

# Colmore Infant and Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103189
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	376841
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Driscoll

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	354
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lorne Pearcey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Viv Randall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Colmore Road Birmingham B14 6AJ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed 24 lessons taught by 13 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at records of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. They also analysed responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 126 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Do pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by special arrangements in school make as much progress as others?
- How well is the school adapting to the apparent changes in characteristics of children entering the nursery?
- How well is the school teaching pupils about life in other parts of Great Britain?

## Information about the school

The school has increased in size since it was last inspected and is now larger than most other primary schools. The characteristics of the children joining the school have also changed considerably. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups has increased. Around half the pupils now come from a White British background, with others mainly of Asian heritage or mixed-race backgrounds. The proportion joining the school who speak English as an additional language has almost trebled and is now well above average. However, the characteristics of the children joining the nursery in 2011 show a significant fall in the numbers speaking English as an additional language in comparison to recent years. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school is average, as is the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion additionally supported by external professionals, or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. The school was undergoing considerable building work during the inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

This is an outstanding school. All pupils thrive because they receive the high-quality teaching and support they need to achieve outstanding outcomes. The very large majority of parents and carers responding to the questionnaire strongly agreed with all the statements and think very highly of the school. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are very high and shared by all staff who continually strive for further improvements.

Children usually join the nursery with skills that are typical for their age, although in some years they are lower than expected. Their progress is outstanding in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so attainment is high on starting Year 1. Such progress continues in Years 1 and 2, consequently, attainment is far in excess of the national average by the time pupils leave the school. It is not only academic achievement that sets this school apart. Nearly everything that the school provides is of the very highest quality. Consequently, almost all aspects of pupils' personal development are outstanding, although they are not given enough opportunities to engage with children from backgrounds different from their own. The attention paid to the care and support for individual pupils, especially those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, is exceptional. By the time they leave school, pupils are confident and independent learners whose behaviour is exemplary and who are able to concentrate for long periods when tackling problems. Many of their attributes are remarkable for children of such a young age, most notably their research skills and public speaking abilities. Parents and carers are understandably highly confident in the school's systems for keeping their children safe. Pupils, too, feel totally safe in school. They follow rules carefully, such as not crossing 'the yellow line', and have total confidence in staff to help them if they need it. All know, for example, to go to the staff with the 'red hand' if they are unhappy, or to turn to one of the playground buddies if they have no one to play with.

The school continues to go from strength to strength. It is being driven forward by exceptional leadership from an inspirational headteacher who receives excellent support at all levels, including from members of the governing body. Self-evaluation pinpoints even the smallest areas for improvement, which are invariably tackled successfully. The result is that all areas of excellence have been maintained since the school was last inspected and almost all the remaining aspects are now outstanding. This demonstrates the school's outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide pupils with more opportunities to engage with others from backgrounds different from their own.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Pupils very much enjoy coming to school, where they achieve outstandingly well. All groups make outstanding progress, including those eligible for free school meals and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils reaching level 3, the highest level of attainment expected at the end of Year 2, is around twice the national average. Pupils arrive at lessons keen to learn. They get straight down to work and concentrate hard on their tasks. In literacy and numeracy lessons they quickly check their marked work to see what they need to do to improve. Unusually, the outstanding system for marking and assessment was devised by the pupils themselves, which typifies the way they are able to take the lead in learning. In the past, pupils did not always understand their teachers' comments, so they proposed a system of symbols which all teachers now use in their marking. Pupils are not only aware of what they need to do to improve, but how to do it and what level they are achieving. In one lesson, for example, pupils discussed whether a piece of writing was level 2A work or level 3. One pointed out 'I would like to see more writing to be sure that this is definitely level 3; it has bits of level 3 in, but not lots'.

