Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

Malpas Church in Wales Primary School
Yewberry Close
Malpas
Newport
NP20 6WJ

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by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Malpas Church in Wales Primary School

Malpas Church in Wales Primary School is on the outskirts of Newport and maintained by Newport City Council. There are currently 339 pupils aged 4 to 11 years. Pupils are organised into 14 classes, two for each year group from Reception to Year 6.

The school is an amalgamation of the former separate infant and junior schools. The two schools amalgamated in September 2017. The new headteacher was formerly the headteacher of the junior school, and the deputy headteacher was formerly deputy headteacher and temporary acting headteacher of the infant school. The infant and junior schools were each last inspected separately in 2014.

The three-year average for pupils eligible for free school meals is around 7%. This figure is much lower than the Welsh average of 18%. The school has identified approximately 12% of pupils as having special educational needs, which is well below the Welsh average (21%).

Most pupils are of White British ethnicity. A very few pupils speak English as an additional language. A very few pupils speak Welsh at home.

Estyn does not inspect religious education or the religious content of collective worship when inspecting a school with a religious character. Instead, the governing body is required by law to arrange for religious education and collective worship to be inspected separately.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en

Summary

Pupils are happy and feel safe in school. Many enjoy their learning and most leave the school with suitable standards in English and mathematics. However, their standards in Welsh and information and communication technology (ICT) are not good enough. Pupils with special educational needs and a few who are more able make slower progress than they should. Too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough.

In most classrooms, there are warm, professional relationships and a mutual respect between pupils and adults. Generally, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. However, teachers do not have high enough expectations to challenge more able pupils to achieve as well as they could. Teachers over-direct pupils' learning and, as a result, pupils do not develop the skills they need to work independently or to solve problems for themselves.

The recent amalgamation procedure has resulted in fractured relationships and poor communication between leaders and between leaders and staff. Consequently, the rate of school improvement recently has been too slow. Staff are not clear enough about their responsibilities and many do not have regular management time to address them. For example, leaders do not manage the provision for pupils with special educational needs closely enough. Leaders do not track pupils' progress or monitor and review teachers' work, or pupils' attendance, tightly enough. This means that leaders cannot be certain that, over time, all pupils make at least the progress they should.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	**Adequate and needs improvement**
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	**Adequate and needs improvement**
Teaching and learning experiences	**Adequate and needs improvement**
Care, support and guidance	**Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement**
Leadership and management	**Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement**

Recommendations

R1 Develop communication systems and a clear strategic direction for the school to enable all staff to work together collaboratively in order to improve the school

R2 Devise robust systems to monitor, evaluate and review the work of the school

R3 Develop tracking systems to monitor and evaluate pupil progress and attendance robustly

R4 Develop the governing body's capacity to support and challenge the school and to fulfil its statutory duties

R5 Improve classroom practice to support and challenge all pupils to become more independent learners

R6 Strengthen the provision to support pupils with special educational needs

What happens next

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that special measures are required in relation to this school. The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress every four to six months, normally on a termly basis.

Main findings

Standards: Adequate and needs improvement

Many pupils start school with literacy and numeracy skills that are well developed for their age. They make appropriate progress in developing these skills and most leave with skills that are at least at the expected level for their age. However, across the school, pupils who are more able and a few of the pupils who have special educational needs do not make as much progress as they could from their individual starting points.

In the foundation phase, many pupils listen well and follow instructions carefully. From the reception classes onwards, they initiate conversations and talk confidently about their experiences. Many pupils develop their handwriting skills well. For example, most grip their pencils correctly and shape their letters carefully with consistent size and spacing. By the end of the foundation phase, many pupils write well in a suitable range of simple genres, for example when they retell familiar fairy tales or write recounts of their visit to Raglan Castle. Most pupils develop an appropriate understanding of the link between letters and sounds. They use their phonic knowledge well, for instance to make plausible attempts to spell unfamiliar words. By Year 2, many pupils read confidently with fluency and increasing expression.

Across key stage 2, many pupils develop their oracy skills well, although a few do not speak confidently, for instance when presenting formally in front of other pupils. Many pupils use their oracy skills effectively to rehearse their writing before putting pen to paper. For example, in Year 4, pupils role-play their stories about Rhodopis, the Egyptian Cinderella princess, before planning and writing the tale. By Year 6, most pupils write neatly, using a legible, joined script. Most pupils spell familiar words accurately. They make good use of punctuation and organise their writing well, for example using paragraphs. However, across the school, many do not write as well in subjects other than English. This is because they do not have enough opportunities to write freely and at length, for example in their topic work.

