



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

A report on

Newport Nursery School

**Church Road
Newport
NP19 7EJ**

Date of inspection: March 2023

by

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

About Newport Nursery School

Name of provider	Newport Nursery School
Local authority	Newport City Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Nursery
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	79
Pupils of statutory school age	N/A
Number in nursery classes	79
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 23.0%)	N/A
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 16.1%)	27.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2022
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	13/03/2023

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.

Overview

Newport Nursery School is a happy, nurturing, and inclusive school. Pupils enjoy attending the setting and settle quickly into new routines. Staff build strong relationships with pupils and know them well.

Most pupils make suitable progress in their communication, social, physical, and mathematical skills during their time at the school. Pupils in the Communication Class specialist resource base make particularly strong progress due to highly skilled and effective teaching by staff. The impact of the professional learning for these staff and the positive impact they have on pupils is a strength of the school.

The school's provision to develop pupils' Welsh language skills is effective. As a result, pupils are beginning to use and recognise simple vocabulary related to shapes and the weather, greet their friends, and join in with songs and rhymes.

Leaders and staff are at an early stage of developing a curriculum that best meets the needs of early years pupils. Staff pay good attention to the needs of pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and plan effectively to best support them in their learning. Overall, however, the school does not plan well enough for pupils who attend the mainstream classes to explore and investigate independently to develop their ideas and thinking. In general, staff do not always pay appropriate attention of children's interests and fascinations as an integral part of their planning to support their engagement in learning.

The recently appointed executive headteacher knows the school well. Leaders evaluate the school's work to plan for improvements thoroughly, using robust self-evaluation processes. These monitoring activities lead to worthwhile training for staff to develop their skills through effective professional learning opportunities.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that teachers create learning experiences and environments that enable pupils to become independent, curious, and creative learners
- R2 Develop the school's curriculum to reflect the learning needs of early years pupils

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to 'The impact of professional learning on outcomes for pupils with specific additional learning needs', for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main evaluation

Learning

When pupils start in the nursery, many have skills below those expected for their stage of development. However, most settle quickly into school life and learn daily routines quickly. During their time in school, most pupils make suitable progress from their starting points. Pupils who attend the Communication Class make strong progress.

Most pupils including those with ALN, listen attentively to instructions and develop their skills to communicate their needs well. As they develop a wider range of spoken vocabulary, pupils begin to talk confidently with friends and visitors. They ask and answer simple questions, ask for help and seek clarification effectively. A few older pupils develop as articulate speakers and relish opportunities to talk about their work and their school.

Many pupils enjoy looking at books. They begin to hold books correctly and identify features such as the changes of colour of the main character as it moves through the book. They share their favourite books with their friends and enjoy discussing their content as they look at the pictures together. A majority of pupils are beginning to recognise their own name when finding their coat hook. They understand that writing has meaning by pointing to letters and words on wall displays that feature aspects of their learning. For example, most recognise the labelling of a daffodil correctly as part of their learning about Spring. Most pupils enjoy retelling stories they have heard and act different parts enthusiastically. However, very few pupils choose to visit the book corner without adult encouragement.

Many pupils develop early writing skills appropriately. They use a wide range of resources to make marks and understand that they are developing their communication skills. Many draw, paint, and make patterns and are beginning to write using a suitable pencil grip. A majority of children are beginning to use their emergent writing skills in their imaginative play, for example when attempting to write notes and lists. A very few write their name confidently.

Many pupils are beginning to identify colours, numbers, and shapes in Welsh. They enjoy singing a range of songs and rhymes in Welsh, and as a result are beginning to use simple Welsh vocabulary to greet their friends and describe the weather.

Most pupils, including those in the Communication Class make suitable progress in their mathematical development. Many count to at least five and match objects to numbers accurately. They recognise and name shapes in the environment and identify the number of sides they have. For example, during snack time, a few pupils identify the similarities between their slice of toast to that of a rectangle. They identify accurately the number of sides and point out that their slice was cut in half. Many pupils use mathematical vocabulary in their play, for example when comparing large and small. However, they do not have regular opportunities to explore mathematical concepts in their learning experiences. As a result, pupils do not build on their skills progressively enough to ensure that they have a secure understanding of these concepts.