Academic learning is not restricted to the classroom. Pupils have undertaken research into what helps them learn and presented the findings to national conferences. They have surveyed the local community to identify any concerns they may have and then worked with the police to resolve parking issues. Such activities effectively support pupils' contribution to the community. Their achievements are a shining example of what pupils of such a young age can do, and leave them exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. One pupil patiently explained to an inspector that it isn't the food itself that is unhealthy, but the amount you eat as part of a balanced diet that is important. Pupils play an excellent role in school life. There are many opportunities to take responsibility, from milk monitors to security guards (responsible for making sure doors are closed properly), that are taken up enthusiastically. Pupils have an outstanding knowledge of other faiths and cultures because of the many different activities led by the parent link worker. She organises cultural events to which parents from all backgrounds contribute. Knowledge of how people live in other parts of Great Britain is less well developed, but understanding of other countries is better owing to the extensive charity work that pupils carry out. Children in the nursery quickly develop the outstanding moral and social values that are evident throughout the school. Even after only a few weeks in the nursery, a group of girls were able to sort out between them who should have the princess doll from the castle. They decided to take it in turns and

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arranged a rota by themselves that satisfied all concerned. Attendance is above average and improving rapidly.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The success of the teaching lies in the way that teachers set high expectations for pupils and then provide them with tasks that are accurately matched to their needs. A typical lesson starts with a short, sharp introduction, before pupils move into one of five or six groups where they work on tasks appropriate to their needs. The staff are exceptionally vigilant. For example, although working with one group, they immediately spot any pupil who needs help or who has finished. This means that individual pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are moved on to more difficult work as soon as they need it and no time is wasted. The role of teaching assistants is exceptional in this respect. Not a moment of their time is wasted. If they are not working directly with pupils, they are making notes on their responses to be analysed later. Children in the nursery, for example, were asked to find the number three outside. The teaching assistant quickly realised that the children could do this, so asked them to choose a number. They chose the number 10. Skilful questioning probed their understanding of two digit numbers before they went off to meet their new challenge. Each number was spoken aloud, written and questioned to find out what was one more or one less, so constantly reinforcing their number skills. The quality of dialogue between staff and pupils is outstanding. Pupils are treated with respect; their opinions are not only sought but also valued. For example, displays in classrooms were totally changed after pupils

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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pointed out that they found them colourful, but not particularly useful. Now there are displays in every room that pupils actively use as part of their learning.

The curriculum is full of diverse and exciting activities. Artists in residence, for example, help pupils to create beautiful works of art. However, they also see supporting the development of pupils’ literacy and social skills as part of their role. Parents and carers are heavily involved in working with their children through events such as science week and ‘men behaving dadly’, where fathers and male carers join in practical activities. Partnership with the local junior school has allowed the appointment of a specialist music teacher, resulting in high standards of music across the school. The school works extremely hard to ensure that it meets the needs of the most vulnerable pupils. Those with a statement of special educational needs, for example, flourish. One parent pointed to the way that all staff had been trained in sign language, and signing had been taught to the pupils so that her daughter could communicate. She said that it was the first time that her child had been able to make friends. Another commented that the school’s support had surpassed her ‘wildest expectations’. At break times the number of staff on duty is very high, ensuring that pupils are safe and no individual is ever far from an adult.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher’s vision and continued drive for improvement are shared by all staff and their morale is high. Rigour and equality of opportunity are at the heart of the school’s work. Data on pupils’ achievements and their characteristics are analysed exceptionally well and used to inform interventions and to adjust the provision. For example, the school responded very quickly to the changing backgrounds and characteristics of children joining the nursery. Specialist staff were targeted to provide more support for parents in helping their children learn at home. This resulted in progress being maintained at the same outstanding level as previous years. There are no differences in performance between groups and the school goes to exceptional lengths to integrate new pupils into the life of the school. A wide range of methods are used to check the quality of what the school provides and its impact on pupils’ outcomes. Plans drawn up to address identified priorities are detailed and accurate. They are invariably successful in bringing about rapid improvement.

