



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**  
**Gelliswick Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary**  
**School**  
**Gelliswick Road**  
**Hakin**  
**Milford Haven**  
**Pembrokeshire**  
**SA73 3RS**

**Date of inspection: January 2019**

**by**

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education  
and Training in Wales**

## About Gelliswick Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Gelliswick Church In Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School is in the village of Hakin near Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire local authority. It is an amalgamation of Hakin Community Primary School and Hubberston VC Primary School. The schools amalgamated on the 1st of September 2017.

There are 549 pupils on roll aged 3-11 years including 24 full-time and 60 part-time pupils in the nursery class. The school has 19 classes, including the nursery, nurture class and two additional learning resource centres.

The average proportion of pupils for free school meals over the last three years is approximately 26%. This is above the average for Wales of 18%. The school has identified 24% of pupils as having additional learning needs, which is above the national average of 21%. A very few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Most pupils are of white British ethnicity and come from homes where English is the main language. Very few pupils speak Welsh at home.

This is the new school's first inspection since amalgamation. The headteacher took up his post in September 2017.

Estyn does not inspect religious education or the religious content of collective worship when it is a school with a religious character. Instead, the governing body is required by law to arrange for religious education and collective worship to be inspected separately.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.  
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

## Summary

In a relatively short period, leaders and staff at Gelliswick Primary School have created a calm and purposeful ethos, where most pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils display good behaviour, have positive attitudes to learning and show high levels of care and consideration towards each other and adults. The school's support for pupils attending the learning resource centres and nurture classes is strong, enabling them to make good progress in developing their social, emotional and communication skills.

Teachers develop positive working relationships with pupils that support and encourage them to succeed. Senior leaders have led the process of amalgamation of the previous two schools very successfully. As a result, pupils, staff and parents feel a strong sense of pride and ownership in their new school.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Provide pupils with an engaging broad and balanced curriculum
- R2 Provide pupils with greater choice in what and how they learn
- R3 Give pupils more opportunities to develop as independent learners

## **What happens next**

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

The majority of pupils enter the school with skills at the expected level. Throughout the school, most pupils make good progress in improving their literacy and numeracy skills. Nearly all pupils in the school's learning resource centres make good progress in relation to their individual starting points.

Many pupils improve their oracy skills well in the foundation phase. In reception, pupils act out the story of Little Red Riding Hood talking confidently in role as different characters. In key stage 2, the majority of pupils develop as articulate, confident speakers who enjoy sharing their opinions. For example, Year 6 pupils give mature, balanced arguments for and against fox hunting. Throughout the school, most pupils listen well when others are talking. Many pupils improve their Welsh oracy skills well, for example younger pupils enjoy singing songs and greet each other confidently. In key stage 2, many pupils use an appropriate range of sentence patterns to hold simple dialogues about themselves and familiar situations. However, pupils do not use their Welsh oracy skills outside of Welsh lessons regularly.

Across the school, many pupils develop positive attitudes towards reading. In reception, they begin to read simple texts by using their knowledge of letter sounds. In Year 2, many pupils speak enthusiastically about characters in books and use picture cues appropriately to make sensible predictions about what might happen next. More able readers do so with good pace and understanding. In key stage 2, many pupils develop as self-assured, fluent readers. They use their reading skills well to support their learning in other subjects. For example, Year 5 pupils skim texts quickly to extract information on how the police use fingerprints to catch criminals. Many pupils express preferences for different types of books and favourite authors. More able pupils use higher order skills such as skimming, scanning and inference confidently. Many pupils read their own work and familiar Welsh texts confidently and with accurate pronunciation and understanding.

When they enter the foundation phase, most pupils improve their writing skills quickly. In reception they begin to write in short sentences, for example to describe a wolf. By Year 2, the majority of pupils spell common words correctly and write in sentences using capital letters and full stops. Pupils that are more able show a growing awareness of the audience for their writing. For example, in their bonfire poems, they engage the reader effectively by using phrases such as 'the crescent moon and fireworks with hesitating crackles'. In key stage 2, pupils write regularly for a wide range of purposes. Most have a secure understanding of the features of different genres of writing. For example, Year 6 pupils write mature balanced arguments on whether schools should cancel break times. Most pupils use punctuation appropriately and spell many more complex words correctly. Pupils that are more able, in particular, use a wide range of exciting and imaginative language to add interest to their work. Many pupils present their work carefully and write using neat cursive script.