Across the school, many pupils make appropriate use of a small range of digital resources to support their learning. They count objects on a screen and control objects to create pictures using digital programs. Many enjoy discovering how household items work and confidently record their work using mobile devices. However, many pupils do not use technology purposefully enough to make progress in their digital skills.

Most pupils' physical skills develop well during their time at the school. They move confidently when using the climbing equipment and demonstrate their strength and stamina when moving large cardboard boxes during imaginative play. Many children develop good fine motor skills, for example when using pincer movements carefully to pick up and move small objects such as pegs from one space to another.

Pupils are beginning to develop their creativity and imagination well. They use a range of resources including natural materials, to create models, collage, and paintings. Pupils in the Communication Class use their senses enthusiastically when learning to express themselves. They use music and movement well to enhance their learning. However, generally across the school, opportunities for pupils to experience music and dance to further develop their creative skills are limited.

Many pupils work well in pairs and small groups when developing their problem-solving skills during free play. For example, they share ideas with others when working out how best to repair broken computer screens and keyboards. Most persevere when using tools to remove the screws and take care to wear their safety goggles.

Many pupils demonstrate a sense of curiosity. They ask questions and seek resources to help them investigate their interests. They repeat actions and demonstrate fascination when discovering new concepts for themselves.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils feel cared for at the school, and as a result they feel safe and valued. Most pupils settle quickly and cope well with separating from their parents. Staff are welcoming and caring in their interactions with pupils which support nearly all children to feel relaxed and content in their inclusive surroundings. This supports them to form positive bonds with staff and their peers. This positive, and nurturing relationship between staff and pupils is a strength of the school.

Nearly all pupils are kind, polite and respectful towards adults and their friends and welcome visitors in a friendly manner. They are beginning to develop friendships that are important to them, for example they actively seek out others they wish to play alongside or sit next to. Most pupils engage suitably in their play and learning and are beginning to make choices and decisions about their play. They choose from a range of resources that are available to them. Many pupils enjoy joining in with songs and rhymes or listening to a story. In addition, most pupils enjoy the opportunities to explore different areas within the classrooms such as the well-resourced outdoor learning area.

Most pupils communicate confidently as they know most of what they say is listened and responded to appropriately. They convey and express their needs well using

verbal and nonverbal forms of communication. For example, pupils in the Communication Class use picture cue cards when choosing snacks or when selecting an activity, they want to participate in.

Nearly all pupils co-operate well and interact positively with their peers and staff. Most are respectful to their friends and use toys and resources appropriately. Pupils understand and follow routines well, for example when quietly moving from class to cloakroom, and when collecting coats and craftwork they have completed prior to going home. Most pupils show empathy and respect for others taking care of their classroom and resources.

Most pupils develop their independent skills well, for example they choose their snacks and drinks during snack time confidently and dispose of the left-over food in the appropriate recycling containers which supports them to gain an understanding of recycling. Many pupils are beginning to recognise and understand the feelings of others, for example they notice and respond appropriately when their friends need help or comfort. Many pupils happily share their experiences with others. They enjoy talking about what they are doing and what they like to do. For example, they excitedly discuss how they prepared and cooked a Welsh rarebit for their snack.

Teaching and learning experiences

Across the school, staff know pupils well. They develop good relationships with pupils and their families. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well and, as a result, they generally engage positively with their learning.

The school is beginning to develop its curriculum to reflect the principles of Curriculum for Wales. Leaders and teachers are beginning to consider the Non-Maintained Curriculum when planning topics that reflect pupils' interests to best meet the needs of early years pupils. Pupils generally respond well to the learning experiences on offer.

