

**A report on**

**Malpas Court Primary School**

**Whittle Drive**

**Newport**

**NP20 6NS**

**Date of inspection: November 2024**

**by**

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education**

**and Training in Wales**

## About Malpas Court Primary School

Name of provider	Malpas Court Primary School
Local authority	Newport City Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	229
Pupils of statutory school age	166
Number in nursery classes	38
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%)	41.0%
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%)	23.5%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	15.7%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2024

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	22/01/2017
Start date of inspection	18/11/2024

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](https://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

Malpas Court Primary School is an inclusive and nurturing environment. Staff and pupils have warm and positive working relationships and, as a result, most pupils feel safe in school. Teachers, including those in the school's speech and language resource bases, support the pupils' wide-ranging needs in a well-organised and attractive environment, which promotes calm and respectful behaviour. Staff are positive role models for the pupils and provide opportunities for pupils to engage in real-life experiences that support them to develop their independence and enjoy learning. Many pupils engage well in lessons and develop confident and mature attitudes to their learning as they progress through the school, particularly those who take on leadership responsibilities.

Teachers plan engaging and creative tasks for pupils related to their chosen topics, and often listen to the pupils' suggestions about what and how they learn. Mostly, these activities develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital skills and help them to progress, but they do not always link purposefully to the school's curriculum or meet the needs of all learners as well as they could. The school's passion for promoting Welsh has a positive impact on the pupils' love of the language.

In many lessons, teachers question pupils effectively and extend their thinking. They see opportunities to extend pupils' learning and develop their skills further. As a result, many pupils, including those who are vulnerable and those with additional learning needs (ALN), make at least the expected progress. However, the quality of teaching across the school is inconsistent. In a minority of lessons there is insufficient pace to the teaching and not all tasks match the needs or abilities of the pupils.

The headteacher, working with support partners, evaluates the impact of the school's work well and has a good awareness of strengths and areas for development. Supporting the well-being of its pupils, staff and parents is a high priority. Despite recent changes in leadership that have created a period of uncertainty, the school is developing trusting relationships with its community, and families are very well supported. However, due to these recent changes, some areas of the school's improvement work are in their early stages of development and middle leaders do not always evaluate the effectiveness of teaching on pupils' outcomes well enough. In addition, rates of attendance remain too low.

## Recommendations

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

- R1 Improve the pace and challenge of teaching to meet the needs of all pupils and develop their skills across the curriculum
- R2 Develop the pedagogical understanding of staff to enable them to strengthen their authentic curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils
- R3 Develop middle leaders to ensure that they evaluate the impact of provision on pupil outcomes effectively
- R4 Increase the attendance of persistent absentees

## What happens next

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

## Main evaluation

Malpas Court Primary School is a welcoming, supportive and attractive learning community that nurtures pupils so that they feel safe and cared for. The headteacher, in a short period of time, has built a team ethos where staff and pupils feel heard, supported and respected. She has high expectations of, and for, pupils and staff. The school prioritises inclusion and meets a wide range of needs through its resource bases and its bespoke support and provision for a range of learning, emotional and behavioural needs. Most pupils respond positively to staff and behave well in lessons and around the school. Most pupils are very proud of their school and take opportunities to develop their leadership skills through a variety of pupil voice groups.

The school provides a high level of support to its community and promotes an open-door policy that welcomes parents and carers into the school to discuss any issues and offer help. The supportive role of the family engagement officer provides a valuable link between parents and carers and the school. Families share an area of the school to drop in

to chat and receive support. The school provides free uniform, food and toiletries that families can help themselves to. The school's work in this area is a strength.

The headteacher, working with support partners, evaluates the impact of the school's work well and has a good awareness of strengths and areas for development. For example, recent improvements to the learning environments have resulted in improvements in behaviour and attitudes to learning. In addition, the 'good to be green' behaviour management system has had a positive impact, and the school continues to drive this area of school improvement forwards by sharing this information with families and supporting staff with its implementation. However, middle leaders are in the early stages of leading on aspects of the school's improvement work and do not always evaluate the effectiveness of teaching on pupils' outcomes well enough.