Governance is outstanding. Members of the governing body have managed an

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excellent balance of support and challenge. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching pupils in sets for mathematics, for example, they observed lessons, evaluated the provision and agreed further funding to support the changes. The governing body ensures that all required policies are in place and implemented consistently by all staff. Safeguarding practices are outstanding and are constantly updated in the light of comments from pupils, parents and carers. The headteacher’s expertise, and that of other staff, is used to support other less effective schools with a high degree of success, often in aspects relating to safeguarding, teaching and leadership. These partnerships are mutually beneficial as good practice is shared and used to enhance provision in both school settings. Excellent provision is made for promoting community cohesion within the locality, and among different faiths and cultures. Provision at a national level, however, is only satisfactory.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The great majority exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. Graduation ceremonies are held to celebrate children’s achievements at the end of the Nursery and Reception Years, when all enjoy dressing up in clothes similar to those used at university graduation ceremonies. Staff set high standards in their clear modelling of what children are expected to learn, before providing an excellent balance between staff guidance and encouraging children’s independent choice of activities. Children listen carefully to one another and make informed and well-reasoned choices about their activities. Their behaviour is consistently of the highest quality because the provision instils a strong sense of what is right from a very early age. Children display a remarkable degree of independence. They record and evaluate their own work and that of others. In one lesson, for example, children



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produced a display of their work, photographed it and then discussed how it could be improved with their friends. Children are confident when speaking to adults and cooperate extremely effectively with one another. They are taught how to stay safe and healthy and have high standards of personal hygiene. A wide range of activities are provided for every class that are perfectly matched to children’s abilities and interests. When learning about numbers in the nursery, for example, some counted the cars in a race, while others counted out conkers for bears to eat. Other groups of children were finding numbers hidden in the sand or writing them for the first time. All children were expertly supported by constant reinforcement and feedback from the staff and learned very well.

The setting continues to go from strength to strength. The leader communicates a strong sense of purpose and a vision that is highly focused on tackling even the smallest weakness. She is an excellent role model and motivator of staff, both in this school and in others. The results of comprehensive assessments are analysed exceptionally well to ensure that all staff and children know what the next steps are in learning. These are also conveyed very effectively to parents and carers through the children’s learning journals.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers are extremely happy with almost all that the school provides. They hold views that correlate closely with the inspection findings. A small number of parents raised concerns about school meals. Inspectors observed lunch and discussed the findings with the headteacher. The school does not have its own kitchen at present, as this was demolished as part of the building works. Currently, lunches are brought in from an external provider. Inspectors found the range of lunch choices to be limited and uninspiring. However, the school is due to move into its new buildings soon and the school will again have its own kitchen.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Colmore Infant and Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 126 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 354 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	106	84	19	15	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	103	82	22	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	64	51	56	44	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	79	63	41	33	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	98	78	26	21	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	86	68	36	29	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	70	56	43	34	8	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	79	63	34	27	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	69	55	51	40	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	74	59	46	37	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	69	55	48	38	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	93	74	29	23	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	101	80	24	19	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



12 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Colmore Infant and Nursery School, Birmingham, B14 6AJ**

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. You told us how much you enjoy coming to school, because you have so many friends, the teachers are nice and you learn lots of new things. We agree. You go to a brilliant school where you learn far more than we usually see. Your teachers know exactly what you need to learn about next to make sure that you make the best possible progress. They are all very quick to spot any of you who need extra help or who are ready for more difficult work, so they make sure that no time is wasted and you learn as quickly as possible. We were very impressed by the way that you have helped them too, by asking them to change the displays and the way that your work is marked. You all know exactly what to do to improve your work and reach a higher level. You work very hard in lessons and your behaviour is excellent.

You all told us that you feel very safe in school, because your teachers take such good care of you, and that you always have someone to talk to when you are unhappy. We found that school is also a safe place because you all follow the rules and help one another. You know a lot about different religions and life in other countries, but you could learn more about life in other parts of this country. So we have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to meet or talk with other children who come from places different to Birmingham. You could help by suggesting some places that you would like to learn about.

Your school keeps getting better and better. Your headteacher has lots of ways of finding out where improvements can be made and quickly puts them right. All the teachers are keen to do their very best for you.

With all best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll  
Lead inspector

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