

**A report on**  
**Magor V.A. Primary School**

**Sycamore Terrace  
Magor  
Newport  
Monmouthshire  
NP26 3EG**

**Date of inspection: January 2025**

**by**

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

## About Magor V.A. Primary School

Name of provider	Magor V.A. Primary School
Local authority	Monmouthshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Church in Wales Voluntary Aided
Number of pupils on roll	301
Pupils of statutory school age	234
Number in nursery classes	35
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%)	12.4%
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%)	15.0%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	3.8%
Date of headteacher appointment	02/09/2024
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	25/05/2017

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Start date of inspection	20/01/2025
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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

Magor Voluntary Aided Primary School is a welcoming and inclusive school with a strong sense of community, where pupils feel safe and happy. Most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those from challenging socio-economic backgrounds, make good overall progress during their time at school. Since his recent appointment, the headteacher has communicated a clear vision for the school based upon raising aspirations whilst maintaining a strong focus on the well-being of pupils and staff. Working closely with a skilled leadership team, he ensures that his vision motivates the school community, ensuring everyone feels valued and supported.

Provision for pupils with ALN is a strength of the school. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well. They respond well to the wide range of pupils' needs and support them to make good progress in relation to their individual learning and developmental targets.

Leaders evaluate the effectiveness of aspects of the school's work appropriately. They use this information suitably to bring about improvements, for instance to Welsh language provision. However, leaders have not identified the need to ensure that teaching supports all pupils, especially the more able, to make the progress they could in developing and applying their skills. Teachers develop pupils' oracy, reading, writing and Welsh language skills suitably. Across the school, pupils make strong progress in their mathematics and digital skills. Teachers generally provide a broad and interesting range of learning experiences. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to develop skills and interests in other areas of learning such as music and sport and to take on leadership roles through a variety of pupil voice groups. However, teachers do not always support pupils to build effectively upon prior learning to ensure that they make the progress that they could over time.

## Recommendations

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

- R1. Improve the quality of monitoring and evaluation to ensure that processes identify areas for improvement robustly, including ensuring that teaching provides suitable challenge for all pupils
- R2. Continue to develop a curriculum that provides an authentic, cohesive and systematic approach to the development of pupils' skills over time
- R3. Improve the quality of pupil feedback to support and provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to respond and improve their work

## What happens next

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

## Main evaluation

Magor Primary School is a welcoming, and nurturing community where leaders, teachers and support staff create a positive environment that fosters care and inclusion. The recently appointed headteacher's vision for the school focuses on raising pupils' aspirations and empowering the entire school community. In a very short amount of time, he has brought the staff together as an effective team with a strong culture of collaboration.

Relationships between staff and pupils have a positive impact on pupils' school experience and their attitudes to learning. Overall, staff are effective in their roles. They support most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and pupils from challenging socio-economic backgrounds, to make good progress from their starting points.

### **Spotlight: Removing the barriers to learning for ALN pupils**

Tailored provision for pupils with ALN meets their needs well. The school has worked effectively to create a calm and nurturing environment and ethos. Staff ensure that pupils with ALN access the full range of learning experiences. Additional provision, such as a broad range of intervention programmes, helps them to do this successfully and make good progress towards their individual targets. Leaders and staff work collaboratively and effectively with families and a range of external agencies to access appropriate advice and support to meet the needs of the pupils. As a result, most ALN pupils demonstrate good levels of well-being. They enjoy coming to school. Opportunities for pupils to discuss their feelings and emotions through regular well-being check-ins are successful in supporting pupils to settle into the school day.

