Estyn | Dros ddysgwyr, dros Gymru
For learners, for Wales

A report on

St George Controlled Primary School

Primrose Hill
St George
Abergele
Conwy
LL22 9BU

Date of inspection: March 2026

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

This report is also available in Welsh

About St George Controlled Primary School

Name of provider	St George Controlled Primary School
Local authority	Conwy County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Estyn does not inspect denominational religious education or the religious content of collective worship when it is a school with a religious character. Instead, the governing body is required by law to arrange for denominational religious education and collective worship to be inspected separately.
Number of pupils on roll	73
Pupils of statutory school age	57
Number in nursery classes	9
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 21.7%)	20.1%
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 9.2%)	*
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*

Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2022
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	22/11/2019
Start date of inspection	16/03/2026

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

St George Controlled Primary School provides a warm and welcoming environment where pupils feel secure, valued and ready to learn. Staff know their pupils well and create a caring atmosphere that supports positive behaviour and strong relationships. The school communicates clearly with families and fosters a strong sense of community through the way pupils, staff and parents work together.

The headteacher sets a clear direction for the school and makes sure that everyone understands their role in helping pupils succeed. Governors are enthusiastic and well informed about many aspects of the school's work, though they are still developing their understanding of the quality of teaching and learning.

Staff plan interesting activities that make good use of the local area and give pupils memorable learning experiences. Because of this, pupils of all abilities, including those who need extra support, make secure progress as they move from class to class.

Most pupils respond well to lessons that encourage them to think and develop growing independence. Teaching is engaging and well-paced. Teachers use skilful questioning and feedback to deepen learning, although they do not apply these approaches consistently.

Most pupils become confident communicators who speak clearly and listen carefully to others. They develop secure reading, writing and numeracy skills and apply them successfully across the curriculum. Their creative and digital skills progress well, and many enjoy expressing themselves through art and music. While pupils show enthusiasm for learning Welsh, many are not confident when using the language in simple conversations.

Pupils' well-being is a strong feature of the school. They understand how to stay safe, both in person and online, and enjoy taking part in mixed-age activities that help them build friendships. The school "Senedd" gives pupils a voice, although staff over-direct this work. Teachers and support staff provide well matched support for pupils with additional learning needs that helps them progress towards their personal goals.

Recommendations

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

R1 Ensure that the most effective teaching practices are shared and applied consistently across the school

R2 Improve pupils' confidence and fluency in spoken Welsh.

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

The headteacher provides considerate leadership and sets a clear strategic direction for the school. This helps to create an inclusive culture where adults know pupils well and help them to feel safe and valued. Leaders have high expectations and ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Regular communication keeps stakeholders well informed and contributes to the school's strong sense of belonging.

Teachers and support staff share a clear vision for delivering a rich and relevant curriculum that reflects the school's unique character and uses the local community purposefully. Learning experiences are well designed and authentic, engaging pupils successfully. As they progress through the school, most pupils, including those affected by poverty or with additional learning needs, make secure progress from their individual starting points.

Staff establish a caring, supportive learning environment and build strong relationships with pupils. This ethos encourages most pupils to attend regularly, behave well and participate meaningfully in lessons. Most pupils develop positive attitudes towards their learning and often show perseverance when confronted with more complex challenges.

Teaching is generally effective. In many lessons, teachers provide a suitable pace and make beneficial use of a range of resources. They question pupils skilfully, helping them build on prior learning and develop their thinking and independence in stimulating indoor and outdoor environments. Teachers give precise, well-timed feedback that helps pupils understand their next steps. In the few instances where teaching is less effective, not all pupils are challenged at a level that sustains their engagement or deepens their understanding. Leaders recognise the need to ensure that the most effective teaching practices are shared and applied consistently across the school.

