

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

**Date of inspection: 25 January 2011**

**by**

**Stephen Dennett**

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

**Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?**

**Key Question 2: How good is provision?**

**Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?**

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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

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## Context

St Julian's Primary School is a community primary school situated in the north east of the city of Newport. The school opened in 2009, following the amalgamation of the infants' and junior schools, which had been established in 1952. This inspection is its first since amalgamation. A purpose built nursery was constructed in the grounds in the 1970s. The school has an open, grassy aspect with a large playing field and four playgrounds. The school's catchment area is socially diverse. There are 493 pupils registered at the school. In addition there are 40 children who attend the nursery in the morning and 39 who attend in the afternoon. Around 24% are eligible for free school meals. The majority of the pupils come from families that are neither economically disadvantaged nor advantaged. Around 7% of the pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds and 3.5% speak English as a second language. No pupil has Welsh as their first language. The school has identified that 27% of its pupils have special educational needs (SEN). Four pupils have statements of SEN. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark on four occasions, the third level of the Healthy Schools' Award, the Eco-Schools' Green Flag twice and was chosen to pilot and launch the Ryder Cup Education Pack.

The individual school budget per pupil for St Julian's Primary School is £2,889, which compares with a maximum of £6,996 and a minimum of £2,612 for primary schools in Newport. The school has the 46th highest budget per pupil out of 48 schools in Newport.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

### Current performance

The school provides a good education for its pupils because:

- Standards of achievement are good at both key stages.
- Pupils' wellbeing is good and their behaviour is excellent.
- Provision is good and teaching is effective, with several notable strengths.
- Pupils are provided with many varied learning experiences.
- The school is well led and managed and provides very good value for money.
- Although leadership and management are excellent, not all of the sector-leading practice has yet been translated into outstanding achievement.

### Prospects for improvement

The school has excellent prospects for improvement because:

- The school has an excellent track record in managing change, as demonstrated by the very smooth amalgamation process.
- The school has consistently tackled identified weaknesses very effectively and can show that the actions it has taken have led to measurable and continuing improvements in standards.
- Arrangements for self-evaluation are excellent and lead to well-constructed school development plans.
- The school consults widely with pupils, parents and the community to ensure that its plans for improvement are based on the needs of all interested parties.

## Recommendations

In order to further improve provision and raise standards, the school should:

- R1 improve the consistency and quality of pupils' handwriting skills and the presentation of their work.
- R2 provide pupils with more opportunities to write in Welsh and thereby further raise standards.
- R3 improve pupils' attendance to previous good levels.

### ***What happens next?***

The school will produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations of the inspection report. Progress in addressing the recommendations will be published in the school's annual report to parents. The school has been invited to submit a report on the sector-leading practice identified in the report.

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Standards: Good**

The school's performance in 2010 as measured by teachers' assessments shows that standards are generally above average when compared with national figures at both key stages. It also performs well when compared with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals and those in similar circumstances (its 'family' of schools). As the school was amalgamated in 2009, it is not possible to measure trends over the past three years, but evidence from the previous schools shows that standards historically have been consistently good. Most groups of pupils, including those with additional learning needs, achieve well. Instances of underachievement are rare, and the school has successfully targeted groups of pupils, such as boys and pupils eligible for free school meals, through effective intervention programmes. As a result, gaps in progress have been narrowed. Children enter the school with a broad range of abilities. In lessons and over time, nearly all groups of pupils make at least good progress in their learning. A very small minority of pupils make only adequate progress because social, emotional and behavioural factors inhibit their ability to concentrate. Nearly all pupils apply their communication and numeracy skills securely in a wide range of contexts. Standards in writing have improved, especially for boys, but a minority of pupils' handwriting and presentation skills are not sufficiently well developed. Pupils' information and communication technology skills are very well developed and the range of opportunities in which they use them is excellent. Pupils' progress in Welsh language skills is good. Their awareness of the Welsh dimension in geography,

history and culture is very good. Although they have good speaking and listening skills, their writing in Welsh is satisfactory and requires further development.

