

A report on
Shirenewton Primary School

**Shirenewton
Chepstow
Monmouthshire
NP16 6RN**

Date of inspection: March 2025

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Shirenewton Primary School

Name of provider	Shirenewton Primary School
Local authority	Monmouthshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	196
Pupils of statutory school age	170
Number in nursery classes	
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 22.9%)	4.3%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 11.1%)	*
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	7.1%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	2.9%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/11/2022

A report on Shirenewton Primary School
March 2025

Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	11/03/2019
Start date of inspection	10/03/2025

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Summary

Shirenewton Primary School is a happy, caring and inclusive school at the heart of its community. The well-being of pupils has a high priority in the school and nearly all pupils feel safe and happy and know where to go to for support if they need it. The school promotes pupils' moral and social development effectively through its values-based curriculum and during collective worship. This helps to ensure that pupils' behaviour is excellent across the school, and they are polite and courteous to one another, staff and visitors.

Most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those who may be affected by poverty, make sound progress in their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. Teachers use a range of questioning methods to recall previous learning, confirm understanding and inform the direction of learning. This helps pupils to improve and refine the content of their work successfully. However, at times, teachers do not provide learning activities that challenge pupils sufficiently and enable them to build their skills progressively across the curriculum.

The school's self-evaluation and quality assurance arrangements are robust. Leaders have a sound awareness of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They recognise that further work is needed to promote a culture of improving teaching and developing pupils' independence at an age-appropriate level.

Governors are fully committed to the success of the school and use their knowledge and skills to support and challenge the headteacher purposefully. The headteacher and staff have fostered close working relationships with parents. As a result, they have confidence in the school and appreciate the help school gives to help them support their children at home.

Recommendations

We have made two recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1. Continue to improve planning for the progressive development of pupils' skills across the curriculum.
- R2. Continue to improve teaching to ensure the development of pupils' independent learning skills at an appropriately challenging level.

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Shirenewton Primary School is a vibrant, caring and inclusive school, where staff know the pupils and their families well. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and are polite and courteous to each other, staff and visitors. Nearly all pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those affected by poverty, have positive attitudes towards learning and make good progress from their starting points.

Spotlight: Developing values to support well-being

The school's provision for developing pupils' values across the school is strong. The structured focus on individual values through the curriculum, whole school assemblies and class discussions gives pupils opportunities to reflect meaningfully and consider the views and values of others successfully. Nearly all pupils have a sound understanding of these values and this helps to ensure excellent behaviour. Pupils feel confident in exploring and understanding their own and others' emotions and know how to manage their feelings. Many older pupils speak clearly about the value of the month and relate these to their own behaviours and the behaviour of others.

Pupils have sound opportunities to develop their understanding of spiritual, and cultural awareness. They learn about a variety of world religions and older pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of inclusion and diversity.

Most pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital skills develop well. By the time they leave the school, many are confident and articulate speakers. The school creates a strong culture of reading and older pupils read texts fluently and with enjoyment. Most pupils' writing skills develop appropriately and by Year 3, they begin to edit and improve their work independently. The school's provision for the development of the Welsh language is good. Bilingual displays promote the Welsh language effectively throughout the school. Nearly all pupils use Welsh enthusiastically and older pupils answer questions confidently using a range of complex sentences accurately.

The school's approach to developing mathematical knowledge and understanding ensures that nearly all pupils make effective progress and develop as capable mathematicians with a sound understanding of number. Many pupils make good progress in developing their digital skills. Most pupils understand how to keep personal information private and how to stay safe online. Teachers ensure that pupils develop their physical and creative skills successfully through a wide range of engaging learning activities.

Leaders and staff are beginning to develop a broad and balanced curriculum using the four overarching themes of well-being, cynefin, diversity and sustainability. Overall, most pupils develop their knowledge and understanding appropriately across the curriculum. Work to ensure that pupils develop and build their skills progressively as they move through the year groups is at an early stage of development.

Across the school, teachers create stimulating and attractive learning environments that support teaching and learning effectively. They make good use of the classrooms, outdoor learning areas and forest areas to reinforce learning successfully.

Most staff use questioning effectively to support, check and extend pupils' understanding. They use assessment and feedback arrangements appropriately overall and are beginning to provide opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work and that of their peers. They generally ensure suitable learning activities for pupils in sequences of lessons that build appropriately on their prior learning. However, too often teachers do not plan learning activities across the curriculum that challenge pupils well enough or develop their ability to learn independently. On occasion, teaching is over directed, which limits pupils' ability to develop as resourceful, independent learners.

Provision for pupils with ALN is good. There are appropriate arrangements to ensure early identification of pupils who may require additional support. The schools ALNCo works purposefully with well-trained support staff to help to ensure that nearly all pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. The school works closely with outside agencies, such as the education psychology service and the learning links teams, to provide specialist support to pupils where required. Key staff meet regularly with parents and pupils to review progress and to plan the next steps in their learning. Good attendance has a high profile in the school and most pupils enjoy attending school daily.

Older pupils, including those with ALN, develop effective leadership skills. This includes working with outside agencies and supporting aspects of school improvement, such as developing the school's new relationships policy.

The headteacher and governors provide a beneficial and meaningful strategic direction for the school. They place a strong emphasis on developing leadership throughout the school and distribute roles and responsibilities purposefully. Senior leaders have high expectations and communicate them effectively to staff. Self-evaluation processes are detailed and robust and identify strengths and areas for improvement accurately. The headteacher and senior leaders have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and learning and plan strategic actions to bring about required improvements. They successfully link professional learning to aspects of the school's work in need of improvement. They provide valuable learning opportunities for staff to work with other schools and organisations. This helps teachers to refine their practice successfully, which has a positive effect on pupils' well-being and learning.

Leaders and staff develop strong relationships with parents and the community. The headteacher is visible and communicates with parents regularly to inform them about school events and to raise awareness of pupils' achievements and successes. Parents are proud of the school and value the school's commitment to helping them to support their children at home.

School governors are well informed and supportive of the school. They bring a range of knowledge and experience to their responsibilities and have a good understanding of the school's work in implementing national priorities. They monitor the school's budget closely and evaluate the impact of grant funding effectively.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern.

The school's arrangements for site management do not give any cause for concern.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

Copies of the report

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

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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publications Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.wales

This document has been translated by Trosol (English to Welsh).