From Year 3, most pupils develop their reading skills well, although a few pupils need support to develop their phonic skills to a good enough level. Most can decode unfamiliar words effectively. They use a range of strategies, such as the context, to help them to work out the meaning of new words and phrases. By Year 6, most pupils are confident readers. They can infer meaning from a text and deduce information by reading 'between the lines'. However, too few pupils enjoy reading and 'getting lost in a book'.

Many pupils in reception classes develop their mathematical language well. For example, they direct a toy across a grid and are beginning to sort objects for the 'three little pigs' using their own criteria. By Year 2, most pupils can record their number work accurately. They count in groups of 10s and 5s up to 100. A few pupils are beginning to use a programmable computer toy with support to develop their understanding of direction. Many pupils are beginning to use rulers to measure length accurately, although this skill is in its early stages of development.

Through key stage 2, most pupils make suitable progress in developing their number skills and sense of place value. They use this knowledge to complete calculations and number sentences using a range of strategies appropriately. By Years 5 and 6, pupils multiply two-digit and three-digit numbers accurately. Most round their answers confidently to the nearest 10. However, a few pupils do not know their timetables facts well enough to support their mental calculation skills.

In upper key stage 2, most pupils make sensible estimates, for example when considering how long it will take them to write the date, title and focus in their exercise books. With support, they are beginning to use their numeracy skills to calculate how much time this takes over a school year. Most pupils use a stopwatch confidently and many convert the reading into different units of time. By the end of Year 6, a few pupils use effective strategies to check their work to see if their answers are reasonable.

With support, many pupils across the school are able to apply their numeracy skills in real-life contexts, for example to calculate how many sweets they would be allowed during wartime rationing or to increase the height of a scaled model of castle walls.

Most pupils develop suitable ICT skills but in a limited range of areas. Most communicate information appropriately, for example by using presentation software, making posters and composing and sending emails. However, their progress is inconsistent and they do not develop their skills broadly enough. For example, pupils do not use spreadsheets or databases effectively in key stage 2. In addition, a few pupils have weak basic skills, for example when controlling a computer mouse in the foundation phase.

Overall standards in Welsh are below those normally found. Most pupils in the reception classes listen carefully to instructions in Welsh and are beginning to respond appropriately. By the time they reach Year 2, most pupils are becoming more confident and are able to ask simple questions. Many pupils can respond with simple one-word answers when asked a question by an adult.

Pupils in key stage 2 develop their knowledge of basic Welsh language patterns suitably in their Welsh lessons. Many pupils talk about their family and pets using simple sentences. They use the past tense to say what they did in the park. On occasions, a few pupils are able to extend their answers using simple connectives.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Adequate and needs improvement

Most pupils feel safe and secure, and enjoy coming to school. They know where to go if they have a problem and they are confident that staff will respond sensitively to their worries and concerns.

Most pupils behave well in lessons and during lunch and breaks. They understand the school's systems for managing behaviour well. Most are considerate and respectful towards other pupils and adults, and a minority of older pupils enjoy helping lunchtime staff with younger pupils. In classrooms, many pupils behave responsibly. For example, they come into classrooms in a calm and orderly manner, and move around the rooms safely and sensibly. However, a very few pupils do not settle in lessons and this, on occasions across the school, slows the pace of learning.

Many pupils are confident to ask their teacher if they are unsure about a task. However, too many pupils lack the resilience to work independently. They wait for

instructions, for example before starting work and when drawing tasks to a close. Most pupils concentrate on their work for a suitable period of time. However they do not persevere with a challenge, or seek other solutions apart from asking for adult help.

Many pupils explain why they make choices about their food and drink, and many enjoy healthy snacks at breaktime. Most pupils take the opportunity to be active during their unstructured times and use the spacious playground well. A few pupils enjoy singing and harmonising to a high standard, for example during an after-school club when performing 'California Dreaming'. They take pride in representing the school, for example in sports teams or as part of the accomplished school choir, which takes part in local and national events.

There is no identified school council, but staff select a few pupils to represent their peers as part of the newly-formed pupil voice groups. A few of these groups are visible around the school, for example acting as monitors on the key stage 2 yard to help to resolve small disputes between pupils. However, many pupil voice groups are very new and are at an early stage in representing other pupils.

