



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Llangattock School (known as Monmouth Montessori  
School with Monmouth Montessori Nursery)  
Vibon Avel  
Monmouth  
NP25 5NG**

**Date of inspection: February 2011**

**by**

**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 163 of the Education Act 2002. The main purpose of inspection under this section is to report on compliance with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003. In schools that provide non-maintained nursery education, this report also satisfies the requirements of Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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:

Publication Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court  
Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW

or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.uk](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

**© Crown Copyright 2011: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.**

## Context

Llangattock School with Monmouth Montessori Nursery is an independent day school for boys and girls aged two to 11 years that opened in 2001. The school and nursery share a spacious rural site, situated in an elevated position above Monmouth in south east Wales.

There are twenty-four part-time children in the nursery and twenty-three pupils aged four to 11 years.

In the morning sessions, pupils aged four to 11 are organised by age into three small classes for English and mathematics lessons. In the afternoon, there is flexible grouping of pupils across these age-ranges for subjects such as science, art and music.

Most pupils live in the immediate locality and others travel from a wider area that includes Abergavenny, Raglan and Chepstow. At 11 years of age, pupils transfer to a range of independent and maintained secondary schools.

There is no selective assessment or formal assessment test. Admission for pupils depends on whether there is capacity and whether the school can fulfil a pupil's particular needs.

All pupils speak English as their first language. The school reports that none of the pupils are economically or socially disadvantaged. The school has identified six pupils as needing extra support with their work.

The proprietor is also the headteacher of the school. The school was last inspected in 2005.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

The school's strengths include pupils' high standards of oracy and reading skills, their motivation for learning and good behaviour. The development and progress of pupils' wellbeing is a good feature of the work of the school.

Despite these good features, there is scope to improve pupils':

- achievements in mathematics and writing;
- independent learning skills; and
- information and communications technology (ICT) skills and the presentation of work.

### Prospects for improvement

The school has good partnerships with parents, the community, other schools and the local authority, which benefit the provision for pupils. However, prospects for improvement are adequate because senior managers have focused more on improving provision than the standards that pupils achieve. Self-evaluation is not rigorous enough in judging standards and the quality of teaching and learning.

The school has not addressed all of the recommendations from the previous inspection.

## **Compliance with the regulations for registration**

Independent school inspections are governed by the Education Act 2002 and related regulations: the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. These regulations require an independent school to meet an appropriate standard in the following areas:

### **The quality of education provided by the school**

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

### **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard. Although the school meets many of the regulatory requirements for this standard, in order to comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school should:

- ensure that the school's child protection policy and procedures are in line with the Welsh Assembly Government Circular 005/2008 'Safeguarding Children in Education' and that all staff are made fully aware of their responsibilities [3(2b)]; and
- have more regard to any National Assembly guidance on health and safety responsibilities and powers of schools by ensuring a periodic test of electrical equipment, an asbestos survey and maintenance of an asbestos register and service of the boilers [3(4)].

### **The suitability of proprietors and staff**

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

### **Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools**

The school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Although the school meets most of the regulatory requirements for this standard, in order to comply fully with the Independent Schools Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school should:

- ensure the school has adequate security arrangements for the buildings [5d].

**The provision of information**

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

**The manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

## Recommendations

In order to improve further, Llangattock School with Monmouth Montessori Nursery needs to:

- R1 take steps to comply fully with the regulations;
- R2 raise pupils' standards of achievement in mathematics;
- R3 provide more opportunities for pupils to improve and extend their writing skills;
- R4 improve pupils' independent learning skills;
- R5 ensure greater continuity and progression in the curriculum provision for pupils;
- R6 continue to develop leadership in focusing on pupil outcomes; and
- R7 continue to develop self-evaluation procedures to inform planning for improvement.

### What happens next?

Since the inspection report notes that the school does not meet one or more of the standards required for registration, the National Assembly for Wales will require the proprietor to submit an action plan within a specified period of time. This plan must set out the steps that the school will take to meet the standards, and the timescale within which it will complete each step.

Estyn advises the proprietor to amend the current development plan to show what action the school intends to take in response to the recommendations. It is also advisable to circulate this plan, or a summary of it, to all parents at the school.

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

**Adequate**

#### **Standards: Adequate**

It is not possible to compare pupils' performance with local or national data for the National Curriculum.

In English, the standards of pupils' oracy and reading skills are very good. Pupils are articulate and use a good range of vocabulary. They learn to read quickly and become fluent readers with good comprehension skills. However, standards of writing are variable with only a few pupils regularly producing extended written work. Pupils do not make enough progress in mathematics, although overall standards are satisfactory.

Pupils with social and emotional difficulties and those with additional learning needs usually make good progress in their learning. They gain in confidence and self-esteem and flourish in the school's supportive environment. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

Most pupils make steady progress in their studies across the curriculum. While pupils' oral recall of previous work is often good, such as in their work in history, their ability to transfer skills from one learning context to another is not always secure enough. The presentation of their written work is often untidy and spelling is inaccurate.

