

YR EGLWYS  
YNG NGHYMURU



THE CHURCH  
IN WALES

## Section 50 Survey of Church Schools in Wales Report Form

### **Ysgol Pant Pastynog**

Prion

Denbigh.

LL16 4SA

#### **Diocese: St Asaph**

Local Authority: Denbighshire

Survey dates: 11th May 2026

Date of last survey: June 19th and 20th 2019

School unique reference number: 6633057

Headteacher: Mr Meirion Edwards

Inspector Name: Dr. Carol James

### **School Context**

Ysgol Pant Pastynog is a Welsh-medium school run by the Church in Wales and located in the rural village of Prion, Denbighshire. The school was founded in 1864. There are 49 full-time learners and 9 part-time nursery learners. The school consists of 3 classes with three mixed age groups, nursery/reception/year 1, years 2, 3 and 4 and years 5 and 6. In Foundation Learning, Welsh is the language of education for learners and English is introduced as a subject to learners in year 3. The Headteacher has been in office since January 2021 and teaches 0.45 of the time. There is one full-time teacher and there are three part-time teachers. About 70% of the learners come from homes with Welsh as their first language. The school has reported that 0% of learners have ALN (Additional Learning Needs) and the Free School Meals indicator is 3%. There are no learners from an ethnic background. Attendance for the last academic year was 94.44%.

### **The expertise and effectiveness of Ysgol Pant Pastynog as a Church school in Wales**

Ysgol Pant Pastynog is a happy, caring and welcoming community committed to fostering healthy, confident and fulfilling learners. By promoting 'Respecting Everyone and Everything', which is the school's motto, learners develop into principled, moral and informed citizens who are ready to contribute positively to society. High expectations are placed on all learners to enable them to reach their

full potential and develop into enterprising, creative and independent participants. The school's Christian values and ethos provide a solid foundation for nurturing ambitious and capable learners, who will be valued members of the local community and wider society.

The school's Christian ethos ensures a warm, safe and welcoming environment where all learners feel valued, supported and encouraged to develop to their full potential. The core values — Respect, Love, Justice, Forgiveness and Service — are deeply rooted in the life and daily work of the school.

The culture of the school is very inclusive and supportive. Learners describe a strong sense of belonging and show genuine care for each other. Older learners naturally support younger children, contributing to a family ethos that is recognised as a strength by parents and carers and the wider community. This inclusive environment ensures that all learners feel happy and safe, valued, and able to thrive. The relationships across the school are respectful and caring, reflecting the school's commitment to living their Christian values. The learners have a positive attitude towards learning. The learner voice is a strong feature in the school through their four committees, and they influence the Christian life of the school and the community.

Ysgol Pant Pastynog is led very effectively, and the inspirational and enthusiastic Headteacher leads by example. The staff are all very dedicated and go the extra mile for the benefit of the learners and the wider community. The school is very effectively supported by supportive and knowledgeable Governors about the life of the school as a strong Christian community. The school's parents and carers, volunteers and the community appreciate the world-class care and education that the learners receive at the school.

### **Established strengths**

- The Headteacher's inspiring vision and leadership effectively supported by enthusiastic and dedicated staff and governors
- The school's firm and well-established values that are lived through Christian experiences in the school and community
- A strong sense of belonging to one happy, caring and inclusive school family which is reflected in close and respectful relationships across the school
- The learners' enthusiasm for learning and their commitment to participate fully in the Christian life and ethos of the school

### **Recommendations**

- To highlight and celebrate Ysgol Pant Pastynog's identity as an ecclesiastical one in all school documentation and correspondence and to create greater links with church schools in Wales
- Ensure consistency in the provision for prayer and meditation by developing meditation corners in each class and re-establishing an external spiritual area.
- To develop further opportunities for learners to plan and lead co-worship, as well as to refine collaborative worship evaluation processes.

- Further strengthen the provision of Religion, Values and Ethics by regularly developing a rich range of stimulating and bespoke activities that reflect the school's rigorous plans.

**The school, through its unique Christian character, meets the needs of all learners including the contribution of Religion, values and ethics to the Christian Character of the school**

Ysgol Pant Pastynog has a deep Christian character which is firmly rooted in all aspects of school life and makes a significant contribution to meeting the needs of all learners. The school's core Christian values are clearly defined and consistently lived, forming a solid moral and spiritual foundation for the school community. These values are confidently understood and expressed by learners and adults, and are evident in the relationships, behaviour and daily experiences of school life.