Pupils use their writing skills very well to support their learning in other curriculum areas. For example, Year 4 pupils write accurate fact files on different jobs in mediaeval castles. Across the school, pupils write in Welsh regularly. Year 2 pupils write about a trip to space using the past tense, while, in Year 6, pupils write well-constructed pieces of writing about themselves and famous people.

As they move through the school, nearly all pupils improve their mathematical skills well. In the foundation phase, most pupils learn and understand how numbers work. In nursery they find, read and record numbers to five. By Year 2, many add two digit numbers correctly and add the cost of two articles and give the correct change from a pound. In key stage 2, most pupils develop a secure understanding of number and place value. For example, Year 3 pupils use knowledge of temperature to record, compare and order the temperature in different parts of the school. By upper key stage 2, many pupils use a wide range of mathematical skills competently to help them solve multi-step problems such as finding the perimeter and area of regular and compound shapes or calculating the surface area of hollow tubes.

Pupils use their numeracy skills regularly in meaningful contexts in other subjects. In Year 2, pupils make sensible predictions on the length of time ice cubes take to melt in different situations and use a range of graphs and tables to represent data. Year 4 pupils accurately solve word problems using facts about the Tour de France whilst in Year 6, use percentages to calculate and compare coastal erosion around the United Kingdom in their science work.

In the foundation phase, pupils use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills suitably across the curriculum. For example, many Year 2 pupils access online platforms confidently to produce eye catching pictures and graphs, which they save and retrieve independently. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils present information accurately using different ICT programs. For example, Year 6 pupils create and interrogate a database on 'Fantastic Beasts' and write interesting fact sheets on Robert Peel. However, overall, most pupils do not develop and use a full range of ICT skills well enough.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good**

Nearly all pupils feel safe and secure in school and are confident that staff will deal with any problems promptly and fairly. Most pupils understand the importance of staying safe online and know what to do if they are worried. Pupils look after each other and care for each other well in school. For example, older pupils who are buddies, provide friendship and support for their younger peers during lunchtime and arrange games for them. Pupils who choose to become members of the school anti-bullying group have a positive impact on maintaining good behaviour outside their classes.

Throughout the school, nearly all pupils' behaviour in class is good or better. They are tolerant, polite, caring and respectful towards each other and adults. This creates a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which to work and promotes positive attitudes to learning. Pupils welcome visitors to the school confidently and are eager to talk about and show their appreciation for their new environment and the opportunities that it offers.

Most pupils are confident, capable and resilient learners. When talking about their work, pupils are enthusiastic and keen to share their ideas and opinions. Pupils work well together as learning partners. This approach encourages older pupils to learn from one other and to develop the skills of co-operation and independence particularly when solving challenging mathematical problems. However, across the school, pupils have a limited involvement in shaping their own learning by contributing their ideas and interests at the start of new topics.

Most pupils understand the need to eat and drink healthily, although a minority do not adhere to the school policy. Most understand the need to take regular exercise for example in running 'the weekly mile'. Many pupils improve their fitness by using equipment available at playtimes and by attending after-school sports clubs.

Members of the different pupil voice committees represent all pupils' views well and make a positive contribution to school improvement. For example, the school council arranged fundraising activities in order to buy resources for playtimes. This has had a positive effect on pupils' behaviour and their enjoyment outside.

Many pupils respond positively to the school's keen focus on improving attendance, and they understand the importance of attending school regularly. Most are punctual at the start of the school day and arrive at school ready to begin their learning.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement**

Nearly all staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They establish good working relationships with pupils and create a calm and respectful environment for learning. A committed team of support staff contributes purposefully to the work of teachers in classes and in specific intervention groups.

Teachers plan together appropriately so that pupils' experiences are consistent across year groups. However, there is no consistent approach to planning across the whole school to ensure that staff teach all areas of the curriculum frequently enough. For example, many classes do not always teach music regularly.

In most classes, teachers set clear objectives and plan a range of activities that build on prior knowledge. They plan effectively for pupils to write in a range of genres across the curriculum and provide plentiful opportunities for them to write at length. Most teachers support pupils that are more able to extend their writing well, for example by considering stereotypes in a retelling of The Paper Bag Princess. They use questioning effectively in order to assess pupils' understanding. However, many adults over-direct activities and this hampers pupils' ability to become independent learners and to work collaboratively.

Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to assess their own and each other's work. Teachers and pupils discuss success criteria in order to consider what pupils need to do to improve. Most teachers give pupils purposeful feedback about how well they are doing during activities and provide useful reminders to keep their learning on track. This helps pupils to complete tasks successfully and to improve aspects of their work.

