



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

A report on

**Shirenewton Primary School
Shirenewton
Chepstow
Monmouthshire
NP16 6RN**

Date of inspection: March 2019

by

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

About Shirenewton Primary School

Shirenewton Primary School is in the village of Shirenewton, near Chepstow in Monmouthshire. It has 200 pupils aged from 4 to 11. There are seven single-age classes.

The three-year average for pupils eligible for free school meals is about 1%, which is much lower than the Wales average of 18%. The school has identified approximately 15% of pupils as having additional needs, which is lower than the Welsh average of around 21%. No pupils speak Welsh at home. A very few pupils speak English as an additional language.

The school was last inspected in November 2011. The headteacher has been in post since 2007. The governing body appointed a co-headteacher for the school in 2017 to work alongside the existing headteacher who acts a co-ordinator for a cluster of local schools.

The school is currently a pioneer school and is working with the Welsh Government and other schools to take forward developments relating to the curriculum and professional learning.

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

The school provides a very stimulating, wide-ranging curriculum that engages nearly all pupils very well. There are opportunities for all pupils to develop their leadership skills and to contribute to decisions about their topics. Nearly all pupils display very positive attitudes to learning. They challenge themselves to become ambitious and capable learners. Nearly all pupils make good progress as they move through the school. The school tracks their progress carefully.

The two co-headteachers focus very clearly on achievement for all in the school. The innovative leadership structure enables staff and pupils to work with other schools in the cluster very effectively. These arrangements have contributed to provision of high quality for pupils. Staff work collaboratively with a range of partners and this supports the professional development of staff well. The school shares its own practice widely.

There are useful opportunities for parents to support their child's learning, often based on parents' suggestions. Governors provide very good support and challenge to school leaders and they monitor the effectiveness of initiatives well.

The school's outdoor environment is extensive and very well developed. Staff make regular use of outdoor activities to motivate pupils and to engage them in creative and physical development.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Excellent
Teaching and learning experiences	Excellent
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Excellent

Recommendations

R1 Raise standards in pupils' oral Welsh

R2 Extend opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to sharing expertise across the cluster of schools and to developing independent learning in the foundation phase, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

During their time at the school, nearly all pupils develop very strong speaking and listening skills. In the foundation phase, nearly all express their ideas confidently. They talk about their work with enthusiasm and act out a role well when playing. For example, they use specific vocabulary accurately to describe a rocket launch when they dress as scientists or astronauts as part of a topic on space. In key stage 2, pupils continue to develop a wide vocabulary. Nearly all contribute to class discussions effectively. They offer suggestions and explanations and many present confidently to a larger group. By the time they leave the school, nearly all are articulate and mature speakers. Nearly all listen effectively. They respond to music and instructions showing very good attention to detail.

Most pupils develop into enthusiastic readers. In the foundation phase, most begin to read a range of books for information and for pleasure. They name different authors and discuss their preferences well. In key stage 2, most pupils can skim and scan for information. They read regularly and enjoy familiar authors. They undertake research using information and communication technology (ICT) and non-fiction books. In Year 6, nearly all pupils make comparisons confidently between a text and a film, deciding why one appeals more to an audience than another.

By the end of the foundation phase, most pupils write independently, making plausible attempts at spelling unfamiliar words. Many are beginning to use a cursive script and write longer pieces. In key stage 2, most pupils write successfully for a suitable range of purposes. For example, older pupils write basic instructions on how to make a promotional film trailer and they write thank-you letters after going on a residential trip. They use their writing skills purposefully to plan activities and to evaluate the effectiveness of their designs. Most pupils spell and punctuate accurately, in line with their age and ability. However, the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation varies too much.

In mathematics, nearly all pupils develop a very good understanding of mathematical concepts. Most pupils solve numerical problems independently at age appropriate levels. For example, younger pupils make muddy footprints to work out counting in twos. By the end of the foundation phase, most pupils are able to halve and double numbers with confidence and consider which coins are best to pay for items to £1. In key stage 2, nearly all pupils have a secure understanding of number and use a suitable range of strategies to check their answers. Most pupils enjoy challenging themselves further. For example, pupils in Year 5 measure jumps, add the data to a spreadsheet, calculate the mean and round the data to the nearest 100.

