

A report on

Mount Stuart Primary

**Adelaide Street
Butetown
CF10 5BS**

Date of inspection: March 2025

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About Mount Stuart Primary

Name of provider	Mount Stuart Primary
Local authority	Cardiff Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	433
Pupils of statutory school age	303
Number in nursery classes	72
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%)	41.3%
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%)	3.6%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	56.8%
Date of headteacher appointment	January 2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	11/12/2017

Start date of inspection	10/03/2025
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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

- a. The term ‘additional learning needs’ is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Summary

Mount Stuart Primary is a welcoming and inclusive school with a clear vision that brings staff, pupils, and parents together. Its strong values of respect, resilience, and creativity help pupils develop confidence and a love of learning. Staff build positive relationships with pupils and families, creating a strong sense of community. Because of this, nearly all pupils engage enthusiastically in their learning and make good progress.

The school provides a diverse and engaging curriculum that meets pupils' needs well. Pupils enjoy a wide range of experiences, including exciting opportunities in the arts. The curriculum successfully connects Welsh culture with global influences, helping pupils appreciate both their local heritage and the wider world. Learning experiences reflect diversity and promote fairness, equality, and respect. A key strength is the school's commitment to anti-racism and diversity. Staff receive high-quality professional learning in these areas and then share their expertise with other schools.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' language and communication skills. Staff model multiple languages, creating a supportive environment, which helps most pupils to develop confidence in speaking. A structured approach to literacy ensures that most pupils make strong progress in reading and writing. Teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills. Most make good progress in number work but have fewer chances to apply their understanding to problem-solving or across the curriculum. Younger pupils learn basic Welsh vocabulary, while many older pupils use the language to ask and answer simple questions.

The youngest pupils thrive in a high-quality, well-structured environment that nurtures their independence and curiosity. Pupil voice groups actively support the school's work, enabling most older pupils to promote issues they care about.

Most pupils confidently use digital programs to support their learning. However, there are limited opportunities to explore a wider range of technology, reducing their ability to develop more varied skills.

While the school monitors attendance carefully, current strategies have not yet reduced absences effectively.

Governors have a clear and insightful understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They provide well-informed support and challenge to leaders. Leaders, including governors, use school funding purposefully to improve outcomes for targeted pupils.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Ensure that pupils apply their numeracy skills purposefully and at an appropriate level across the curriculum
- R2. Ensure that pupils develop a broader range of digital skills
- R3. Improve attendance

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Mount Stuart Primary is a vibrant and exciting learning environment. Its distinctive, well-defined vision permeates all aspects of school life and brings staff, pupils and parents together. Strong partnerships, teamwork and open communication strengthen the school's work and reflect its core values such as resilience, respect and creativity. As a result, most pupils are motivated and make good progress from their individual starting points.

School leaders set and communicate high expectations, particularly for the development of pupils' language and communication skills. Embracing a multilingual community, they have created a successful environment where staff, representative of diverse backgrounds, model multiple languages effectively. This means that pupils see themselves reflected in others across the school and helps nearly all pupils to make strong progress in developing their oracy and communication skills. Younger pupils develop Welsh vocabulary related to food, weather, and body parts. Many older pupils use the present tense to ask and answer simple questions with increasing confidence.

The school's structured approach to teaching literacy skills supports pupils to learn new skills and apply these skills both in literacy lessons and across the curriculum. Most pupils write confidently across a range of genres with increasingly sophisticated vocabulary and punctuation. Teachers plan exciting opportunities for pupils to meet published authors and provide representative reading materials that inspires pupils to read. A strong reading culture ensures that nearly all pupils make good progress.

Teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills and vocabulary. Most pupils make good progress and confidently move from practical resources to visual methods before working independently with numbers and symbols. Teachers plan fewer opportunities for pupils to use their understanding of mathematical concepts to solve problems or to apply their numeracy skills at an appropriate level across the curriculum.

