



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

**A report on**

**St Julian's Primary School  
Beaufort Road  
Newport  
NP19 7UB**

**Date of inspection: October 2018**

**by**

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

## About St Julian's Primary School

St Julian's Primary School is a large primary school in Newport local authority. There are 685 pupils at the school aged 3 to 11 years including 75 pupils who attend the nursery part-time. The school has 23 single-aged classes. Around 18% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is in line with the national average. Most pupils come from homes where English is the main language spoken. The school identifies that 20% of pupils have additional learning needs, in line in with the national average. This includes 18 pupils who have statements of educational needs. A few pupils are looked after by the local authority.

The headteacher took up his position in September 2009. The school was last inspected in January 2011.

The school is currently a pioneer school and is working with the Welsh Government and other schools to take forward developments relating to the digital competency framework 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

St Julian's is a thriving, fully inclusive learning community where many pupils make exceptional progress and achieve high standards. The progress that pupils make in improving their numeracy, writing and information and communication technology (ICT) skills is a very strong feature of the school. Nearly all pupils have very positive attitudes towards school and show high levels of independence and resilience. They display exemplary standards of behaviour in lessons and around the school.

Staff have high expectations of the standards that pupils can achieve. Teachers provide pupils with a highly engaging and stimulating curriculum that ensures that they have exciting opportunities to improve their skills in meaningful contexts and meets the needs of all pupils well. The school's use of ICT to support pupils' learning is outstanding.

The headteacher and deputy headteachers provide the school with exceptional leadership. They ensure that all staff have valuable opportunities to develop as reflective practitioners through a very effective programme of professional development. As a result, the school is continually improving.

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

## **Recommendations**

R1 Improve attendance

R2 Improve opportunities for foundation phase pupils to choose what they learn

## **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 case studies on its work in relation to the use of ICT by pupils and family engagement, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

## Main findings

### Standards: Excellent

Around half of pupils enter the school with literacy and numeracy skills below that expected for their age. As they move through the school, many pupils make very strong progress in improving their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Most pupils with additional learning needs make at least good progress towards meeting their individual targets.

Most pupils improve their oracy skills quickly in the foundation phase. Year 1 pupils enjoy listening to each other's ideas. By Year 2, many pupils speak confidently and enthusiastically, showing a good awareness of audience, for example when describing the ice volcanoes on Uranus. In key stage 2, many pupils become very confident, articulate speakers. They enjoy talking about a range of subjects and regularly present to others. For example, Year 5 pupils pitch their ideas using highly persuasive language to a panel of local business people to secure advice and support on how to market their products. Most pupils develop their Welsh oracy skills well. By Year 2, many pupils talk accurately about their likes and dislikes. In key stage 2, many pupils use a wide range of vocabulary, different tenses and sentence patterns to express themselves on a range of subjects.

In the foundation phase, most pupils use their knowledge of phonics effectively to decode words as they begin to read. By Year 2, most pupils read simple texts with enthusiasm and discuss characters in a story knowledgeably. In key stage 2, many pupils become fluent, expressive readers. Older pupils in particular articulate their favourite books and authors giving mature reasons for their choices. Many pupils develop a wide range of skills such as skimming and scanning to help them locate information in books and online. They use these reading skills beneficially to help support their learning across the curriculum. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils read familiar Welsh texts with appropriate pronunciation and understanding.

As they move through the foundation phase, most pupils make very good progress in developing their writing. Nearly all pupils write purposefully in a broad range of different contexts. For example, reception pupils make detailed lists of materials needed to make a model lighthouse. By Year 2, many pupils use imaginative and original vocabulary to express their ideas, for example, when using a simile to describe a grandmother as 'skinny as a ruler'. In key stage 2, most pupils make very rapid progress in improving their writing skills. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils produce extremely high quality pieces of writing in literacy lessons and in other subjects. They use rich and varied vocabulary to add interest and sparkle to their work and show a strong awareness of their audience. By Year 6, many pupils write at length and with great maturity and sensitivity. For example, they write emotive poems and journal entries on the Windrush generation and detailed descriptions of being a monkey sent into space. Most pupils spell accurately and use a wide range of punctuation effectively. Most pupils write neatly and present their work with care. In the foundation phase, pupils write short sentences in Welsh with adult support. In key stage 2, many write independently for a wide range of purposes. For example Year 4 pupils create leaflets containing accurate facts about Aberystwyth.