Most pupils have very good ICT skills. They use these very successfully to support their learning across the curriculum. Nearly all younger pupils use a programmable toy correctly to map a route across a desert island. Older foundation phase pupils use their simulation skills well to control a space rocket to travel around the planets. They take screen shots of images and use them in their topic work effectively. In key stage 2, most pupils use a wide range of programs and applications well. They create and interrogate databases very skilfully to gather information. For example, in Year 6, pupils create a database to record statistics about countries and religions around the world.

Across the school, the majority of pupils have positive attitudes towards learning Welsh. In the foundation phase, many pupils respond well to familiar instructions and they ask and answer a few simple questions. By Year 6, many pupils answer questions and write for a suitable range of purposes, using the vocabulary and sentence patterns they have learnt. For example, they write about themselves, their likes and dislikes and simple dialogues. However, as pupils move through the school, progress in improving their Welsh language skills, especially in the spoken language is limited.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent

Nearly all pupils display very positive attitudes towards their learning. Their ability to take on leadership roles confidently within the school is exceptionally strong.

In lessons, nearly all pupils apply themselves to their work immediately and are very eager to learn. Most have high expectations of themselves and explain confidently how they meet these expectations in their work and play. They are extremely enthusiastic and work diligently for extended periods when completing their activities, for example in science when designing and creating an invention to improve the world. Nearly all pupils talk about their work with a high level of confidence and show great pride and a mature understanding of their work, its strengths and aspects that they can improve.

Nearly all pupils support each other's learning respectfully in lessons when working on both individual and group tasks. For example, Year 1 pupils work very effectively when creating a clock in the outdoor environment, helping each other to correct mistakes and to improve their work. As a result, nearly all pupils are confident, independent learners who take risks to challenge themselves.

Nearly all pupils respect the views of others and wait patiently for their turn. For example, when discussing the features of different film genres, Year 6 pupils show excellent consideration for different opinions. Pupils communicate particularly well with visitors and adults, showing a high level of maturity in conversation.

Pupils of different ages work together extremely effectively. For example, nearly all foundation phase pupils collaborate purposefully during the daily 'over to you' sessions. They display very high levels of engagement in their tasks. Nearly all undertake a range of challenges confidently, showing strong levels of independence and a wide range of creative skills.

During their time in school, all pupils take on at least one leadership role with great maturity and passion. They participate fully as members of the many pupil groups within the school, which include the pupil leadership team, the eco committee, community ambassadors and digital leaders. The pupil leadership team improves a range of provision within the school. Pupils undertake classroom observations and review pupils' attitudes and learning behaviours. They feed back regularly to other pupils, members of the senior leadership team and governors. Following these reviews, teachers have made changes to the way they manage their classrooms, which has had a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. The digital leaders train staff and governors. They plan and deliver lessons for other pupils based on the objectives in the digital competency framework. This is helping other pupils to apply

their ICT skills very successfully across areas of learning. Nearly all pupils know how to stay safe online. Most pupils behave very well in class and when moving around the school. They treat each other and adults with a great deal of respect. Nearly all pupils interact and engage well together at playtimes and lunchtimes, sharing the available spaces fairly. Nearly all pupils understand the need to keep themselves and others safe, and they feel safe at school.

Nearly all pupils are developing strongly as ethical, informed citizens. They raise money for a wide range of local, national and international charities. For example, they have recently raised money for the Severn Area Rescue Association (S.A.R.A.) and Help for Heroes, and the healthy schools committee has arranged a sponsored silence for a local heart charity that is supporting a pupil in the school. Many pupils help to clear litter locally and nearly all recycle plastic, showing a strong awareness of sustainability. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of exercise and eating and drinking healthily. They participate in the 'daily mile' with enthusiasm.

