



YR EGLWYS
YNG NGHYMRU



THE CHURCH
IN WALES

Gwella Inspection of Church in Wales Schools Report

Borderbrook Voluntary Controlled School,
Talwrn Green,
SY147LJ

Local authority: Wrexham

Dates of inspection: 27th and 28th November 2017

Date of last inspection: 2010

School's unique reference number: 6653054

Acting Headteacher: Mrs Fay Green. B.A. Q.T.S.

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



School context

Borderbrook is a Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled school. The school is located in a rural area, in the village of Talwrn Green near Malpas. The school provides education for boys and girls between 3-11 years of age. The school has 25 pupils on roll including 4 part-time nursery children. 8% of the pupils currently have the right to free school meals. 8% of pupils are on the Additional Learning Needs register, which includes 2 pupils on School Action plus. There are no families with Welsh as their first language. All the pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. Currently there are no pupils with EAL. Currently 8% of families take their entitlement for Free School Meals. Attendance has been consistently high over the last 3 years. The Headteacher was appointed in April 2012 and appointed to the Federation in January 2016, she shares her time equally between Borderbrook School and St. Paul's Voluntary Aided Primary School. At present no child has been exempted from Religious Education or Collective Worship.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Borderbrook School as a Church in Wales school are good.

Borderbrook incorporates its church school status naturally into all aspects of school life, enjoying very good links with the church and the community it serves. There is a strong ethos of love and care within the school. The children appreciate and enjoy their membership of the school. The Reverend Clive Hughes, Mrs Hughes and Reverend Weir visit the school regularly to celebrate services and give advice on religious issues. Ms Elisabeth Aslin, the Bishop's Visitor, is also a supportive member of the school team. Pupils are curious when questioning and reflecting on the world in which they live, spiritual issues and moral challenges. They have many opportunities to contribute to their learning environment and the wider world. All this is done through reflection and appreciation of the world God has created.

Established strengths

- The excellent behaviour, and attitude of the children.
- The excellent moral development of the children.
- The children of Borderbrook are well supported by all adults to secure their full potential.
- The high standard of Collective Worship
- The good use that is made of I.C.T. to support Religious Education and Collective Worship.

Focus for development

- Moderation of R.E work in conjunction with other church schools.
- To continue to develop best practice by working with identified schools beyond the cluster.
- In response to current world events, for pupils to understand that Christian values are shared between other faiths.
- To further develop pupil's wellbeing, following on from the Faith project.

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.

The contribution of Religious Education to the Christian Character of the school is good.

Once you cross the threshold of Borderbrook school you are immediately aware of its special Christian character, which lies at the heart of all its work. The school's Christian character guarantees a solid foundation for the personal, academic and spiritual wellbeing of all pupils. The children display a positive approach to learning which is reflected in the standards achieved. Pupils achieve in-line, and in some areas out-perform, when compared with the family, LA and Wales. Pupils monitor and evaluate their progress against outcomes. Early identification, intervention and liaison with specialist agencies ensure that the children reach expected levels of progress, particularly those who are vulnerable. Pupils' attendance is consistently well above the LA and Wales target.

An extremely well-developed interpretation of spirituality is shared across the school. The local Rector and other clergy are invited to the school to lead Collective Worship, making a good contribution to the spiritual development of pupils. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect quietly and to contribute confidently in the Collective Worship sessions, by using their own prayers and sharing experiences. All school staff lead by example and place an appropriate emphasis on the moral development of each child in the school.

Pupils show respect for a variety of beliefs, attitudes and other cultural and social traditions, and have a good understanding of equal opportunities and fairness. This is achieved by raising pupils' awareness of what is acceptable and unacceptable, and by promoting strong values, emphasizing respect, honesty and courtesy towards others. The school empowers all children to make decisions for themselves and to take responsibility for preparing them to become the citizens of the future.

Relationships with parents are excellent and well established. The school has an open-door policy. Regular opportunities for parents to come into school are offered, including termly open days and information events; such as phonic teaching sessions. Focused meetings with teachers are offered each term. An active PTA provide a range of social and fundraising opportunities

Pupils and staff are said to show mutual respect for each other and have a positive impact on pupils relationships with each other as well. Governors are involved in school life and many have participated in Learning Walks and/or Back to School Days to experience the school life for themselves. Equally, members of the School Council and Super Ambassadors have spoken about their work to the Governing Body.