### **Spotlight: Effective learning environment**

The school has made recent improvements to its learning environment by making effective use of all available spaces that provide pupils with a safe, calm and consistent atmosphere. This has had a positive impact on pupils' behaviour, well-being and attitudes to learning.

The school has reviewed its curriculum to provide greater opportunity for pupils to experience authentic learning and real-life contexts. Pupils across the school have contributed to their 'things to do before you leave Malpas Court' vision and enjoy engaging in these opportunities. This has increased their motivation and engagement. However, on a few occasions, these activities do not link purposefully to the school's curriculum, or develop the pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital skills as well as they could.

A majority of pupils start school with skills and experiences well below those expected for their age. During their time in school, a majority of pupils, including those affected by socio-economic disadvantage and with additional learning needs (ALN), make at least suitable progress from their starting points. A few make good progress in many aspects of their learning.

Over time, many pupils make sound progress in the development of their oracy skills from their starting points. Teachers support the youngest pupils to develop their vocabulary through real-life experiences, such as attending Fflic's party to celebrate the puppet's birthday. By the time they leave the school, many pupils are confident speakers, extending what they say through the use of more complex vocabulary to support their explanations,

for example when giving an account of the life of an evacuee in the war. Pupils are keen to talk about their work and are enthusiastic when discussing school life.

A majority of pupils develop a range of reading skills. Many of the youngest pupils develop their phonic skills rapidly and decode and read simple words. They develop a love of reading by engaging enthusiastically with familiar stories such as *The Jolly Postman*. Older pupils read a range of texts for a variety of purposes with clarity and appropriate intonation, to support their work across the curriculum and to read for enjoyment in the school's well-resourced and attractive library.

The youngest pupils develop their emerging writing skills in real-life contexts, such as addressing envelopes and delivering them to the post box in the snow. By the time they leave, a majority of pupils develop appropriate writing skills. For example, a few older pupils write fluently to create lively diary entries using a range of punctuation and interesting vocabulary, and instructions for how to trap a dragon. They apply these skills successfully in a range of curriculum areas.

A majority of pupils acquire suitable numeracy and digital skills as they move through the school. The youngest pupils develop their number skills through practical experiences, such as identifying numbers as they engage in water play and singing number songs. Older pupils use their measuring skills to measure ingredients for rationing in the 1940s shop. However, overall, pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply these skills in purposeful ways across the curriculum.

The school's passion for promoting Welsh is strong and has a positive impact on the pupils' love of the language. Pupils engage in their Welsh assembly enthusiastically and are keen to use the language with visitors and as they greet each other around the school.

Teachers provide pupils with feedback, and many pupils benefit from this process by making improvements to their work. In many lessons, teachers question pupils effectively and extend their thinking. They see opportunities to extend pupils' learning and develop their skills further. However, in a minority of lessons there is insufficient pace and in a few instances the tasks do not match the needs or abilities of the pupils as well as they could.

The school makes good provision for pupils with ALN, particularly for those pupils in the resource bases. Staff work closely together to support the identification of pupils' individual needs and to provide appropriate support. They draw purposefully on specialist expertise to develop their provision to meet the wide-ranging and highly complex needs of the pupils. For example, a few pupils access *The Den* to provide them with the

environment they need in order to thrive and support them to access the curriculum. This is having a positive impact on behaviour and well-being across the school.

The governing body is supportive of the school. Governors are developing their level of challenge to leaders and have a sound overview of the current strengths and improvement priorities of the school. They meet regularly to discuss important aspects of the school's work.

Despite increases in attendance over recent years, the rates of attendance remain too low, and leaders do not account for the rates of persistent absenteeism well enough.

### **Additional information**

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

The school's arrangements for site management give 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](http://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:

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