Most pupils' literacy skills develop effectively. They become confident speakers and listeners, using increasingly adventurous vocabulary in a variety of contexts. Reading skills progress well and most pupils benefit from rich language experiences that support them to become fluent, expressive readers as they move through the school. Pupils' writing skills also develop effectively. Younger pupils engage in a variety of mark-making activities, while older pupils, particularly those who are more able, use sophisticated language to write for different audiences.

Through effective teaching and well-planned provision, most pupils develop their mathematical skills accurately and confidently. They build a secure understanding of number and, when appropriate, use a range of written methods to solve problems successfully. As they progress through the school, many pupils develop secure reasoning skills and apply their numeracy capably in authentic, cross-curricular contexts.

Through purposeful teaching and effective use of resources, most pupils' digital skills progress well. They use a broad range of applications to enhance their learning and engage in creative and collaborative tasks. The school also provides valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills. As a result, pupils work effectively with others on purposeful art, drama and music projects that support their self-expression and teamwork.

Most pupils develop their physical skills effectively through lessons and active play. They understand how to make healthy lifestyle choices and benefit from a suitable range of extra-curricular opportunities. Many pupils show positive attitudes to learning Welsh and develop a good understanding of their cultural heritage through assemblies and community events. Despite this, pupils' confidence and fluency when using Welsh in everyday conversations are underdeveloped.

Staff provide effective opportunities for pupils to develop strong values and to explore their spiritual and moral beliefs. Pupils learn about equality, rights and fairness, and develop a good understanding of the importance of treating everyone in society with respect. These opportunities promote a sense of identity and help most pupils cooperate effectively with one another.

Through effective teaching, most pupils understand how to develop their own personal and social skills effectively and how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they hold through the school's "Senedd" council. They contribute to collective worship and have influenced policies such as the school's approach to play. Although this work is beneficial, the group's work is over-directed by adults. This hinders the development of pupils' leadership skills.

Purposeful opportunities for pupils to collaborate and work with others foster pupils' sense of belonging across the school. Regular cooperation days create positive interactions between pupils of different ages, and older pupils support younger children sensitively. Older pupils explore future career aspirations through engaging activities such as creating "dream job" profiles and examining payslips. These experiences help pupils build a realistic understanding of the world of work.

Spotlight: Building skills for life beyond the classroom

A range of authentic activities broaden pupils' understanding of the wider world of work and nurture high aspirations for the future. By engaging in purposeful tasks, such as analysing real-life financial documents and articulating the skills required for specific careers, pupils strengthen their literacy and numeracy skills in meaningful contexts. These opportunities support older pupils to make informed decisions about their future learning and work, with increasing confidence.

Arrangements for supporting pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) are robust. Staff know these pupils well and draw on beneficial partnerships with external agencies. They use grouping flexibly to address individual needs. Effective tracking procedures help staff identify pupils who require targeted interventions. As a result, many pupils with ALN make good progress from their individual starting points. Transition arrangements, both for pupils joining the school and those moving on to the next stage of their education, are managed thoughtfully.

Leaders have established suitable self-evaluation and improvement processes that focus appropriately on the impact of provision on pupils' progress. Professional learning opportunities for staff have improved aspects of the school's provision such as the effective use of the outdoor learning environment. Leaders have developed a good track record of reviewing and developing important aspects of their provision. For example, improvements to the security of the site have strengthened the school's robust culture of safeguarding.

Governors are committed and well informed about many aspects of the school's work, including progress towards key priorities such as improving attendance and refining the curriculum. Their role in evaluating first-hand evidence to gain an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and learning is at an earlier stage of development. Leaders and governors manage finances prudently and grant funding sensibly to provide targeted literacy and well-being support.

External partnerships enhance pupils' learning experiences and strengthen the school's role within the community. Strong links with the local church develop pupils' sense of citizenship, while collaborative work with cluster schools has supported the development of a consistent tracking system to assess pupils' progress. Parents value these links, along with the school's approachable staff and open-door policy, which contribute to pupils' sense of stability and happiness.

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.

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

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