Section 50 Inspection of Church in Wales Schools Report Proforma

Blaenavon Heritage Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Blaenavon Community Campus
Middle Coed Cae Road
Blaenavon
NP4 9AW
Diocese: Monmouth
Local authority: Torfaen County Borough Council
Dates of inspection: 13th October 2026
Date of last inspection: March 2014
School's unique reference number: 678/3028
Headteacher: Mrs Anna Britten
Inspector's name and number: Sarah Brian & Carl Fitter

School context

Blaenavon Heritage Voluntary Controlled Primary School, opened in 2012 following an amalgamation of other schools. It has a strong Christian ethos with a rich Welsh cultural heritage. This English medium school is set within the Diocese of Monmouth with 400 pupils on roll, including nursery.

The school is organised into 14 classes, a nursery class, and a nurture provision. In addition to the Headteacher, there are 14 full-time teachers and 3 part-time teachers. The school employs 15 full-time and 6 part-time teaching assistants.

1.8% of learners speak English as an additional language. Among learners of statutory school age, 32% are eligible for free school meals. The school is an inclusive learning environment with 5.3% of learners identified as having Additional Learning Needs.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary as a Church in Wales school

"Opening the door to your future with God all things are possible"

Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary School has a distinctive Christian ethos lived out by all. It has fostered an incredibly strong community feel within the school with all being valued, included and welcomed.

Learners demonstrate a strong sense of belonging, feel valued, listened to and report having caring and loving adults who work hard to take good care of them.

Consequently, behaviour is of a very high standard across all year groups with respect and kindness shown to all.

Opportunities for personal and spiritual development are wide and varied including membership of different teams and groups such as School Council, Eco Group, Worship Team, Heddlu Bach, Digi Leaders and Criw Cymraeg. The well organised curriculum supports learners to build a sense of identity, Cynefin and understanding of the world around them.

Worship is central to the life of the school, highly valued by all and sees learners benefitting from a range of leaders including visitors from different churches and faith groups.

The school works well with other learning organisations in the wider development of RVE and has taken leadership on a local authority RVE exhibition.

Professional learning is given a high priority in developing the school and members of staff greatly benefit from a range of Christian focussed opportunities.

Strong leadership drives the school forward with clear processes for reviewing and evaluating actions, which means that the school is highly effective as a church school.

Established strengths

This is a very well-led, calm, happy, caring and inclusive school with highly positive relationships between all.

A strong sense of Cynefin is obvious with learners, staff and governors reporting a feeling of belonging and being included in all aspects of school life.

Children show respect and exemplary behaviour, living out the school's values day by day.

The creative use of the 'I Sing Pop' resource to motivate learners and build engagement with worship is clearly embedded and currently being developed further.

Recommendations

- The school now needs to provide learners with the opportunity to consistently plan, lead and then monitor and evaluate collective worship.
- The school also needs to further strengthen relationships with the local Church in Wales Church and other local church and community groups.

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

Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary School has established a strong and distinctive Christian vision that permeates all aspects of school life and is understood and embraced by the whole school community. This vision makes a significant contribution to the creation of a safe, inclusive and stimulating learning environment, which supports the wellbeing of both learners and staff effectively. As a result, learners demonstrate exemplary standards of behaviour and conduct themselves with respect, compassion and consideration for others.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on developing positive values, attitudes and a sense of belonging. Consequently, learners demonstrate high levels of pride in their school and local community and have a well-developed understanding of their identity and Cynefin. They speak confidently about their place within the community and the contributions they can make to it.

A notable strength of the school is its nurturing family ethos, where relationships are characterised by mutual respect, trust and care. The school prioritises the wellbeing of all stakeholders and invests thoughtfully in both staff and resources to ensure that learners' diverse needs are met effectively. As a result, learners feel valued, supported and empowered to achieve their full potential. The school's vision, *'With God all things are possible'*, successfully promotes aspiration, resilience and a positive attitude towards learning and personal development.

Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to creating environments that support learners' social and emotional wellbeing. For example, adaptations to the organisation of lunchtime arrangements have increased opportunities for purposeful social interaction and contributed positively to learners' wellbeing.

The school provides a wide range of meaningful leadership opportunities that enable learners to contribute actively to school life. Through groups such as the Worship Team, Eco Group, Criw Cymraeg, School Council, Heddlu Bach and Digi Leaders, learners develop leadership skills, take responsibility for decision-making and demonstrate increasing independence and accountability.

The school's Christian vision is particularly evident in learners' engagement with social action and service. Learners participate enthusiastically in a broad range of charitable and community initiatives and are encouraged to identify and respond to the needs of others. They demonstrate a growing understanding of social responsibility through activities such as fundraising, environmental projects and support for local and national charities. Furthermore, the school responds sensitively to the needs of individuals and families within the community through discreet and compassionate support. For example, ensuring spare uniform is available to families in need.

Learners engage positively with a broad and relevant curriculum that captures their interest and supports their personal development well. Learning experiences provide valuable opportunities for learners to develop an appreciation of the natural world and an understanding of their responsibilities as stewards of God’s creation.

Prayer and reflection are deeply embedded within the daily life of the school. Learners engage purposefully with well-considered opportunities for spiritual

development through dedicated reflective spaces as well as prayer points throughout each day. These experiences enable learners to reflect thoughtfully on their beliefs, values and actions and contribute significantly to the school's inclusive Christian character.

The impact of collective worship on the school community

Collective worship is an integral and highly valued part of school life, making a significant contribution to the school's distinctive Christian character and ethos. Worship is carefully planned through the use of 'I Sing Pop' to provide enjoyable, engaging and meaningful experiences for learners, enabling them to reflect on Christian values and consider how these relate to their own lives, relationships with others and the wider world. Collective worship provides regular opportunities for learners and staff to come together as a school community, creating a strong sense of belonging, shared purpose and identity.