Staff are strong language role models, and this supports pupils effectively with their language acquisition. Many pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and by Year 6 they are confident, articulate communicators, for instance when they perform scripts they have written for an audience. As a result of a consistent whole-school approach to teaching reading most pupils make good progress and become confident and competent readers. In the youngest classes, pupils develop a good understanding of phonics and word patterns and begin to apply these when decoding new words. In the older classes, many pupils begin to employ a range of skills well to support their wider learning and to read for pleasure. Provision for the youngest pupils to develop their early writing skills is strong. By Year 2, many pupils are beginning to communicate meaning using simple, well punctuated sentences. Overall, many older pupils make appropriate progress in developing their writing skills. By Year 6 many pupils write suitably using a range of genres, but they do not have enough opportunities to apply or build upon these skills well enough across other areas of the curriculum. Teacher feedback does not support pupils well enough to understand what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve their written work. This contributes to pupils not consistently making the progress they could in this aspect of their learning.

Leaders' strategic approach to improving pupils' Welsh oracy skills has had a positive impact across the school. Most teachers use Welsh vocabulary and model phrases appropriately during daily routines and Welsh lessons. Younger pupils exchange greetings and answer questions, and older pupils develop their Welsh vocabulary well and make good attempts to engage in simple conversations.

Provision to develop pupils' mathematics skills is effective. Most pupils work confidently and accurately with number. For example, in older classes pupils calculate profit and loss accurately and apply their skills appropriately in real-life contexts, such as when budgeting

for a packed lunch. Overall, though, pupils do not generally develop their numerical reasoning and problem solving as well as they could.

Teachers provide a stimulating, rich environment for pupils both inside and outdoors. All pupils have valuable opportunities to access and explore tasks and activities independently in these areas. Teachers create focused interactive areas of learning in the younger classes with purposeful activities. Nearly all of the youngest pupils engage well with this provision and show good levels of perseverance. Nearly all pupils use a variety of digital resources and tools confidently to support their learning. Across the school pupils have beneficial opportunities to develop their creative skills. For example, the youngest pupils create their own music in the outdoors and older pupils plan and create Christmas cards in the style of different artists. Provision for the development of pupils' physical skills is good. The youngest pupils improve their fine and gross motor skills through activities such as riding bikes and manipulating playdough. Many older pupils develop co-ordination, technique and strategy skills successfully when participating in a range of sporting activities. In general, though, the school does not have a cohesive plan for the progressive development of pupils' skills. This means that there are gaps in pupils learning that prevent them from making the progress that they could. In addition, teachers currently do not take full advantage of opportunities to deliver learning experiences in authentic contexts that are relevant to the pupils interests.

Nearly all teachers pace lessons appropriately. They use questioning and pitstops skilfully to explain or reinforce learning and to highlight useful teaching points. In many classes, pupils work well independently and collaboratively. However, the level of challenge does not consistently meet the needs of the more able pupils well enough.

Many pupils relish opportunities to take on leadership roles through joining a variety of pupil voice groups. Pupils in these groups talk with enthusiasm about the impact of their work and how they support the school community. For example, the Climate Leaders talk proudly about how they use solar panels, provided by a solar panel expert, to charge digital devices in sunny weather.

Regular acts of collective worship provide valuable and thoughtful support for pupils' spiritual and moral development. They include beneficial opportunities for pupils to reflect on their thoughts and feelings.

Leaders use a sound range of first-hand evidence to appropriately evaluate the impact of the school's work on pupil outcomes. Where this is most successful, they use the findings from this work well to inform their improvement strategy. This has led to notable improvements to the learning environment and to provision for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills. Where monitoring processes are less effective, they do not

identify aspects of teaching and learning that require improvement well enough. These include the level of challenge provided for more able pupils.

Professional development arrangements are effective in supporting staff to improve aspects of their practice. There is a strong culture within the school of developing leaders thus building capacity across the school. Early career teachers receive valuable training and support from experienced school leaders, to improve Welsh provision across the school, resulting in good pupil progress and positive attitudes toward learning Welsh.

The governing body is highly effective in supporting the school. Governors provide a good balance of support and challenge. They support leaders to use finance effectively. This includes the use of the pupil development grant, which funds a range of highly beneficial provision for pupils. They work effectively with school leaders to address national priorities and ensure that school improvement priorities impact positively on pupil outcomes.

### **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/carers 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:

Publications Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

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