Teaching and learning experiences: Excellent

The school provides an exciting and very wide-ranging curriculum. Teachers take pupils' views about what they want to learn into account and provide work that matches pupils' needs and interests well. They plan varied activities in line with the aims of the new curriculum for Wales. The school is a Welsh Government pioneer school and it is making very good progress in developing its curriculum. There are many opportunities for pupils to work practically and to learn from first-hand experiences. Staff make very purposeful use of the outdoor environment to support pupils' learning and their wellbeing. In the foundation phase, staff plan many indoor and outdoor activities for pupils to work independently and creatively to promote their numeracy and literacy skills. This 'over to you time' is very effective in enabling all pupils to make decisions and to become confident, ambitious learners.

In key stage 2, teachers give pupils many opportunities to plan and evaluate their own learning. They receive purposeful opportunities to work collaboratively to achieve their goals, linked to the topic they are studying. For example, for their topic on film, Year 5 pupils design and make a supercar for James Bond. They use their numeracy skills to measure the speed of supercars during the planning stage. Teachers also give pupils many beneficial opportunities to use their technology skills. For example, older pupils design and make a recycling robot and control it using a tablet computer.

Teachers have appropriate plans for developing pupils' Welsh language skills in designated Welsh lessons. The curriculum provides a wide range of creative activities that include painting in the style of a Welsh artist and listening to Welsh music. The school uses visits and visitors to enrich topic work. For example, a visit from a local marine and land search rescue charity inspires pupils to use circuits to light up their model lifeboats, and a visiting geologist helps pupils to learn about the properties of rocks. In the foundation phase, all pupils learn to play a musical instrument and, in key stage 2, all pupils learn a modern foreign language. Pupils experience useful enrichment activities to help them to develop beneficial life skills, such as budgeting, housekeeping, animal husbandry and cooking.

Teachers plan activities well to ensure that pupils use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills for real-life purposes. For example, pupils design and make class calendars to sell at the Christmas fete and they use their numeracy skills to work out the costs and profit from holding a quiz and car wash. In key stage 2, staff encourage pupils to analyse designs, films and musicals. They enable pupils to use their literacy skills to discuss their ideas and to write notes and instructions linked to their topic.

In lessons, nearly all teachers enable pupils to evaluate their own work or that of other pupils and nearly all teachers provide helpful feedback to pupils to help them to improve their work. Pupils all have personal targets to help them to aim high and to know their next steps. Teachers use the outcomes of pupils' work and assessment information to plan for future learning effectively. Teachers group pupils according to their needs for aspects of mathematics and literacy. These arrangements are generally successful in helping pupils to make good progress towards meeting their individual targets.

Nearly all teachers provide clear explanations and information, for example, when they teach new terminology related to a topic. They refer to previous learning well to help pupils to consolidate what they have learnt. Teachers use questioning techniques effectively to support pupils' learning and to probe their understanding further. Teachers often enable pupils to work in pairs or groups and there are extensive opportunities for pupils to extend their oracy skills in discussions in class.

Teaching assistants are very effective in providing additional support for learning and helping to meet pupils' emotional needs. All staff know their pupils very well and working relationships between staff and pupils are positive and respectful.

Care, support and guidance: Good

School leaders make very good use of information on pupil performance data and professional discussions with teachers to monitor the progress of pupils. Teachers identify carefully those pupils who require extra support or challenge. Leaders and managers establish a wide range of helpful intervention strategies for targeted pupils that support the development of their literacy and numeracy skills well. There are effective strategies to support pupils' emotional needs, provided by well-trained staff, and these help to increase pupils' resilience and wellbeing purposefully. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The school seeks advice from outside agencies where appropriate. This advice informs targets on individual education plans and supports the continued progress of pupils with additional needs. Nearly all pupils with additional needs achieve their individual targets.

Staff value the views of pupils highly in both individual learning and wider school planning. The pupil committees devise very useful plans for action. These inform whole-school development planning well, and these opportunities play a leading role in developing pupils as confident, active citizens.

The school's provision helps nearly all pupils to develop a strong understanding of their place in the local community as well as their role as global citizens. Pupils learn about diversity and consider their own and others' cultures and ways of life regularly. They take part in many local events, for example, they perform in Remembrance Day commemorations at a local church, benefit from Welsh folk dancing and enjoy exciting eisteddfodau. Effective links with a partner school in Rwanda help pupils' awareness of the needs of those who are less fortunate. Pupils donate their shoes at the end of term and walk barefoot to experience an aspect of what life is like in parts of Africa where poverty is an issue.