**Wellbeing: Good**

All pupils have positive attitudes towards healthy eating and exercise. They take part enthusiastically in a good range of physical activities and actively support the 'Healthy Schools' initiative. All pupils say they feel safe in school. Pupils enjoy school and are well motivated. They have positive attitudes to learning, enjoying the wide variety of activities on offer. They say they feel valued and supported by all staff in the school. All pupils work hard, contribute well and do their best. They are proud of their school. Nearly all pupils are able to work independently and have good opportunities to contribute to what and how they learn. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are polite, courteous and respectful. This is evident not only in lessons, but in assemblies, during playtimes and lunchtimes, and in their orderly movement around the school. Attendance is slightly below the all Wales national average. The school has identified the issue and has implemented strategies to improve attendance. Members of the school council and eco committees are actively involved in making decisions and represent the views of pupils well. Pupils enjoy the very rich variety of extra-curricular activities and experiences on offer. Their understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship is developing well.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Learning experiences: Good**

The school provides a wide range of learning experiences for pupils to enrich their education. There is detailed planning for the implementation of the key skills. Emphasis has been given to new initiatives such as extending the more able pupils' literacy skills. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to record and support learning. Pupils with additional learning needs are given good support. The school has successfully considered how to make learning experiences more attractive to boys. The school provides a wide range of clubs and extra-curricular activities that enrich pupils' education. These are strongly linked with the local area and provision is well planned in order to develop pupils' awareness and knowledge of Welsh language and culture. Displays in classrooms include suitable vocabulary, which promotes pupils' ability to develop Welsh language and positive attitudes towards their Welsh heritage. As a result, in all classes the pupils are developing positive attitudes towards Welsh and this promotes bilingualism effectively. The school has good provision for education for sustainable development and global citizenship, including making good use of links with the local community and places in other parts of the world. One class has developed a link with a school in Rwanda, which has given the pupils an insight into life there, which is shared with the school. The school has achieved the Eco-Schools' 'Green Flag' award for the second time as a result of successfully promoting sustainability through schemes such as recycling, energy conservation and healthy living.

### **Teaching: Good**

All members of staff promote good working relationships successfully and teachers' planning identifies clear learning objectives. Teachers have a good understanding of the curriculum and focus activities to challenge pupils to high achievement. All teachers evaluate their lessons thoroughly as a basis for planning future work. The format of lesson planning supports the identification of skills to be developed and the evaluation of progress effectively. Teachers use a good range of teaching strategies and the management of behaviour is excellent. Pupils are setting their own targets for improvement. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and often provide helpful feedback on achievement and ways to improve. Pupils' progress is assessed regularly and tracked carefully by teachers at both individual and group level. A sector-leading feature is the school's 'LEMURS' system, which targets the more able and talented pupils for language and literacy. The school's excellent assessment arrangements are clear and robust. As a result, teachers identify the ability and progress of all pupils very well and make good use of the assessment evidence to plan and target effective learning. Reports to parents are clear and informative. Parents and carers say they feel very well informed about their children's progress.

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

The school is a well-ordered caring community where everyone feels valued. Good quality assemblies effectively promote pupil's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Adults and pupils show mutual respect for each other. Pupils feel able to approach staff for advice and guidance. Rules and procedures are embedded throughout the school. The benefits of healthy living are promoted well across the curriculum and in a range of extra-curricular activities. The school has an effective framework for personal and social education. It monitors pupils' wellbeing and offers support when needed. All procedures for safeguarding are fully met. Pupils receive appropriate support and guidance when they start school. There are effective transition arrangements for pupils in Year 6 with the local secondary school. Provision for pupils' with additional learning needs is good. The school has well organised systems to identify and support these pupils. Individual educational plans are comprehensive and set out suitable targets for improvement that are reviewed on a regular basis. The school's 'One Step at a Time' support programme is sector leading and has been successfully implemented in other schools. External agencies and specialist services work in effective partnership with the school, ensuring all pupils' needs are met well.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school has an inclusive ethos, in which everyone is treated equally and with respect, regardless of gender, social background, race or faith. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to diversity and equality. Pupils have equal opportunity to access all areas of the curriculum and activities. Diversity and multiculturalism is promoted well in the personal and social education programme, collective worship and wider school activities. The school provides a safe, caring and welcoming environment for all pupils. The school buildings and outside areas are well maintained and sufficient for the number of pupils. The classrooms have been decorated with displays to provide a welcoming, bright and stimulating learning environment. Resources are ample and of good quality and well matched to pupils

needs. Outdoor areas are well maintained and good planning ensures the development of areas to enhance pupils' learning.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>
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<b>Excellent</b>
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### **Leadership: Excellent**

The headteacher, supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, provides a very clear educational direction. The leaders of the school have an excellent track record in managing change effectively. The amalgamation of the two schools has been carried out very successfully with the minimum of disruption to pupils' education. Excellent relationships between staff and a smooth-running administration have a positive effect on the whole learning environment. Staff share common values and have a real sense of purpose to their work. The senior management team and other managers ensure there is consistency in the structures and systems across the school. This in turn leads to good standards. As already mentioned in this report, the school has initiated a number of sector-leading initiatives, which in turn are beginning to have a positive effect on provision. Leaders communicate a driving ambition to further raise standards and improve provision. Governors are well informed about the school's performance and use this information to help set its strategic direction and tackle any areas of underperformance. Their wide range of expertise and experience enable them to offer excellent support to senior managers, and to challenge them when necessary. Policies and initiatives, including those that meet local and national priorities, are implemented consistently, leading to marked improvements in these areas.