In the foundation phase, most pupils develop a very secure understanding of number. They use numeracy facts effectively to help them solve simple problems. For example, reception pupils correctly work out how many ways you can make 10 by adding 2 numbers together. By Year 2, many pupils work confidently with larger numbers and decimals, for example to order the size of different dinosaurs. In key stage 2, many pupils have very strong numeracy skills. They use this knowledge expertly to help them solve a range of real life problems. By Year 6, many pupils have high quality numeracy skills which they use skilfully to solve multi-step problems. For example, pupils use percentages and fractions to calculate pollution in our oceans accurately. Throughout the school, pupils apply their numeracy skills highly effectively to support their learning in other subjects. For example, Year 3 pupils use grid references to locate different types of litter found as part of their topic on Beechwood Park.

Across the school, most pupils have exceptional ICT skills which they use expertly to support their learning across the curriculum. Nearly all pupils in reception use a programmable toy correctly to map a route for a farmer to visit all the animals on his farm. Older foundation phase pupils use green screen facilities confidently to retell the story of the boy who wanted to catch a star. In key stage 2, pupils use a wide range of programs and applications exceptionally well to enhance their work. They make sensible choices about when they need to use ICT and what platforms and software to use. Older pupils are highly proficient at producing creative multimedia presentations for a range of different audiences. They create and interrogate databases very skilfully to handle information, such as when Year 4 pupils compare and contrast the relative prices of ingredients needed to make their own pizzas.

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

Nearly all pupils behave exceptionally well in class and when moving around the school. They treat each other and adults with a great deal of respect. For example, during pupil meetings and lessons, pupils show exemplary consideration for other pupils' opinions. Nearly all pupils interact and engage very well together at playtimes and lunchtimes, sharing the available spaces fairly.

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school. They know whom to turn to if they are worried and are confident that staff will listen to any concerns that they raise and will deal with issues appropriately and promptly. Nearly all pupils have a very secure understanding of how to keep safe online.

Nearly all pupils recognise the importance of healthy eating and know what they need to do in order to stay fit and healthy. Many pupils take part in the extensive range of worthwhile sporting activities provided by the school. For example, many pupils take part in stimulating and exciting after school activity clubs, such as 'Motivational Monday' club and 'Fit Friday' club on a weekly basis. Pupils are extremely appreciative of these activities.

Nearly all pupils are very enthusiastic about coming to school. They relate to staff exceptionally well, based on a high level of mutual respect. Nearly all pupils look after one another extremely well. Members of the 'random acts of kindness club' challenge their peers to perform a kind deed at school, at home or in the community on a regular basis. As a result, nearly all pupils are kind, considerate and supportive of others.

Many pupils readily take on a wide range of leadership roles with great maturity, such as taking responsibility as members of the eco council, 'Wellbeing Warriors' and 'Voice club'. These pupils take part with great passion and commitment. The 'Wellbeing Warriors' team is dedicated to the improvement of health and wellbeing throughout the school. They lead assemblies and plan and deliver parental engagement sessions, including live workouts. As a result, many more pupils bring healthy lunch boxes to school and pupil participation in after school clubs has increased greatly. The well-established 'Voice' group members develop as extremely ambitious, confident and capable learners and help their peers to do likewise. They actively seek the opinions of their peers about a wide range of issues with a view to making improvements. For example, as a result of their own research, members decided that they could help improve behaviour by designing anti-bullying posters to highlight the issue and by making presentations during assemblies. As a result, pupils' behaviour has improved over time and is now extremely good. Members of all representative groups are exceptionally proud of the work they undertake and the difference they make to the lives of others. A significant feature is that pupils who are not members consider that the various groups represent them extremely well.

Nearly all pupils are ready, eager and excited to learn at the beginning of lessons. They work highly effectively in pairs, small groups and whole class situations. Nearly all key stage 2 pupils show a very high level of resilience and determination when facing challenges, particularly when solving problems. Their 'super learning powers' enable them to develop the necessary skills and mind-set to tackle problems exceptionally well. Most pupils develop the necessary dispositions to be effective, independent, lifelong learners extremely well. As a result, they are able to sustain concentration for long periods of time. When given opportunities to make decisions about their work, most pupils make very mature and sensible choices to extend their learning, for example when choosing which IT software package is the most appropriate for presenting their work to others.