The school offers excellent opportunities for parents to support their children's learning. Termly workshops address parental requests well, explain national priorities very effectively and provide parents with useful ideas to support their child's learning at home. Parents also offer their expertise to enhance the curriculum and occasionally join lessons. This work has a positive impact on pupil progress.

The school provides extensive opportunities for pupils to engage with creative and expressive arts. Staff promote the arts successfully through the curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities. Pupils develop their creative skills by composing their own music, practising different techniques in art and using digital media to present music videos. They design costumes, flags and menus when creating their own culture. Older pupils design and make healthy 'mocktails' for their parents as part of their topic. Many pupils participate in a very wide range of extra-curricular activities to enhance their creativity, physical development and technological skills. There are opportunities to take part in events at the local secondary school. The school has extensive arrangements to prepare pupils for transition between classes and feeder schools.

The school provides pupils with a range of opportunities to develop their understanding of a range of social skills, moral issues, and spiritual awareness, through carefully planned collective worship and class activities. Pupils reflect on religious and moral questions well. For example, they create their own Rangoli patterns as part of their work on Hinduism and describe in detail what each part means to them.

The school promotes healthy living well. A suitable range of extra-curricular clubs provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to experience teamwork, sport and competition. The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. For example, pupils identify the amount of sugar in drinks and take part in local challenges to increase their intake of water.

Leadership and management: Excellent

The school has developed an innovative and very effective leadership structure, with two co-headteachers who work together in partnership extremely successfully. Together they provide robust leadership that sets a clear strategic direction for improving the school.

The co-headteachers have a very clear vision for the school that focuses on developing a strong and inclusive learning community where all pupils can achieve their full potential. They have constructed their vision in close partnership with pupils,

parents and governors. The effectiveness of the vision is evident in the inclusive ethos and strong teamwork within the school. It also supports the high expectations that staff have of pupils and the good standards that pupils achieve.

The school works highly effectively with other schools across the cluster. This is a particular strength and it has a very positive impact on many aspects of the life and work of the school. For example, staff make outstanding use of the expertise of practitioners within the cluster to enrich the learning experiences that pupils receive in art and technology. The partnership also successfully enhances the physical resources within the school. For example, shared ICT resources across the cluster enrich the school's provision and support the development of pupils' digital skills very successfully. In return, staff provide support for other schools within and beyond the cluster, for example in developing effective foundation phase practice and in providing opportunities for pupils who are more able.

The professional development of staff is a key priority and a strength within the school. All staff undertake a very wide range of professional learning activities. Teachers visit other schools regularly and work very effectively with other teachers within the cluster. For example, they agree the principles of creative development across the cluster. This has a very beneficial effect on the confidence of staff and the opportunities provided for pupils. For example, the school has devised its curriculum to provide pupils with purposeful tasks that develop a wide range of pupils' skills.

All members of staff are extremely enthusiastic and they work very effectively to achieve their goals. The co-headteachers encourage all staff to try out new ideas. This freedom promotes staff confidence to trial and develop innovative practice within the school, for example in teaching modern foreign languages to key stage 2 pupils and in developing the expressive arts and the teaching of science and technology.

Governors are highly committed, and they make an excellent contribution to the success of the school. They have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and use this knowledge to support and challenge leaders successfully, for example, during the process of developing the shared leadership structure within the school.

Leaders monitor all aspects of the school's work through well-planned activities. They identify strengths and shortcomings well using a wide range of first-hand evidence. This includes careful analysis of pupil performance information, undertaking lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and listening to learners. As a result, leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Priorities in the school development plan link directly to the outcomes of the self-evaluation procedures, focusing firmly on maintaining and raising standards.

With the support of the governing body and the school administrative officer, the co-headteachers manage the school's budget very carefully. They target financial resources successfully to meet areas of need within the school, for example to increase the indoor teaching space available and to provide emotional support for pupils, using the pupil development grant. The school makes very effective use of the extensive outdoor environment and there are many well-planned areas to promote pupils' independent learning.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

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

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