### **Improving quality: Excellent**

The school has excellent procedures for self-evaluation. The senior management team has a very clear picture of the school's performance, its strengths and areas for development. There is a wide range of rigorous monitoring activities, including accurate lesson observations. The self-evaluation report produced for the inspection was a very useful document as a result. Very effective use is made of assessment information to set targets for improvement and identify groups of pupils that are underperforming. For example, a group of boys in Year 4 last year were identified as underperforming in mathematics and an intervention programme was put in place. These pupils then made exceptional progress in standardised tests, closing the gap between boys and girls in this cohort. All the information gathered is used effectively to produce a detailed and clear school development plan. The whole self-evaluation process ensures the school maintains high standards and good quality provision, which in turn, demonstrates that the school has excellent prospects for further improvement. This is further confirmed by the exceptionally effective way in which managers have handled the amalgamation. The school regularly seeks the views of parents/carers, pupils and the community. There are well-established professional learning communities in the school and good links with other schools in the local authority and the school's 'family'. These networks of professional practice make a good contribution to the school's overall provision.

**Partnership working: Good**

The school has effective strategic partnerships with parents, governors, the local authority, social services and local schools. These make a positive contribution to pupils' wellbeing and educational standards. The school communicates well with parents. There are regular newsletters and an attractive web site to inform parents of school activities. The collaboration with local schools is being extended to better share ideas and develop aspects of the curriculum. The transfer arrangements for pupils are very effective. An efficient moderation process involves staff from the cluster of schools, secondary school and the local authority. The local church also assists pupils as they make the transition and enable them to prepare well for the next stage. The school has good links with a range of local employers. Visits from local industries assist with areas of the curriculum such as sustainability, design, marketing and entrepreneurial skills. Outside agencies are effectively engaged to provide targeted support for pupils with additional learning needs.

**Resource management: Excellent**

The school manages its resources exceptionally well to support the learning environment. Very good and effective use is made of all staff to cover the school curriculum. All statutory requirements are met. Robust procedures ensure that resources are allocated to meet identified priorities. Spending is planned and monitored very well. Good use is made of planning, preparation and assessment time to provide pupils with a variety of learning experiences and for staff to plan effectively. Although the outcomes for pupils and provision are both good, the school provides very good value for money because its funding is very low and what it receives is put to excellent effect.

## Appendix 1

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

One hundred and forty questionnaires were submitted by parents/carers. A number of letters were also received, all of which were positive. Nearly all parents were satisfied with the school and agreed that it was well led and managed. The overwhelming majority agreed that their children enjoyed school and that they were well cared for, supported effectively and kept safe. Nearly all parents said their children made good progress and that teaching was good. They also said that there was a good range of activities and that homework was 'just right'. Most parents who responded said behaviour was good. The only negative comments were about grounds maintenance and the fact the two schools were not joined internally. The team agrees with parents/carers positive comments, but thinks that the school site is well kept and maintained. It agrees that an enclosed corridor between the two buildings would enhance communications and integration between the two buildings.

#### Responses to learner questionnaires

Ninety-eight pupils submitted questionnaires. All pupils said they felt safe in school and that teachers helped them make progress. Nearly all said that they would know who to go to if they felt worried or upset. They also said that they know how to keep healthy and take regular exercise. Most said they were doing well at school and they understand what they need to do to improve. A small minority of pupils said there was poor behaviour at playtimes and that occasionally they were prevented from working in class. When inspectors talked to pupils, however, it transpired that incidents had occurred in the past and the pupils concerned were no longer at the school. Pupils interviewed during the inspection also insisted there was no bullying.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

Stephen Dennett	Reporting Inspector
Enir Morgan	Team Inspector
Audrey Evans	Team Inspector
Helen Adams	Lay Inspector
Deborah Rainer	Peer Inspector
David Rees	School Nominee

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### Copies of the report

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### Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11