Teachers provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to visit local play centres and to learn from visitors to the school such as an animal display group. They involve families when planning an enterprise venture and encourage pupils to think about how they can protect the environment by recycling and reusing items.

All staff place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' Welsh language skills. They include Welsh incidentally throughout the sessions and in many teacher-led activities. The school has a strong Welsh ethos and pupils have many opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and heritage. They learn about the traditions and special celebrations associated with Wales and dress in traditional clothes for Saint David's Day. Pupils have opportunities to learn about other cultures and festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali through experience days. However, overall, the school's plans to develop pupils' understanding of diversity is at an early stage.

The school has suitable arrangements to develop pupils' communication and mathematical skills. In a few instances pupils demonstrate their early understanding of how to handle books and enjoy role-playing stories that are familiar to them. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop a love of reading through sharing stories or rhymes together. Pupils develop a suitable understanding of shape, time, and

number. However, teachers do not always provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills across all areas of learning.

The school develops pupils' Welsh language skills well. Teachers model and encourage the language through songs and simple patterns such as those used to describe feelings and the weather. Plans for the development of pupils' digital skills are less well developed.

Many staff have high expectations of pupils, and teachers are beginning to consider their individual needs in their planning. In the Communication Class. For example, staff skilfully employ highly effective approaches to successfully engage pupils with specific needs. As a result, pupils respond exceptionally well to their learning experiences and make steady and sustained progress towards their targets. Where teachers provide opportunities for pupils to make choices, they engage with their learning purposefully and independently. However, where learning is over-directed, pupils do not develop successfully as independent learners. There are too few opportunities for them to explore their environment or to make suggestions, ask questions and talk in more detail about the aspects of their learning that interest them. Staff do not always respond quickly and effectively enough to offer pupils consolidation or challenge. As a result, pupils' learning is not always strengthened and deepened well enough.

The school is well resourced, and staff have developed safe and inviting areas to enable learning. Learning environments are well-organised and pupils know where to find the resources they need for learning and for self-care. Despite the challenges presented by the school's restricted outdoor area, staff create an interesting outdoor learning environment with a wide range of areas planned to enrich pupils' learning experiences. However, pupils do not access the outdoors freely throughout the school day. Staff do not always plan worthwhile opportunities for pupils to respond to their interests and ideas as they explore this environment.

Across the school, staff monitor and track pupil progress carefully. They use questioning to assess pupils' understanding of learning during teacher led tasks appropriately. Teachers and support staff gather useful information through observations, evaluation of learning and the impact of interventions. Staff regularly discuss pupil progress and share this information beneficially with parents. Where assessment is used purposefully, staff identify next steps in learning, set targets and make appropriate arrangements for additional support. Staff in both classes work together to ensure that all pupils with additional needs receive the targeted support they need. However, assessment information is not always used effectively to inform planning for learning for all pupils. As a result, teaching is too often based on content rather than the next steps in learning for all pupils.

Care, support and guidance

All staff understand their roles and responsibilities to keep pupils safe and healthy. They understand their responsibility to safeguard pupils from harm. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Staff follow effective routines, which support pupils to keep safe and healthy, for example cleaning tables after use and ensuring that pupils wash their hands frequently. The school provides a range of healthy snacks for pupils to choose from during snack time and ensure that pupils' preferences and requirements are known and met. Nearly all staff support pupils' physical development well by providing opportunities for them to be active and get fresh air during planned times when they can access the outdoor areas. The school has appropriate systems in place to monitor attendance.

There are robust systems to identify, monitor and review the progress of pupils with ALN. All staff, including the additional needs co-ordinator, contribute effectively to the provision of learning experiences. Staff who lead targeted individual support programmes in the Communication Class are particularly effective in meeting the needs of their pupils. The school has made good progress in implementing national ALN reform. Individual development plans are thorough and effectively reflect all the pupil's needs. This ensures continuity of provision and has an important impact on pupils learning.