The school is said to have an ethos of celebrating diversity and different cultures. Global study is planned for and explored in Super Learner Week. Pupils acquire a good level of understanding of other major faiths such as Judaism and Islam while developing respect for the beliefs of others.

Pupils have a good understanding of the church/chapel at local level, due to the close links that exist with Peters Memorial Chapel. The Chapel is used as a place for special celebrations and also as an educational resource for some teaching in RE, history, geography art, etc. Pupil voice is described as strong and pupils discuss the charity that they wish us to support.

In the Autumn term of 2016, Governors supported parental requests for R.E. to be taught using the Church in Wales syllabus. The school has moved forward with its curriculum planning, ensuring the long term scheme of work was fully representative of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework. Using a variety of teaching and learning styles staff strive to ensure that all pupils are engaged in R.E. lessons and that expectations within RE are as high as for other subjects.

R.E. lessons are delivered as part of a regular weekly timetable. The time allocation meets the statutory requirements. Provision is monitored by the Headteacher who is Subject Co-ordinator. The RE Link Governor and Bishop's Visitor monitor RE and Collective Worship across the school.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.

Collective Worship at Borderbrook school is a special time for all. It is distinctively Christian and central to the life of the school community. There is daily whole school worship. This provides an opportunity for pupils to come together as a Christian family within the school, to hear Bible stories and stories with Christian values, which enable them to develop an understanding of spirituality.

The worship space is defined by a Christian focal point, including an altar dressed in liturgical colours, a cross and the Bible. A candle is lit to signify the presence of God at the start of worship. At the close of worship, the candle is extinguished and children leave to the chosen music. Each act of worship includes the Lord's Prayer and Anglican Responses, The Grace, an appropriate Hymn (English/Welsh).

Children take turns to lead Wednesday Worship for the whole school. Planning, delivering and evaluating Wednesday Worship is seen as important in Borderbrook school. A template gives the structure and pupils are taught the relevance and discuss the purpose and moral of the content.

The Christian ethos of the school is reflected in signage, symbols and displays of children's work throughout the school, both indoors and out. Children have worked recently with a local artist to design and paint a prominent mural which depicts the Christian values at the heart of the school. The "Buddies" system on the yard is a good example of these values in action.

Reverend Clive Hughes, Mrs Hughes and Reverend Weir visit school regularly to lead Collective Worship. This is a powerful link with the church community. All the school community have a good understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Children really enjoy these visits and show affection and respect for their spiritual leaders.

Collective Worship teaches pupils to model their behaviour on Christian values and teachings from Biblical stories, and to relate these to everyday life. Whilst acts of worship are rooted in the Christian faith, celebrations of other cultures and faiths are also included. Parents are encouraged to reinforce Christian Values at home and take part in any home-school activities.

Collective Worship is a time to reflect upon God's teachings and a key time for pupils to communicate their thoughts and prayers in a focused special time. A candle is lit to signify the presence of God at the beginning of Collective Worship and extinguished at the end. A Bible, a cross and a candle are placed upon the altar to signify the beginning of worship. The children understand that this symbolises the Trinity. Pupils take turns to compose and share a prayer for the world, which is saved in the Prayer For the World book.

All staff, governors and the clergy are aware of the statutory requirements for Collective Worship. These are met in full. The school allocates fifteen minutes daily for Collective Worship. The Headteacher is RE Subject Coordinator and the named person with responsibility for Collective Worship. The parents' legal rights are clearly outlined in the school prospectus, which states that they have the right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship.

The Headteacher/R.E. Subject Coordinator has responsibility for ensuring Collective Worship follows the School's policies and that it is reviewed regularly. As RE Subject Coordinator, the Headteacher has the responsibility for ensuring staff have the opportunity to attend relevant training offered by the Diocese. In recent years, staff have attended whole staff INSET with the Diocese, Prayer Spaces, Creative Collective Worship. The cascading of information is an important part of sharing good practice with non-attendees.

The Roots and Fruits scheme and "Out of the Box" is said to ensure that collective worship is planned systematically so that there is continuity and variety – there being a very clear focus on Christian Values, beliefs and festivals.