Pupils use their oracy and reading skills very well in work across the curriculum. Pupils' writing, numeracy and ICT skills are less well developed. For example, they do not write enough for different purposes and in different forms or use ICT enough to help them interrogate and search for information.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of Welsh heritage and culture are developing well.

#### **Wellbeing: Good**

The development and progress of pupils' wellbeing is a strength of the work of the school. Pupils are proud to be members of the school. Most pupils are well motivated and keen to learn. They enjoy school and feel that staff value and respect them.

All pupils say that they feel safe in school. They have confidence in adults to care, support and guide them. Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school with most pupils showing care and kindness towards others. Pupils are courteous, polite and well mannered. They speak confidently to adults.

Most pupils have a secure understanding of how to follow a healthy lifestyle and are keen to make healthy choices. They gain a good understanding of the need to care



for the environment. Many pupils take part in community activities, which contributes effectively to their overall development. Pupils' punctuality and attendance are good.

The school council represents pupils well, but the role of this committee and pupils' involvement in wider decision-making are not fully developed. Pupils' problem solving skills and their knowledge of what to do to improve their work are underdeveloped.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
---	-----------------

**Learning experiences: Adequate**

The school provides a broad curriculum that meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. The study of Spanish, French and philosophy enrich the curriculum.

In the morning, pupils are organised into three age-related classes for English and mathematics lessons. There is detailed curriculum planning for these subjects but the work is not always matched well enough to pupils' learning needs. There are flexible teaching groups in the afternoon across different age ranges for the coverage of other curriculum subjects. The planning for this work is brief and does not ensure enough continuity and progression in pupils' learning.

Throughout the school, there is strong provision for the development of pupils' oracy and reading skills. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing, numeracy and ICT skills in work across the curriculum.

The school provides a small number of extra-curricular experiences for pupils, for example a football club led by a professional coach.

The school successfully promotes the culture of Wales through events such as the annual Eisteddfod and the recent musical production about the life of Charles Rolls. Educational visits and visitors to the school further enhance the range of pupils' learning experiences.

The school promotes sustainable development very well and pupils have benefited from opportunities to be involved with the local Community Orchard in Monmouth and Forest Schools. The school was the first independent school in Wales to gain the green Eco School flag award.

**Teaching: Adequate**

Throughout the school, there are very good relationships between staff and pupils. Staff manage behaviour well and set clear expectations. Together, these features contribute strongly to the positive ethos in classrooms that encourages pupils to be confident and well motivated in their learning.

In lessons where teaching is effective:

- work is planned so that pupils build on their previous learning and develop their knowledge and skills;
- clear objectives are explained and discussed at the beginning of the lesson; and
- pupils have opportunities to practise their new skills.

In the majority of lessons where teaching is less effective, work does not take enough account of pupils' abilities and progress. Opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning and decision-making skills are generally limited to what pupils choose to do once they have completed the main task of the lesson. Staff do not consistently apply the school's approach to the teaching of lessons.

The school has developed systems to assess and record pupils' progress and, more recently, their wellbeing. This includes assessment of work at the end of each lesson and more formal testing at regular intervals, especially in English. Staff have good opportunities to share information about pupils' progress at regular weekly meetings. However, assessment is not used well enough to inform the planning of new work.

Teachers provide helpful oral feedback to pupils in lessons but the marking of work is often cursory. Praise is frequently over-generous and there are few comments to show pupils what they must do to improve.

Parents feel well informed about their children's progress through parents' meetings, written reports and the school's open door policy. The reports cover all subject areas but describe what pupils do rather than what they achieve. Reports do not include guidance to help parents support their child's progress.

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

There are effective arrangements for the support and guidance of pupils. Staff promote good behaviour well and encourage pupils to show respect and fairness to each other. Learning experiences promote pupils' personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This provision helps pupils to appreciate their own culture and develop respect for others.

There is a good emphasis on healthy lifestyles through the home-cooked lunches and fresh fruit that is available at break times. Pupils make good use of the extensive outdoor space for exercise and recreational play.

The school's carefully planned induction programme meets the needs of individual pupils. The school has effective systems for identifying and monitoring pupils who require additional help with their learning. Individual education plans are appropriate to the needs of each pupil and parents are involved in the process of setting learning targets that are reviewed regularly. There are effective relationships with specialist services and outside agencies.

The school does not have an appropriate policy for safeguarding. Procedures for dealing with safeguarding issues are not fully developed.

### **Learning environment: Adequate**

The school is an inclusive community where pupils are valued and receive equal access to all areas of the school's provision. The school is successful in creating a 'family' atmosphere where all pupils, parents and visitors are welcomed. Incidents of oppressive behaviour or bullying are very rare and the school deals with them effectively.