The school's values reinforce its Christian ethos and are central to all aspects of the school's life and work. The exhibitions across the school effectively reflect her Christian character and contribute to the creation of a warm and reflective environment. The school has recently developed a dedicated meditation corner in the hall, which provides valuable opportunities for learners to reflect and formulate their own prayers. Although there are corners of prayer and reflection in some classes, this provision needs to be extended across the school to ensure that they are used more effectively to support the spiritual development of the learners. The re-establishment of an external prayer and reflection area would also further strengthen the provision, enabling learners to reflect and appreciate the natural environment and the magnificent view from the school site.

School staff work effectively as a caring and dedicated team, reflecting Christian values through respectful and supportive relationships. They put learners' wellbeing at the heart of their work, and learners feel confident to turn to them for support. Parents and carers commend the headteacher and school staff and recognise the positive influence of the school's Christian ethos on learners' behaviour and attitudes. Learner voice is highly valued through an effective structure of four school committees made up of learners from years 2 to 6. The committees meet regularly and provide valuable opportunities for learners to share ideas, contribute to decisions and lead on the development of the school. All learners have the opportunity to participate in the different committees, developing their leadership skills and sense of responsibility. The work of the committees effectively reflects the school's Christian values.

Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) plays an important role in supporting the ethos and Christian character of the school. The planning is strong, with clear progression through the use of thematic lenses that ensure continuity across the school. Learners engage in a range of bespoke learning activities and rich lived experiences that bring RVE to life. Hands-on approaches, such as role-playing, visits and experiential tasks, enable learners to engage deeply with religious concepts and develop meaningful understanding.

Learners demonstrate a solid knowledge of Christian beliefs and practices and are able to discuss them confidently and maturely. They can considerately compare

different faiths and global perspectives, showing respect for different perspectives. The emphasis on in-depth enquiry supports learners to develop reflective and thoughtful responses. The school needs to continue to develop learners' understanding and respect for all religions, beliefs and non-religious views, reflecting the diversity that exists in progressive Welsh society.

The use of lived experiences is an obvious strength. Activities such as exploring baptism, taking part in a mock marriage and engaging in global citizenship projects enable learners to connect learning to real-life contexts. These experiences make learning meaningful and memorable. Learners are also actively involved in fundraising activities and community projects, demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility for others. This includes work with charities, environmental initiatives and inter-national activities such as Denbigh Foodbank, Children in Need and Christian Aid.

Overall, the school's distinctly Christian character is a central strength, creating a cohesive and inclusive community where all learners are supported to grow academically, socially, and spiritually.

### **The influence of collective worship on the school community**

Collective worship is a central and very valuable aspect of daily life at Ysgol Pant Pastynog. Worship is inclusive and inspiring, providing meaningful opportunities for learners, staff and the wider school community to reflect spiritually, explore Christian values and develop a deeper understanding of faith and belief. Worship is carefully designed to reflect the school's Christian vision and values and makes a significant contribution to the strong sense of community and belonging that is evident in the school.

Music, visual imagery and symbolic elements such as candles are used effectively to support spiritual reflection and enrich the experience of worship. During the worship observed, an image of the Jesse window from St Dyfnog Church, Llanrhaeadr is shown on the screen alongside meditative music created a purposeful and spiritual atmosphere to turn the hall into a contemplative place for worship. The themes explored during worship are closely related to the school's Christian values. For example, during observed Christian Aid work together worship, the learners had the opportunity to meaningfully reflect on the needs of others and their role in serving as global citizens.

Learners have opportunities to take part in worship within the school and contribute prayers, reflections and presentations with confidence and maturity. Members of the learners' committees speak enthusiastically about their contribution to worship and understand the importance of prayer and meditation in school life. Learners appreciate the opportunities to write prayers, lead collaborative responses and contribute ideas through suggestion boxes and committee meetings. It would be beneficial for them to have more opportunities to plan and lead collective worship.

Prayer is a natural and authentic part of the daily life of the school. Learners speak confidently about the role of prayer and are willingly engaged in collective and personal prayer opportunities. Prayer is naturally incorporated throughout the school day, including in classroom activities and moments of reflection. Parents and carers

noted that children regularly discuss faith-related prayers, services, and experiences at home, demonstrating the lasting impact that worship has on the spiritual development of the learners.

The strong links between worship and local church life further enrich the learners' experiences. Clergy, ministers and visitors such as the 'Turning the Page' crew and the Bishop's Visitor contribute regularly and effectively towards worship and support the learners' understanding of Christian beliefs and traditions. The school benefits from strong partnerships with the local church and chapel and Christian organizations. The learners appreciate the opportunities to take part in church services at St Dyfnog's Church, Llanrhaeadr and community events such as the St David's Day parade in Denbigh and speak positively about these experiences.