Many pupils engage in a wide range of community activities. For example, they take part in a very worthwhile intergenerational project involving parents, grandparents and residents in the neighbouring nursing home. Almost all pupils raise money for a wide range of local, national and international charities regularly. For example, they have recently raised money for the haematology ward at a local hospital. They also raise money for good causes further afield, such as a charity to support children in Uganda. As a result, pupils develop an exceptional understanding of how to support people who are less fortunate than themselves and develop as ethical, informed citizens in highly effective ways.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Excellent**

One of the exceptionally strong features of the school is the way in which staff provide a balanced and rich curriculum that meets the needs of nearly all pupils successfully. They base it on exciting, stimulating themes and learning experiences that engage the interest of pupils very well.

Teachers ensure that improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is the core to all of their curriculum plans. They plan rich and engaging learning experiences to enable pupils to develop these skills systematically and to apply them in a wide range of exciting and meaningful contexts. A notable example of this is the project where Year 6 pupils create, test and race their own electric cars, providing them with meaningful cross-curricular opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills to a very high standard.

The school is a Welsh Government pioneer school and is making very good progress in developing pupils' digital competence. All teachers provide pupils with exciting opportunities to apply their ICT skills within all areas of their learning. For example, pupils throughout the school use technology to record and analyse the number of steps they take over a period of time in an attempt to undertake a virtual walk to their link school in Uganda.

Teachers further enrich the curriculum successfully through a wide range of educational visits and by inviting visitors to the school to speak to pupils. For example, members of a local film and photography company visit the school to support Year 6 pupils to create their own film based on the play Macbeth.

Throughout the school, most teachers engage pupils very well in their learning. Where teaching is most successful, the pace of learning is brisk, and teachers use a wide range of engaging approaches to develop pupils' skills well. Nearly all teachers have high expectations of pupils and make beneficial use of questioning to extend pupils' learning. Nearly all teachers provide pupils with beneficial oral and written feedback on their work. This contributes very successfully to the strong progress that most pupils make.

Teachers make effective use of a wide range of digital resources as teaching tools to promote pupils' learning in a creative and stimulating way. For example, in Year 2 teachers use virtual reality to enable pupils to explore the planets in the solar system and in Year 6 they use video conferencing to give pupils the opportunity to interview a wind turbine engineer in order to develop their knowledge and understanding of renewable energy.

The school has a structured approach for teaching Welsh that builds well on pupils' prior skills and knowledge. Welsh lessons link successfully to pupils' life and experiences. Opportunities to learn about the history and culture of Wales and their local community feature regularly throughout the curriculum. For example, pupils learn about the life of the Romans in Caerleon, and about significant events in Welsh history including Trewern and the tragedy of Aberfan.

Most teachers in the foundation phase provide effective and interesting activities indoors and outdoors that engage pupils successfully. However, teachers do not always ensure that they provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to make choices about their learning.

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

The school provides outstanding support to parents to enable them to help their own children to learn. Teachers make exemplary use of the school website and other



social media to share their expertise with parents. For example, they upload very helpful video clips explaining how to tackle reasoning problems and, for parents of younger children, demonstrate how to form letters. Staff deliver very effective regular parental workshop sessions on literacy and numeracy skills and provide parents with very useful resources to use at home. The school's support for families through a range of high quality interventions such as 'Lads and Dads' have also had a very valuable impact on increasing parents engagement in their children's learning.

The school has extensive systems in place to track and monitor pupils' progress. Staff make highly effective use of this data to ensure that pupils make at least expected progress. For example, teachers share results from spelling tests with parents via a digital application highlighting errors to correct at home. Staff make highly effective use of diagnostic tools. For example, leaders analyse pupils' performance in numeracy tests to identify and address shortcomings in provision and performance. This has had a positive impact on the exceptional standards of numeracy at the school.

The school has highly effective systems in place to track and support pupils' wellbeing. Staff pay particular attention to addressing the needs of vulnerable groups of pupils to ensure that they make at least good progress. The school provides these pupils with very beneficial interventions to help develop their skills. Staff use a range of nurturing principles, emotional and social skills to build identified pupils self-confidence.

The school works very beneficially with outside agencies to increase the capacity of staff. For example regular sessions with the educational psychologist have developed teachers' skills well in order to provide support for identified pupils.

The school provides extensive opportunities for pupils to engage with creative and expressive arts. For example, the school's dance group performs annually at a local dance festival. Staff promote the arts successfully through a wide range of high quality art work on display around the school including work stimulated by Welsh artists as well as work based on Egyptian art and Rangoli patterns.