Pupils know that attendance is important, and they value the annual rewards for full attendance, and the weekly inter-class competition. However, over time, too few pupils attend school regularly enough.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

In most classes across the school, there are warm, professional relationships between the staff and their pupils. Many teachers provide interesting activities for their classes, and most pupils enjoy their learning. However, on too many occasions across the school, teachers control the activities too tightly. This constrains the opportunities for pupils to work independently. As a result, pupils rely too heavily on adult support and do not develop their resilience and independence well enough.

In addition, teachers too often provide the same activity for pupils of all abilities. They support the few pupils who find the work difficult, but their expectations of what more able pupils can achieve are not always high enough. This means that these pupils do not receive enough challenges in their work to extend their learning, for example through longer, independent tasks that require them to think more deeply. As a result, these pupils do not always make as much progress as they could.

Teachers generally manage pupils' behaviour well. In a few instances, and generally where the pace of teaching and learning is too slow, pupils lose concentration and fidget or chatter. Most teachers deal with this suitably but, on a few occasions, teachers allow these minor disruptions to interrupt the flow of learning unnecessarily.

Most teachers provide pupils with regular, helpful feedback about how to improve their work. In mathematics in particular, teachers provide additional practice to encourage pupils to rehearse their skills or to correct a misconception. Where pupils respond, this helps them to improve further. However, across the school, not all pupils respond consistently to their teachers' feedback.

A team of skilful learning support assistants provide effective pastoral and suitable learning support. They contribute enthusiastically to the experiences of many pupils in lessons. However, at times, pupils are over-reliant on adult support and this inhibits the development of their independent learning skills.

Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and use their assessments to monitor progress within the school. However, leaders do not quality assure teachers' assessments regularly or robustly enough to ensure that they are accurate. In Year 2 and Year 6, teachers assess pupils' work against National Curriculum criteria accurately, and they moderate their assessments appropriately with colleagues from neighbouring schools.

Teachers plan appropriate opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum. However, they do not plan a broad enough range of experiences for pupils to build their skills systematically and progressively in enough purposeful contexts. As a result, pupils are not confident to apply their skills independently in new or different contexts.

Teachers are beginning to prepare for the curriculum for Wales by trialling a new, thematic approach that aims to support pupils to become ambitious, confident and capable learners. Staff supplement the curriculum well with a wide range of visits that link closely to current themes. Pupils visit interesting places to support their learning, such as the Egypt Centre in Swansea, and they talk enthusiastically about creating their own mummy. Residential visits for older key stage 2 pupils provide suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills and self-confidence.

The school has created an engaging learning environment for the foundation phase utilising indoor and outdoor spaces well. These offer a range of suitable learning opportunities for the younger pupils, including a worthwhile forest school area.

Opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills in designated lessons are broadly suitable. However, teachers provide limited opportunities for pupils to practise their Welsh in informal situations around the school. There are a few useful activities to enrich pupils' knowledge about the culture and heritage of Wales.

Care, support and guidance: Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement

The school provides a supportive environment for pupils' wellbeing and there are positive working relationships between most staff and pupils. Parents new to the school welcome the introductory meetings that help them understand the school. These assist the youngest pupils to settle quickly.

Parents benefit from the occasional workshop sessions that support them to understand their child's learning. Teachers provide useful, annual written reports to parents on their child's progress. These reflect each child as an individual. The school uses a social media channel to share news and photographs with parents. However, too often, the school shares information at too short notice. There is no regular newsletter and, overall, communication with parents is limited.

The school's systems to track pupils' progress are not robust enough because the information gathered is not always accurate and reliable. The weak tracking means

that more able pupils do not make the progress that they could. Leaders do not hold teachers fully to account for standards and progress in their classes because the tracking information is too weak to identify issues in a timely way.

From Year 2, teachers devise helpful profiles to record all pupils' strengths and areas to develop. This supports teachers to know their pupils well. There are suitably personalised plans for pupils identified as having special educational needs. However, the quality of the plans is not good enough across the school. For example, targets are not always succinct and measureable, and the timeframe for the actions in the plans is not always clear. In addition, the school does not co-ordinate the support for these pupils well enough. Currently, many of these pupils attain their individual targets, but leaders do not have the robust evidence to be certain that all pupils with special educational needs make at least the progress that they should from their starting points.

The school has recently begun to use its own 'Cam Chart' for managing behaviour in a positive way up to Year 6. Both pupils and parents have embraced this strategy as they see it as a fair system. It enables pupils to make choices about their actions and to modify their behaviour should they need to. Teachers generally manage pupils' behaviour consistently and effectively, both in class and around the school.