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

The Headteacher who has been in post for five years has successfully ensured that the school's Christian ethos is conveyed and modelled throughout the day for pupils, parents and visitors. It is evident that she considers her role to be part of her Christian ministry and calling. The Governors, including Foundation Governors, support the school's Christian character and take part in the strategic planning process, thereby ensuring that the school provides the best education for its pupils. The Headteacher, staff and pupils have composed a new Federation values statement, vision and prayer. The school's mission statement and vision is underpinned by Christian principles and is clearly highlighted around the school. The school's website, App and prospectus are used to promote that Christian ethos.

The school, the church, diocese and chapel maintain close links. Pupils lead community services every half term and whole school performances linked to the Christian calendar take place termly. R.E. work is displayed in chapel throughout the year. Senior education staff from St. Asaph Diocese have attended Governor's meetings as part of the Governors' work to support the development of its church school status.

The Church Committee has delegated responsibilities; it meets twice each year and reports its minutes to the full Governing Body. R.E. lessons are observed and evaluated in the same way as all other core subjects, in-line with the school monitoring process. The Link Governor visits school to share in Collective Worship and undertake learning walks. Policies for RE, Collective Worship and Spirituality are reviewed annually.

The Reverend Clive Hughes and the Reverend Weir (Methodist Minister) visit school fortnightly to deliver Collective Worship and offer support and pastoral care to the school. Their lively worship is always interactive and very much enjoyed by all pupils. Half termly visits from the Bishop's Visitor has clear focus and direction and are already having a positive impact on standards and developments within the school. R.E. lessons are monitored by the Headteacher, the Subject Coordinator, in line with the school's monitoring cycle of improvement. The Church in Wales scheme of work is utilised and has been adapted recently to include the Understanding Christianity resource.

The Governing Body has a wide skill set, as a critical friend to the Headteacher, challenging, monitoring and evaluating performance. Governors undertake learning walks, attend a 'Back to school day' bi-annually and are invited to have lunch with the children termly. The Governing Body has achieved the Governors' Quality Mark and is now undertaking the Governors Wales Self Evaluation 2017. All staff and governors attend relevant training. The Headteacher has established and leads a cluster Church Schools PLC aimed at developing identified priorities. The Headteacher has trained as a Section 50 and Estyn Peer Inspector. A member of the SLT has commenced the NPQH qualification in 2017.

The school recognises the close partnership it has with parents in supporting and developing children. Parents' Forum meetings are planned termly in which parents are encouraged to share and discuss any worries and concerns they may have. Parents attend termly pupil target setting meetings, an annual report meeting with the class teacher and open days throughout the year.

The school Playgroup supports efforts to grow the school and aids the transition of pupils into the Foundation Phase class. Shared practices demonstrate this commitment to working closely for example, playgroup (and After School Club) pupils say a short prayer before having their snack, lunch and home time, mirroring the practice in Foundation Phase. The school PTA is well supported and raises significant funds, including national curriculum learning, for example a 0.1 music teacher, transport to swimming sessions and transports to inter school sports venues.

The school fulfils all the statutory requirements for Collective Worship.

*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 cooperation. We would also like to thank the Headteacher, Staff, Governors and Pupils of Borderbrook for their welcome and cooperation.
Mr Gareth Williams M.Ed.*

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

Parents' Questionnaire - Holiadur Rhieni

There were 14 responses - Yr oedd 14 ymateb

	YES / YDWYF	NO / NAC YDWYF	
Are you aware that this is a church school?	13	1	<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?	13	1	<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?	6	8	<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	7	4	2	1		Mae cymeriad Cristnogol nodedig yn perthyn i'r ysgol
The school's distinctive Christian character makes a significant contribution to pupils' education	5	5	2		2	<i>Mae cymeriad Cristionogol nodedig yn gwneud cyfraniad awyddocaol I addysg y disgyblion.</i>
Pupils find Collective Worship a valuable experience	8	2	3	1		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	11	3				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	6	6			2	Mae'r ysgol yn hysbysu'r rhieni yn dda am y gwaith a wna'r disgyblon mewn Addysg Grefyddol
The school encourages pupils to care for God's Creation(the environment) as well as for themselves	10	2	1	1		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	10	2	2			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	12	1	1			Mae gan yr ysgol gysylltiadau effeithiol â'r gymuned leol..
	Cytuno'n llwyr	Cytuno	Ynail na'r llall	Anghytuno	Anghytun o'n llwyr	