Foundation phase teachers manage their indoor environment well and provide appropriate experiences for pupils through focused tasks. These activities stimulate pupils' oracy skills appropriately, for example when they describe the texture of the fruit in Grandma's fruit salad and which materials are best for keeping you dry in wet weather. Teachers' use of the outdoors is at an early stage of development. Adults direct most activities and do not always ensure that pupils have worthwhile opportunities to solve problems or to make independent choices in learning areas. As a result, the school has yet to establish all the principles of the foundation phase well enough.

Teachers in key stage 2 provide a curriculum that provides beneficial opportunities for most pupils to develop high-quality literacy and numeracy skills. 'Working walls' provide useful prompts, scaffolds and examples of prior learning, which pupils refer to, to help them in their tasks. Pupils in upper key stage 2 enjoyed choosing the theme 'Crime and Punishment' from a small selection of options available to them. However, overall there are too few opportunities for pupils to make decisions about what and how they learn.

A useful scheme of work to support the development of ICT helps staff to identify relevant contexts for pupils to apply a growing range of skills. Older pupils create presentations on the World Cup and use green screens to practise and record their Welsh language skills. However, opportunities for pupils to use ICT regularly to support their learning in lessons are limited.

Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills well in lessons. They develop their understanding of the culture and history of Wales and important links to their local area successfully by using a range of visitors, educational trips and activities to make the most of the local area. Foundation phase pupils visit Tenby museum and lifeboat station. Year 5 pupils visit Haverfordwest riverside market to sell the products they make during an enterprise week. The school is beginning to develop appropriate opportunities to learn about their locality, and the history and culture of Wales. For example, foundation phase pupils celebrate Laura Ashley's influence on design and, in key stage 2, pupils complete reports about famous Welsh people.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The school is a caring environment that develops pupils' personal and social skills well. Staff have worked hard to create a calm, inclusive atmosphere that is welcoming for pupils and parents. All staff and pupils show a high level of care and respect for each other. This is seen during lessons and other activities throughout the school day.

Senior leaders have established a comprehensive system to track pupil progress across the school. They hold regular pupil progress meetings with teachers that help to identify accurately pupils who would benefit from focused interventions to improve their literacy or numeracy skills. Staff track pupils' progress diligently to establish their progress when receiving specific interventions.

Staff make sure that learners have access to a wide range of well planned, timely interventions to support their wellbeing. These interventions support pupils' social and emotional needs effectively. The school uses creative resources such as

therapeutic sunshine sessions and visits to an alternative curriculum provider. Here, pupils work in their own garden and learn a variety of skills such as woodwork and bush craft to support their wellbeing.

The additional learning needs co-ordinator, alongside teachers, agree clear improvement targets for individual education plans and review them regularly. The additional learning needs co-ordinator keeps parents informed of their child's progress well through drop in sessions and consultation evenings. The school works creatively with partner schools to develop screening tools for pupil wellbeing. Staff use data well and help to signpost useful support and resources for parents of pupils with additional needs.

Leaders track pupils' attendance rigorously and produce effective evaluations of the attendance rates of all pupils. They evaluate the impact of strategies such as the use of the school's family liaison officer on raising levels of pupils' attendance. There are encouraging rewards for good attendance that pupils and parents value. The school, in partnership with parents, use personal support plans effectively to reduce the risk of pupil exclusions.

Parents and governors worked together effectively to develop a strong set of values that promote a culture of respect and tolerance. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the values and explain how they demonstrate them in and out of school. For example, pupils foster the values of fairness and compassion through supporting local charities that provide food and support for vulnerable families. The school also supports children in need and pupils recently wore odd socks to support anti-bullying day.

School leaders have embedded effective behaviour systems that enable pupils to be ready, respectful and safe. All staff and pupils have received training to run an innovative anti-bullying programme and many pupils report that school buddies have a positive impact at playtimes, setting a very good example to others. Pupils' behaviour around the school and in classes is very positive. They work well with adults in an atmosphere of trust. Teachers take time every morning to engage with pupils and check on their wellbeing. This helps them to be ready for learning.

The school council involves all pupils in decision-making, and regularly seeks pupils' views and attitudes to school and act upon any ideas promptly. For instance, they took account of what pupils wanted when purchasing equipment to play with at break times. Many pupils report that the school council represents pupils of every class, including the learning resource centres well.

