

**A report on**

**Millbrook Primary School**

**Parrett Road  
Bettws  
Newport  
NP20 7DQ**

**Date of inspection: March 2025**

**by**

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

## About Millbrook Primary School

Name of provider	Millbrook 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	267
Pupils of statutory school age	237
Number in nursery classes	14
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%)	30%
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%)	5%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	12%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2024
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/11/2016
Start date of inspection	31/03/2025

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

Leaders and staff have worked diligently to create a 'home from home' for pupils and established an engaging learning environment at their current site. Although outdoor space is limited, many younger pupils benefit from inviting outdoor areas where they develop their social and physical skills well.

Leaders and staff are positive role models and foster an inclusive and friendly ethos. Staff develop effective working relationships with pupils, have high expectations for behaviour and provide strong support for pupils to recognise and manage their emotions. As a result, most pupils across the school have positive attitudes towards their learning.

School leaders are committed to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Most staff support pupils, including those from low-income households or with additional learning needs (ALN), to make good progress from their individual starting points.

Staff have developed an enquiry-led approach to the curriculum that provides pupils with a range of interesting and authentic learning experiences. Teachers use questioning and feedback well to check pupils' understanding and move learning forward. In a few lessons staff do not provide a high enough level of challenge in learning experiences and opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills are under-developed.

The school maintains strong relationships with parents and carers supported by the effective work of the family engagement team. Pupils across the school benefit from involvement in a broad range of leadership groups.

Leaders carry out a broad range of activities that assess the quality of the school's work. They choose school priorities carefully and ensure that they have a direct impact on pupils' learning. School governors provide enthusiastic and knowledgeable support.

## Recommendations

We have made one recommendation to help the school continue to improve:

- R1. Further develop consistency in teaching to ensure that all pupils work at an appropriate level of challenge and develop as effective independent learners

## **What happens next**

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

## **Main evaluation**

Following a period of disruption, leaders and staff have created an engaging and homely environment for pupils' learning in their current school accommodation. Staff form caring and respectful working relationships with pupils. They are good role models and have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond well to these expectations, demonstrating support and developing empathy for others.

Many pupils start school with social and communication skills below those expected for their age. Senior leaders are committed to improving the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that pupils make effective progress from their individual starting points. Leaders have developed robust procedures to identify and support pupils with ALN. Skilled teaching assistants provide a range of beneficial interventions that develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well. Most staff support pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those from low-income households, to make good progress.

Leaders and staff have developed a thoughtful, enquiry-led curriculum that engages pupils in their learning and supports pupils' cultural awareness well. Most pupils benefit from authentic opportunities to develop their problem-solving and thinking skills effectively. Staff develop pupils' knowledge and awareness of Wales and the wider world thoughtfully. For example, older pupils research the impact of the industrial revolution on life in Wales and contrast this with life at the time in New Zealand. Staff make creative use of the current school environment to support pupils' learning. Although outdoor space is limited, staff use the outdoor areas purposefully and regularly to develop younger pupils' social and physical skills well.

Teachers plan systematically to develop pupils' literacy and mathematical skills. In the younger classes, there is a strong focus on developing early reading skills and pupils enjoy reading and listening to stories. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils read a range of fiction and non-fiction texts confidently. They use these skills well to support their learning across the curriculum. The youngest pupils develop their early number skills well. By Year 6, most pupils use their calculation skills effectively in their work across the curriculum. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their digital skills in a range of meaningful activities. For example, older pupils develop algorithms to control a step counter when investigating the impact of exercise on healthy lifestyles.

Overall, teachers use questioning and feedback well to check for understanding and give pupils time to reflect on their work. They move pupils' learning along at a good pace and support pupils to make good progress during individual lessons and over time. In a few lessons, staff over-direct the learning and, in these lessons, pupils do not develop their independent learning skills well enough. In many lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and share these effectively with them. However, in a few lessons staff do not always provide a high enough level of challenge and, on these occasions, pupils do not make the progress they should.

The school's support for pupils' emotional needs is particularly effective in ensuring that they understand how to self-regulate and engage effectively with their learning. Leaders work constructively with external partners, to support pupils who need ongoing support with behaviour.

### **Spotlight 1: Effective family engagement**

The school develops strong connections with parents and carers through effective family engagement. The support includes establishing daily family routines, guidance on how to support their child at home and signposting further help in the community. This leads to positive outcomes for pupils, such as improving early language skills as well as attending school regularly. The weekly family café maintains strong links with parents.

Leaders evaluate the school's work thoroughly. Staff and pupils are clear about what they are doing well and how they can improve. Leaders act swiftly to improve pupils' learning and progress, using the information gathered through purposeful monitoring activities to identify the most important priorities for improvement. They choose the priorities carefully, ensuring that staff have time and resources to embed the changes that make the most impact on pupils' learning. Leaders provide a beneficial range of professional learning for staff. This has a positive impact on pupils' skills, for example developing a consistent approach to early reading. Staff benefit from visits to local schools to observe strong practice and this has improved outdoor learning provision for younger pupils.

### **Spotlight 2: Developing pupils' leadership skills to influence the life and work of the school**

A strong feature of the school is the opportunity for pupils to take on responsibility and use their own ideas to make a difference. Members of the many pupil leadership groups take an enthusiastic and thoughtful approach to their work. They regularly organise whole-school activities to promote causes or celebrate the inclusive nature of the school. Members of the Criw Cynefin provide welcome packs for new pupils and celebrate differences, for example through autism awareness days.

School governors are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and have a good understanding of the school's priorities. They are developing their role of critical friend well and provide strong support for leaders and staff through the recent changes. They fulfil their curriculum link roles diligently, for instance when evaluating the development of pupils' Welsh oracy skills.

Following the school's move to a new site, leaders and staff continue to maintain strong relationships with parents and the community. Many parents feel that the school considers their views and that, when they share issues or concerns, they are addressed appropriately.

### **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)

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