The school promotes healthy living exceptionally well, for example by using cartoon characters to emphasise the benefits of a healthy diet. Staff offer pupils an extensive range of extra-curricular sports activities. In addition, teachers encourage families to take part in physical activities at home by the live streaming of fitness sessions. The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

The school gives pupils excellent opportunities to develop their understanding of a range of social skills, moral issues, and spiritual awareness, through collective worship and class activities.

The school makes very effective use of a link with a partner school in Uganda to develop pupils' understanding of the lives of others in different parts of the world. Teachers give older pupils beneficial opportunities to learn about global issues. For example, they teach pupils about the Windrush generation to develop their understanding of the difficulties that migrants faced when settling in Britain.

The school has a very comprehensive personal and social education scheme which enables nearly all the pupils to develop very good social and emotional skills. For example staff arrange for Year 6 pupils to attend a careers fair to give them an excellent opportunity to learn about careers and the skills and qualifications they will need in the future. The school provides extensive advice to pupils and parents on how to stay safe online.

The school provides pupils with valuable opportunities to take on additional responsibilities and to present and perform regularly to different audiences. These opportunities play a leading role in developing pupils as confident, active citizens.

The school has robust systems in place for tracking and monitoring attendance. Staff use a wide range of strategies to attempt to improve attendance. In addition, the 'Voice' pupil group produces advice for pupils on how they can get themselves ready for school in the morning to improve attendance and punctuality. However, over recent years, attendance has not improved significantly and does not compare favourably with similar schools.

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

### **Leadership and management: Excellent**

The headteacher and senior leadership team provide powerful leadership to the school and create a highly inclusive ethos. They lead by example and have high expectations of pupils' and staff achievement and wellbeing. Senior leaders communicate a clear vision that all members of the school community understand. The headteacher consistently encourages staff to try out new ideas. This freedom promotes staff confidence and allows innovative practice to flourish in the school. For example, teaching assistants have trained each other to use green screen and stop motion filming with the pupils in the foundation phase when retelling stories.

The highly motivated and united team of staff lead effectively at all levels and support one another very well. They understand their roles and responsibilities well and are highly committed to fulfilling them. Leaders at all levels drive important improvements in the school. For example, they led a sustained focus on improving boys' skills in writing and reading. Staff redesigned the curriculum and the school is now reaping the benefits of well-motivated boys who are making very good progress in both of these areas.

Leaders are very successful in meeting national and local priorities. In particular, the implementation of the digital competence framework is highly effective. They share this outstanding practice with other schools on a regular basis.

Highly committed governors make a strong contribution to the success of the school. For example, they have supported the school very well in the improvements made to the building. They monitor finances effectively and successfully challenge the school to maintain high standards.

Leaders know the school very well. They evaluate the performance of pupils robustly and analyse data thoroughly to identify aspects of pupil performance that need

improvement. They use a broad range of valuable information to inform their thinking, such as learning walks, listening to pupils and parent questionnaires. They make effective plans to improve the school. For example, a nurture group, funded by the pupil development grant, has been very successful in improving the attitude to learning, progress, emotional wellbeing and attendance of some of the most vulnerable pupils in the school. The school has a good track record in making improvements. For example, in recent years, leaders identified the pace of lessons as an issue. They addressed this by communicating clear expectations of what excellence looked like and backing this up with supportive lesson observations. As a result, pace of lessons is now very good in most lessons.

The school is an outstanding learning community. Parents, pupils and staff are all part of this vibrant culture that creates positive, aspirational individuals. Staff and pupils are eager to develop their skills and have a real sense of fun and excitement about doing so. Teachers and teaching assistants take initiative in sharing expertise and teaching each other. Leaders quickly identify good practice and facilitate the sharing of this between staff. For example, the introduction of podcasting has promoted improved pupils' oracy skills effectively. Teachers also meet in groups of three to film each other and use these short examples to share best practice and to improve their own teaching. For example, as a result of watching each other, teachers are now more effective and efficient in their use of numeracy 'warm-up' sessions.

The school uses its resources very well to ensure that pupils make very good progress in developing literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Leaders understand the costs of existing programmes well and track spending effectively. They take account of value for money well and manage finances astutely with a purposeful focus on improving teaching and learning. The school uses the indoor learning environment very effectively. Staff make very good use of space and their attractive classroom displays promote pupils' development of skills very well. Staff also use indoor space around the school very well to teach small groups of pupils with particular needs.

## 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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