In Key Stage 2 the children’s digital competency is stretched through the innovative teaching of Religious Education. Children are able to discuss and articulate what they feel are the key messages from Jesus’ teaching. The topics are thoroughly planned to cover aspects of the curriculum giving children a variety of experiences with a clear focus on literacy and numeracy.

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

Whole school worship begins with lighting candles and shared Anglican responses. The key elements of worship are a natural and embedded feature and the call to prayer is shared by all children. The children were engaged throughout worship, being challenged and encouraged to share their thoughts on values and to express their spirituality. Themes for worship follow a set routine including Anglican responses and liturgy. Following a review, the gospels have a more central part in worship, both whole school and class worship. The children were active participants during the worship through prayer and prayer responses showing familiarity with the Anglican liturgy used during the worship. Staff and clergy are involved in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship with involvement from the vicar. Leaders of worship understand the importance of a consistent approach and that this includes reference to Christian values wherever possible. The school has an ‘open worship’ for parents and members of the community at least each half term which is well supported. The children are involved in planning and delivery, under the guidance of the vicar, understanding the importance of sharing the worship as Christians, not only performing. The school meets the statutory requirements for Collective Worship.

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

The leadership and management of Ysgol Llanfechain has recently undergone change with a clear focus on maintaining the standards and values of which the school is proud. Governors and the school team strive to ensure children are cared for as they would their own family,
reflecting Jesus’ mission to ‘love one another’. Staff are confident in their roles and responsibilities concerning RE and worship, discussing ways forward with concrete plans and evidence which shows the prospects for improvement are very good. The school’s link with the local church is strong and continues to develop. The whole school curriculum is underpinned by a distinctive Christian vision and values. The whole school community contributes fully to school life, which has a clear and distinctive impact on children’s well-being.

The work of the Religious Education and Collective Worship coordinator is thorough and well-planned, showing a well-thought-out and manageable plan for improvement. Leaders are not only aware of, but embrace their duty to the children of Llanfechain and their development as spiritual individuals.

**Prospects for Improvement**

Ysgol Llanfechain has an effective governing body who are working with the school’s leaders to maintain high standards and move the school on as a valuable asset to the Diocese. The school has strong links with the other church schools in the area, sharing a headteacher, and supporting each other. The prospects are therefore very good that the school will maintain standards and there are areas which can be outstanding given time. The impact of worship and the children’s understanding of their duty as Christians through the work on values can be outstanding in future if proposed developments are made.

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