Sports buddies help pupils to be active and to make healthy choices. The school has appropriate arrangements for healthy eating and drinking. Pupils have access to drinking water and foundation phase pupils have access to healthy fruit snacks. In a few classes, topic work gives pupils opportunities to explore ways of keeping fit and to discuss healthy lifestyles.

Through regular school assemblies, concerts and curriculum work, there are worthwhile opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral and cultural understanding. Most pupils visit the local church and attend an ascension day service at St David's Cathedral. Pupils in Year 6 are very involved in the Shakespeare Schools Festival and perform at the nearby theatre. Teachers provide useful opportunities for pupils to improve their creative and entrepreneurial skills

through a range of extra-curricular provision. For example, the arts and crafts club won a cash prize from a local business for an interesting collage and pupils in Years 5 and 6 made a profit during their annual enterprise week selling their own devised products. These activities give pupils useful opportunities to visit and work with a wide range of partners.

The school informs parents well about the skills their children are learning through the curriculum. They invite parents to school regularly to see the range of support available. For example, in the foundation phase, teachers hold Welsh afternoons where parents can take part in a language session with their children.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

Senior leaders have a vision for improvement based on raising standards and a strong ethos of inclusivity. The headteacher has led the process of amalgamation successfully. Senior leaders have worked consistently to ensure that staff, pupils, parents and governors play a full part in the process. As a result, all stakeholders feel a strong sense of pride and ownership in the new school. Leaders have a good understanding of their specific roles and carry out their responsibilities effectively. They played a key role, in partnership with the governing body, in designing the new leadership structure. As a result, staff feel well supported and confident to express their views on matters of improvement.

All leaders expect high standards from pupils and teachers. In many areas they have worked well to ensure consistency and continuity of provision. For example, introducing a new whole school behaviour policy, supported by effective training, has led to noticeable improvements in pupils' behaviour across the school.

Leaders play a prominent role in monitoring standards. Purposefully planned self-evaluation activities identify the most important priorities for improvement. There is a close link between the outcome of monitoring activities, the content of the school's self-evaluation report and the school's development plan. In a short space of time, leaders have improved key areas of the school's work effectively. For example, the enhanced provision for improving pupils' literacy skills across the school has resulted in most pupils writing to a higher standard, and recent improvements in developing Welsh as a second language have led to the school achieving the Siarter Iaith bronze award.

The governing body balances its responsibility to support and challenge the work of the school well. For example, governors challenge senior leaders appropriately on the quality of education that the school is providing, particularly in terms of the school's assessment data and curriculum. They attend school events and professional learning activities regularly and have high expectations in terms of standards and provision. As a result, governors have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas that need developing and are beginning to hold senior leaders to account through the scrutiny of progress and the school's standards committee. However, opportunities for governors to contribute directly to self-evaluation are a developing feature.

There is an appropriate focus on meeting national priorities, although the focus on curriculum reform is at an early stage of development. Staff work with senior leaders to identify effective professional learning opportunities. These link clearly with the priorities on the school development plan and support their performance management objectives well. For example, members of staff visited a local primary school to view good practice in the implementation of numeracy across the curriculum. As a result, the school has now improved its provision and pupils have more opportunities to use their numeracy skills regularly and in meaningful contexts.

The school benefits from many worthwhile partnerships with other providers to improve the professional practice of staff. The school has taken a lead role in school to school working. Gelliswick teachers have taken a strong lead in driving the recent improvements in writing across the cluster and have engaged well in work scrutiny with other schools. The headteacher has presented to Pembrokeshire schools on the rationale for improved cluster working. The Maths leader has been part of the National Excellence in Maths project, and improvements to provision at Gelliswick have been the model for presentations and visits from other schools.

The school's new building provides a positive environment for learning, and nearly all pupils have a healthy sense of pride in their school. Throughout the day, they display a calm and purposeful manner. The learning environment motivates staff to improve their approaches to good teaching and learning in a professional manner. Staff are beginning to improve their use of resources. For example, the creation of nurture classrooms dedicated to enhancing pupils' wellbeing is having a positive impact on their learning. Although there are extensive outdoor facilities, provision for delivering outdoor learning is at an early stage of development.

Overall the school has sufficient resources to meet the needs of pupils and for the successful delivery of the curriculum. The school is staffed sufficiently and the headteacher deploys them effectively to ensure that the school meets the needs of pupils. The school has a detailed spending plan for the pupil development grant that outlines clearly where it uses the funding, such as in providing experienced staff and effective interventions for identified pupils. Staff track the progress of those pupils entitled to the grant effectively. As a result, most pupils eligible for free school meals make good progress from their starting points.

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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