There is a satisfactory range of resources available to support the majority of pupils' learning needs, including ICT. However, there are not enough resources for mathematics or non-fiction books for independent research.

Overall, the quality of the teaching accommodation is suitable. The extensive grounds provide plenty of space for pupils' play and learning.

The school complies with many of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, regarding the health and safety of the premises.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
--	-----------------

### **Leadership: Adequate**

The principal and staff are strongly committed to the ethos and values the school promotes. There is effective team-work throughout the school, which ensures a shared purpose and promotion of a caring, nurturing environment for pupils. There is a positive culture within the school and all staff feel valued. Roles and responsibilities are well defined, but these are not reflected in staff job descriptions.

While there is a strong and successful focus on high standards of oracy and reading, senior managers have not ensured that all other areas of pupils' learning are as good as they can be. Although performance management arrangements are in place for staff, these arrangements focus on staff training needs. Performance targets are not linked to improvements in the standards of pupils' work and in the quality of teaching.

The board of advisers has a wide range of expertise and its members are very committed to the success of the school. The strength of the board membership results from the principal's good use of networking to recruit people with a wide range of experience. The board provides good support and advice to the principal but has no responsibility for statutory obligations or the overall standards pupils achieve. This means that the principal carries a heavy burden of responsibility.

The school is addressing national and local priorities through its introduction of the Foundation Phase in the nursery and its commitment to sustainability throughout the school.

The school complies with most of the Independent Schools Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. A small number of health and safety issues have been reported to the school.

### **Improving quality: Adequate**

The school's self-evaluation process enables staff to identify correctly strengths in a range of work and provision, such as standards of oracy and pupils' wellbeing. However, judgements about the standards pupils achieve in other areas are not always accurate enough. They do not take account of important aspects, such as lower standards in mathematics and the need to improve the presentation of pupils' written work.

The recent expansion of the senior management team has provided leaders with better opportunities to focus on whole school improvement issues. This team has helped the principal to produce the school's improvement strategy, which links to the outcomes of the self-evaluation process. The strategy focuses strongly on widening and improving the school's provision. However, there is little emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning in line with the school's aspiration for pupils to attain the highest levels of achievement.

Networks of professional practice are developing within the school. Teachers carry out peer observations to share ideas, but this process does not impact enough upon improving pupils' skills, especially in mathematics, writing, ICT and independent learning.

The school has made good progress against two of the six recommendations from the previous inspection. Assessment of children under five is developing positively and there is more use of first-hand evidence to inform self-evaluation. However, recommendations to comply fully with the regulations for registration, to raise pupils' standards of achievement, to plan more effectively to ensure that work matches pupils' learning needs, and to use a greater range of teaching approaches, remain areas for development.

### **Partnership working: Good**

Partnership working is a strength of the school. In particular, there are good links between the nursery and the lower school class to provide continuity in education for pupils.

Parents feel welcome in the school and are well informed through newsletters, the school website and the parents' and teachers' association. The principal has established close links with the community and pupils benefit from opportunities to be involved in community events, including the Monmouth Show, church services and concerts.

Links with the local authority are helping the school to develop its Foundation Phase curriculum. In addition, when necessary the partnership helps the school to provide good support for pupils with special educational needs.

The school has good links with other independent schools and collaborates well with Monmouth Boys' School to share resources. This benefits older pupils' ICT and swimming skills. The principal has also developed good transition links with local maintained primary and secondary schools.

**Resource management: Adequate**

The school is very well staffed for the number of pupils on roll, which enables small class sizes. The principal deploys staff flexibly to capitalise on their expertise, for example in areas such as the nursery, art and philosophy. Parent volunteers also contribute to the work of the school, such as by teaching French.

The school makes appropriate use of the accommodation, which includes extensive outdoor areas for play and learning. There is a limited range of resources, which are of satisfactory quality.

Spending decisions are linked clearly to priorities in the school's improvement strategy with the focus on widening the school's provision.

The school provides value for money.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Stakeholder satisfaction report**

#### **Responses to parent questionnaires**

Eleven parents attended the parents' meeting and thirteen parents completed the questionnaires. Overall, these parents express satisfaction with the school. Parents report that their children like the school and that they feel safe. Parents consider that staff are approachable if they have any concerns or questions. Most parents feel well informed about their children's achievements through the school's open-door policy, their consultations with teachers and written reports.

#### **Responses to learner questionnaires**

Ten pupils completed the questionnaire. Inspectors also talked to individuals and representative groups of pupils across the school. Overall, pupils say that they are happy and enjoy school and that other pupils are well behaved. They think that the teachers and other adults help them to progress and that they have enough resources to do their work.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

Wendy Young HMI	Reporting Inspector
Rhona Edwards HMI	Team Inspector
Paul Scudamore	Team Inspector
Michelle Gosney	Peer Inspector
Rosemary Whaley	School Nominee

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

## 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