Recently, the school has revised its systems for monitoring pupils' attendance. However, over time the school's systems for managing, tracking and challenging absence have not been robust enough, and attendance has not improved well enough.

Very recently, leaders have reformed the opportunities for pupils across the key stages to have a voice in the running of the school. For example, this academic year, the 'number cruncher' pupil group informs pupils of the current attendance data. Other groups, such as the 'chew crew', help to raise the profile of healthy lifestyles. However, overall, the provision does not support pupils well enough to develop their independence, for example to solve problems, or participate in decision making.

Staff plan a suitable range of enriching social and cultural activities for pupils. They give pupils suitable opportunities to learn about how people lived in the past in Wales, such as through visits to Raglan Castle. The school gives pupils opportunities to learn about the work of famous Welsh people, like Roald Dahl, and to participate in a school eisteddfod. They also have opportunities to develop their public performance skills by performing in the school's annual pantomime. They benefit from participating in a range of after-school clubs, including the school choir and the 'calm club'.

There is an appropriate programme for personal and social education. This often involves expertise from the community, such as police liaison officers and school nurses. Pupils learn about staying safe online, but not all pupils understand how to look after themselves, for example on the internet. The school makes appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils broadly meet requirements. However, a concern about the security of the entrance gate was brought to leaders' attention.

Leadership and management: Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement

The process of amalgamation and the formation of the new primary school has created many time-consuming challenges. These challenges have diverted leaders from the school's core purpose of delivering teaching and learning experiences of high quality for the benefit of the pupils. Relationships between the staff and leaders, and between leaders themselves, have become fractured. Too often the channels of communication are unclear, and meetings do not always result in shared, purposeful decisions or outcomes. This has affected the smooth running of the school on a daily basis, and the wellbeing of the staff and leaders who work there.

Leaders have recently redistributed roles and responsibilities more equitably between the staff. However, too many staff do not have a job description that accurately reflects their current roles and responsibilities.

Middle leaders have recently received training to help them understand their role. They are enthusiastic about forthcoming opportunities to develop their newly allocated areas of learning and experience. However, their role in monitoring and evaluating the current provision is underdeveloped. As a result, they do not contribute well enough to the school's self-evaluation procedures or to decisions about the school's priorities for improvement.

The most recent school development plan has clear, suitable priorities and appropriate actions, and is supported by a new, more rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluation. This term, leaders have begun a cycle of worthwhile monitoring activities linked to the development plan, including book looks and learning walks. However, leaders do not monitor and evaluate the quality of teachers' classroom practice and the standards that pupils achieve systematically or on a regular enough basis. For example, leaders have not observed directly the quality of teaching across the classes since 2017. In addition, leaders do not revisit monitoring activities, such as book scrutiny, to check that the required improvements have taken place. Across the school, there are too few opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants to learn from each other, for example by observing their colleagues working in other phases of the school.

There have been a few recent, useful school improvements. For example, the introduction of a structured phonics scheme last year ensures that all pupils in the foundation phase learn their sounds systematically. However, over time, the school's track record of improvement is less successful. For example, improving Welsh and attendance were both recommendations from the last inspections of the two former schools, but remain shortcomings and are priorities on the current whole-school development plan.

Currently, leaders do not use performance information strategically enough to identify the impact of school improvement actions on pupil progress. For example, leaders have allocated the previous years' pupil development grant funding appropriately to support pupils eligible for free school meals but they do not know whether the actions have improved the progress of the targetted pupils. The present school tracking system is not sophisticated enough for leaders to be certain that all pupils make the progress they should from their individual starting points. Currently, leaders do not hold teachers to account for the progress of pupils in their class enough.

Leaders have attended local training that they have shared with staff to begin to develop an understanding of the curriculum for Wales. In addition, teachers have participated in worthwhile professional enquiry, for example undertaking research into outdoor learning and problem solving.

The governing body is supportive of the school. Governors meet regularly to monitor the school's finances and discuss the budget. However, the school's financial position has fluctuated significantly since the amalgamation and is too volatile overall. Governors have recently attended training with the teachers, to support the development of the school's new curriculum. However, their role in guiding the school's strategic direction and acting as a critical friend is limited. For example, governors do not visit the school formally on a regular enough basis to assure themselves through first-hand evidence of the impact of improvement actions. Currently, governors do not meet all of their statutory duties, for example in reviewing statutory policies regularly enough, or through the detail of their annual report to parents.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent 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 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' wellbeing, 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

Copies of the report

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

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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