Themes for collective worship are carefully selected and effectively linked to the school's Christian values, the Christian Calendar, biblical teachings, and the school's overall ethos and vision. Worship reflects the seasons of the Church year, providing meaningful opportunities for learners to deepen their understanding of significant Christian celebrations, traditions and practices. For example, gathering produce for Harvest with links to giving thanks. Bible stories and teachings are used purposefully to explore Christian beliefs and values, helping learners to understand how these can guide their choices, attitudes and actions. Worship also responds thoughtfully to current events and contemporary issues, encouraging learners to consider the relevance of Christian values in today's world. Through these authentic experiences, learners are supported in developing their spirituality, empathy and compassion, while strengthening their understanding of their responsibilities towards others and the wider community.

Worship is invitational in nature, ensuring that all learners and adults are welcomed and able to participate in ways that are appropriate and meaningful to them. Opportunities for prayer, reflection, music, story and response encourage learners to engage thoughtfully, while respecting individual beliefs and experiences. This inclusive approach enables collective worship to contribute positively to learners' personal, spiritual, moral and social development.

The school values the involvement of others in enriching collective worship by inviting members of the clergy and other speakers to lead worship. This helps learners recognise that the school is part of a wider Christian community and strengthens their understanding of the role of the Church within school and community life. The celebration of the school Eucharist is a particularly significant aspect of this provision. It provides learners with an authentic experience of worship within the Church in Wales tradition and strengthens links between the school, the Church and the wider Christian community. The inclusive nature of the service ensures that learners have meaningful opportunities to participate and play an active role in the celebration, fostering a sense of belonging and shared responsibility.

Collective worship is evaluated and reviewed annually by the RVE leader to ensure that it remains relevant, engaging and impactful. This process enables the school to reflect on the quality and effectiveness of its provision, identify strengths and establish priorities for ongoing development. As a result of this reflective practice, the collective worship timetable has been adapted to provide purposeful opportunities to revisit, deepen and build upon previously explored themes. The school recognises the importance of ensuring that the themes, Christian values and opportunities for spiritual reflection introduced through collective worship extend beyond worship itself and are embedded within learners' wider learning and everyday experiences. For example, themes explored during collective worship have been interwoven into the RVE curriculum, enabling learners to make meaningful connections between worship, biblical teachings and their learning.
As part of its ongoing development, the school has identified the need to develop greater opportunities for learners to contribute to the planning, preparation and leadership of collective worship.

The effectiveness of the leadership of the school as a church school

The school benefits from highly effective leadership provided by the headteacher, supported by a skilled and committed senior leadership team. Leaders lead by example and consistently model the school's Christian values and principles through their actions, relationships and decision-making. As a result, the school's distinctive Christian vision is clearly evident in all aspects of school life and is understood and embraced by the wider school community.

Senior leaders, working closely with a knowledgeable and supportive governing body, provide a clear strategic direction for the school. They maintain an unwavering focus on securing the best possible outcomes for all learners and ensure that decision-making is firmly rooted in meeting the needs and aspirations of the school community.

Leaders have successfully established a highly inclusive and supportive culture where all members of the school community feel a strong sense of belonging. The school's ethos encourages learners and staff to embrace challenge, develop resilience and achieve success. This is underpinned by a deeply embedded commitment to ensuring that every individual is valued and supported to flourish.

Inclusion is a significant strength of the school. Leaders demonstrate an uncompromising commitment to recognising, understanding and responding to the diverse needs of learners and their families. They create a culture in which achievement is celebrated, barriers to learning are addressed swiftly and sensitively, and challenging circumstances are met with optimism, compassion and determination. Consequently, learners benefit from a nurturing environment where they feel safe, supported and able to succeed.

The school maintains positive relationships with local churches and wider community organisations, reflecting its commitment to partnership and service. Leaders recognise the value of these relationships and are actively seeking to strengthen community engagement further. Recent developments include plans to enhance collaboration with the local Church in Wales community following the

appointment of a new Ministry Area Leader. These initiatives demonstrate the school's commitment to deepening its Christian distinctiveness and broadening opportunities for learners.

The effective use of a Church School Trust Fund illustrates leaders' commitment to enriching learners' experiences. Funding has been utilised to provide older learners with access to high-quality physical activity opportunities that they may not otherwise encounter, such as dinghy sailing. These experiences contribute positively to learners' confidence, wellbeing and personal development while broadening their aspirations for the future.

Leaders place a high priority on professional learning and recognise its importance in sustaining school improvement. They actively seek opportunities that support both professional practice and spiritual development. For example, the school recently organised a professional development day led by a Christian keynote speaker, which staff report had a significant impact on their personal wellbeing, motivation and professional reflection. In line with the school's vision of *'Opening the Door to Your Future'*, leaders ensure equitable access to professional learning opportunities and implement effective systems for sharing best practice across the staff team, maximising the impact of training and development activities.

The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities effectively and makes a valuable contribution to the life and work of the school. Governors possess a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and provide an appropriate balance of support and challenge to school leaders. Through regular engagement with school activities and development priorities, they have a well-informed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. Their active involvement contributes positively to school improvement and reinforces a culture of accountability and continuous development.

Spotlight

Sharing the vision

Digital resources and facilities are used to great effect to support worship and learning. High quality media clips are used to share ideas and messages which are used effectively across the school and beyond. Learners demonstrate strong collaboration to create scripts around themes relating to learning and aspects of worship which are then recorded to a high quality before being published for various audiences.

The school meets the statutory requirement for collective acts of worship	**Yes**
Religion, values and ethics is objective, critical and pluralistic	**Yes**