Parents, carers and community members recognise the importance of collective worship in shaping the school's caring and respectful ethos. They describe the school as a place where Christian values are lived authentically where worship strengthens relationship across the school community. Parents and carers appreciate the opportunities provided for reflection and spiritual growth and appreciate how worship complements and enriches family experiences.

Collective worship makes a significant contribution to the spiritual development of learners at Ysgol Pant Pastynog. Learners are given opportunities to reflect deeply, ask questions and consider issues relating to meaning and purpose within a safe and supportive environment. Worship encourages learners to develop curiosity, empathy, and respect for others. Across the school, learners show confidence in discussing faith, values and belief, reflecting the profound impact that worship has on their understanding of themselves and the world around them.

### **The effectiveness of the school's leadership as a church school**

The experienced headteacher provides effective and inspiring leadership that is central to fostering the school's strong family and Christian ethos. His commitment to promoting the ecclesiastical character of the school is evident in the way Christian values inform strategic planning, curriculum development, relationships and daily practices. The headteacher is effectively supported by the Religion, Values and Ethics (CGM) co-ordinator, and the leaders are able to cultivate a team of dedicated staff who work collaboratively to maintain a caring, inclusive and supportive environment.

The school's Christian values are clearly rooted within school improvement processes and strategic documents, with a definite focus on developing the school's ecclesiastical ethos and character. Governors play an active and valuable role in the life of the school, providing appropriate support and challenge to the leaders. They are knowledgeable about the strengths of the school and the areas to be developed, and effectively monitor the impact of decisions on learners' well-being and development. The positive working relationship between the principal and the governing body strengthens the Christian vision of the school and supports continuous improvement. The school's prospectus, annual reports and website convey the school's vision clearly and effectively. Leaders also recognise opportunities to further strengthen the way the school's ecclesiastical identity is communicated to new visitors and families.

The governors are very supportive and play an active role in the life of the school. The relationship between the Headteacher and the Governors is very positive and supportive. They are knowledgeable about events and issues and eager to further develop and strengthen the Christian vision of the school. They know the school well and provide appropriate support and challenge to the leaders. Governors engage in monitoring activities, including lesson observation and pupil engagement, and demonstrate a solid understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas to be developed. Responsibilities are effectively shared among the governors, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to the improvement and the development of the church school. The Governors have a clear understanding of the purpose of a church school and the place of the school within the wider world. The Governing Body is aware of and acts effectively within their role as a 'critical friend'.

Leaders have established strong partnerships with the local church, community organisations and other schools, which significantly enrich the learners' experiences. The school has links with some church schools to share good practice and collaborate on new work plans. It would be advantageous to expand this to include schools across Wales to extend their working circle with others. Relationships with the local churches, Chapel Club, Christian charities and community groups strengthen the spiritual and moral life of the school and provide authentic opportunities for worship and reflection. The school plays a central role in its rural community, with events such as coffee mornings towards Macmillan and Christian Aid, which help strengthen relationships across generations. The school has recently been part of a 'Generational Transition' project where the learners have had the opportunity to go to Llanrhaeadr Chapel and Denbigh Hospital to have the opportunity to sing with older residents and local patients. Community members warmly spoke of the welcoming nature of the school and the inclusive approach adopted by leaders. The school's neighbours provide support to the learners by listening to reading and offering use of its garden, which offers rewarding experiences to the learners.

Community members and parents and carers praise the inclusive and welcoming nature of the school, and appreciate the way staff identify and support each child individually. The parents and carers are confident that their children are happy, safe and nurtured in a caring Christian environment, and they value the open and supportive relationship that exists between them and the school.

### **Spotlights**

Through strong leadership based on Christian values, Ysgol Pant Pastynog has fostered a thriving church school community where learners and adults are respected, supported and inspired to thrive. The four school committees make a valuable contribution to the life of the school and promote the core values of the school very effectively.

The Religion, Values and Ethics co-ordinator, in conjunction with a visiting singing coach at the school, has developed a modern and catchy song that successfully promotes the school's values. The song has had a noticeable positive impact on the learners, who confidently refer to the lyrics of the song when discussing the values of the school. Through regular performance, the song strengthens a sense of belonging, pride and community spirit among the learners, supporting their spiritual,

moral and emotional development, as well as reinforcing the school's Christian identity.

**The school meets the statutory requirement for acts of collective worship**

**YES**

**The school meets the statutory requirement for religion, values and ethics (where inspected)**

**YES**

**Religion, values, and ethics are objective, critical, and pluralistic.**

**YES**