Most pupils confidently use simple digital programs and applications to support their learning. While these experiences help pupils develop their digital skills, there are limited opportunities for pupils to explore a wider range of digital technology, reducing their ability to build more varied skills. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of internet safety, which enables them to use technology responsibly.

Spotlight: Successful implementation of a rich, diverse curriculum

Leaders are strongly committed to embedding anti-racism and diversity. They lead professional learning that helps others to deepen their understanding of best practices in diversity and curriculum development, both within the school and more widely. The school's curriculum strongly reflects its diverse community. Staff carefully plan learning experiences to ensure representation of all cultures and religions. This broadens pupils' perspectives and strengthens the inclusive learning environment.

The dynamic, bespoke curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to engage enthusiastically with the arts and to make connections between Wales and other cultures. Nearly all pupils feel inspired by the curriculum and connect well with their learning.

The headteacher's passionate and effective leadership drives improvement and encourages pupils to become ethical and informed citizens. She is highly knowledgeable in educational research and actively instils this ethos in others. She works alongside dedicated leaders and staff to promote a diverse and anti-racist community, embedding these values across daily school life. This approach effectively nurtures high expectations, a deep sense of cynefin, and a culture of respect and responsibility

The school promotes well-being effectively and nurtures positive attitudes to learning. Staff listen attentively to pupils and provide effective support that helps pupils to understand rules and rewards. Pupils demonstrate a strong sense of justice and high levels of care for their school and each other. Positive relationships create a respectful environment where pupils learn about each other's experiences through meaningful activities. Nearly all pupils collaborate well with each other, helping them develop patience and cooperation skills. Staff promote positive behaviour and equip pupils with the vocabulary and strategies to manage their emotions, ensuring that nearly all behave well in lessons and around the school.

The school provides tailored support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), strengthened by valuable links with external agencies. ALN co-ordinators and teachers plan effectively, while skilled teaching assistants deliver targeted programmes in literacy, numeracy, and well-being to accelerate progress. Because of this, most pupils with ALN, or with other barriers to their learning, make suitable progress from their individual starting points

In most lessons, staff use effective questioning to check for understanding and to encourage pupils to extend their ideas. The pace of lessons is generally good and this contributes to sustained pupil engagement and progress. In most cases, activities meet the needs of pupils well and they receive an appropriate level of support and challenge.

Teachers plan meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop independence in their learning. In the best examples, teachers carefully consider the resources and learning environment. For example, in the nursery class, staff develop exemplary provision for the youngest pupils to develop a range of skills through independent play. Staff observe learning skilfully and enhance opportunities for learning through highly effective intervention.

Senior leaders support staff well to develop a shared understanding of progression. Staff provide effective feedback that helps pupils to understand what they have done well and their next steps in learning. Throughout the school, staff have a thorough understanding of individual pupils' needs and plan effectively for progression.

The school's improvement priorities develop through ongoing self-evaluation and a clear focus on pupils' needs. Overall, leaders identify the most important areas for improvement and effectively monitor them using a transparent review cycle. Leaders address national priorities well by supporting Welsh language development and implementing ALN reforms. The curriculum effectively meets the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales. There are many clear links between school priorities, tailored professional learning, and the positive impact on pupil progress.

Governors have a clear and insightful understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the work of the school. Their broad range of experience and skills strengthens decision-making and ensures they provide well-informed support and challenge to school leaders. Leaders, including governors, use the school's grant funding purposefully to improve outcomes for targeted pupils.

Staff build strong partnerships with parents and the community, promoting open communication and trust. Parents value regular updates and feel confident approaching the school with concerns. These supportive relationships enable parents to play an active role in their child's learning. The school's caring approach is especially helpful for new pupils and their families arriving from other countries, supporting them well as they settle into school life. The school monitors attendance appropriately, but current systems are not effective enough in reducing absences, which remain too high.

Pupil voice groups actively support the school's work and help pupils develop useful leadership skills. This enables most older pupils to use their voice positively to promote issues that they care about.

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)

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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