All staff manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. They use praise appropriately to celebrate achievements and reward good interactions. Staff encourage pupils to be kind and take turns in their play. They model appropriate language that supports pupils to understand how to share resources and resolve conflict. Staff remind pupils of the rules of the setting and support pupils to be well mannered in their interactions with others.

Teachers plan a range of suitable experiences and activities for pupils to learn about and celebrate the history and culture of Wales. For example, they hold an annual Eisteddfod, produce pictures and paintings based on the work of Welsh artists and visit local places of interest. The school plans interesting cultural themed days for pupils to celebrate and learn more about the people in their community. For example, they invite parents and pupils to share celebrations such as Eid with the wider school community sharing food and music, dance, and stories from their culture.

Teachers develop pupils' spiritual, moral, and social skills appropriately. They plan and deliver a range of tasks that support pupils to develop an understanding of the world they live in and how to take care of it, such as planting daffodil bulbs in recyclable containers as presents for Mother's Day. Staff encourages pupils to think of others in need in their community and in the wider world who need help and support. The school actively raises fund for local and national charities, for example working collaboratively with a local primary school to run enterprise events and collect food and toiletries for refugee charities.

Leadership and management

The school is newly established following the amalgamation of two previous nursery schools. An executive head has been appointed recently from a local primary school. Leaders have managed this change well and this has resulted in staff who feel well supported in their roles and pupils who are happy and settled in their environment. The executive headteacher is developing her own vision for the school and this is this is beginning to be shared appropriately with staff.

Throughout the school there are dedicated members of staff who nurture and care for pupils, this is particularly so for pupils with ALN. All staff take pride in modelling professional behaviours and attitudes. They are courteous, warm, and kind in their interactions with pupils. Leaders focus on ensuring that pupils have a strong sense of well-being and have regular and worthwhile opportunities to use and hear the Welsh language during their time at the school.

Arrangements for the management of staff performance are appropriate. Targets link well to the school's priorities and personal development. Leaders ensure that the school makes appropriate progress in addressing national priorities. The school is beginning to design and deliver on its local interpretation of the Curriculum for Wales, considering the appropriateness of the curriculum for early years pupils. Staff have beneficial opportunities to work collaboratively with other schools to gain an understanding of curriculum design and pupil progression. There is comprehensive provision for professional learning and a positive culture to promote this across the school. All staff are eager to seek and access opportunities for professional development. For example, the recent training accessed by staff in the Communication Cass has been particularly beneficial in meeting the needs of those pupils with ALN.

Leaders hold staff to account appropriately, for example through regular progress and tracking meetings to consider each individual pupil's progress. As a result, the school swiftly identifies those pupils who require additional support and plans are put into place to support their development and well-being. Leaders have a good understanding of the needs of all the pupils within the school. They share individual pupils' achievements and activities with parents effectively through the school's online platform, which is highly valued by parents and carers.

The school participates in a suitable range of monitoring activities. Leaders use these activities to gather a range of useful information to inform their self-evaluation processes to identify the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders are reflective of their own practice and are willing to take risks and adapt plans when priorities change within the school. For example, in response to recent monitoring activities, leaders identified the need for teachers to reflect more accurately on teaching and learning within their classes with a particular focus on understanding the developmental stages of early years pupils. This however is in the early stages of development.

Leaders and governors manage resources effectively. They allocate funding appropriately to support the schools' priorities. They consider well the short and long term needs of the school when planning their finances. They make best use of the early years pupil development grant to provide valuable support to pupils, which is having a positive effect on their well-being, social and emotional needs, and support them to make progress in their development and learning.

The governing body is a strong advocate for the newly amalgamated school and governors know the pupils and its community well. They discharge their roles and responsibilities appropriately and meet regularly in sub committees and as a whole body to discuss and make decisions that support the running of the school. They bring valuable expertise from their professional careers to support them discharge

their duties. They work with leaders and pupils to ensure that the school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking for all pupils.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer 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

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:

Publications Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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