

# Avon Primary School

Barracks Lane, Shirehampton, Bristol BS11 9NG

<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 December 2015
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The determined leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the skilful deputy and assistant headteacher, ensures that an uncompromising drive to improve is in every area of school life.
- Recent and continuing actions have ensured that the quality of teaching and assessment has improved, accelerating the progress pupils make in their learning. The school has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Governors consistently challenge the school and hold senior leaders to account. They know the school very well.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, have good manners and display positive attitudes when working in class.
- Pupils' consideration of others and pride in their work and their school ensures that their personal development and welfare are very good.
- Current pupils' progress is consistently good and improving across all year groups in school.
- Outcomes for pupils are now good. Pupils clearly enjoy their work, tackling learning with enthusiasm and a sense of fun.
- Teaching is good. Teachers know their pupils well, assess pupils' work regularly and keep a careful check on the progress that pupils make.
- Children in the early years make a positive start to their learning because they like school and feel safe and secure at all times.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although pupils' attainment in mathematics has improved, their progress is not as rapid as in reading and writing, which is now showing to be above average.
- The most-able pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are not consistently given work that challenges them to reach their full potential.
- In the early years, the quality of the experiences both indoors and outdoors restricts opportunities for outstanding learning.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to further accelerate the rates of progress pupils make in their learning so that they reach even higher standards of attainment, especially in mathematics, by:
  - making sure all pupils are consistently stretched and challenged in their learning, especially the most-able pupils
  - giving pupils more opportunities to use their skills and ideas in other areas of the curriculum
  - improving the pupils' mathematics skills more quickly by making sure that pupils of all abilities are set consistently challenging work.
- Enrich the learning and progress in the early years by:
  - organising the curriculum and learning environment both indoors and outdoors so that it provides a richer variety of experiences giving greater opportunities for the children to initiate their own learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The tenacity of the headteacher, effectively supported by the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher to eliminate underperformance and secure a settled teaching team, has led to improvements in the school since the last inspection. As a result, progress has accelerated and standards have been raised, and the school has greatly improved since the last inspection. Teaching has improved, good behaviour flourishes and the rates of progress that current pupils make in their learning are accelerating. This is not yet reflected in statutory assessment data at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of what the school does well as a result of ongoing, extensive and highly detailed monitoring of the school's performance. They have clear-cut priorities for those areas that require further improvement and are relentless in their pursuit of excellence, communicating a sense of drive and urgency to continue to move forward quickly.
- Procedures to check the quality of teaching and learning across the school are very effective. Leaders and managers are skilful in ensuring that their analysis and interpretation of information about pupils' progress leads to actions that address any areas of concern.
- All teachers are involved in moderating standards by reviewing year group planning, looking at pupils' books, focused observations of work of the school and regular pupil progress reviews. The middle leaders help further improvements in teaching and learning in subjects other than English and mathematics, making use of existing practice. The mentoring of new staff, including the middle leaders, is facilitated by senior leaders and supports the overall vision of the school.
- School leaders use the school's pupil premium grant to maximum effect to ensure that disadvantage is no barrier to participation and achievement. The school provides additional staffing, including a learning mentor, to support disadvantaged pupils' academic achievement and their personal development. Additional staffing has included staff trained in the Thrive programme, promoting emotional health and well-being for those pupils who need it. The impact of this support is reflected in the good progress and achievement of disadvantaged pupils across the school.
- Staff performance is managed effectively through pupil progress meetings, looking at pupils' workbooks, observing teaching and a culture of sharing good practice. All staff, including those who are new, have adopted this ethos and openly discuss their strengths and areas for development with colleagues, creating an environment where everyone is a learner; adults and children alike.
- Staff have challenging objectives for their own professional development, linked closely to school priorities. The school has invested extensively in training for staff, which supports their professional development extremely well. This includes the support from the partnership school they have worked with since the previous inspection.
- Pupils benefit from a lively, broad and well-planned curriculum, in which pupils were involved in its development, based on a series of learning challenges. Themes and topics are brought to life by an exciting range of visits and visitors to school. For example, during the inspection pupils in Year 6 visited Bristol Cathedral for a Christmas trail visit as part of their work on pilgrimages. Subjects are linked together very well and so pupils have many opportunities to develop their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers work closely together to regularly review the curriculum and check that it meets the needs of the pupils in the school. Inspection evidence shows that the challenges in the curriculum for the most able are improving, though they have been inconsistent over time. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular clubs over the year which enhances their learning, such as choir, gymnastics and other sports. All of these clubs are monitored for impact and take-up.
- School leaders have recognised the need to improve the environment and planning of the early years as well as address the issue of challenging the more-able pupils, especially in mathematics. These issues are in the school development plan and training is planned to tackle these areas.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely strong. It reinforces traditional British values, and also has an international dimension with charitable links to a school in Uganda, Africa. Pupils have a positive sense of their role in the school and wider community. Avon Primary is a caring, outward-looking school, typified by pupils participating in many community activities, especially in helping the elderly in the community.
- The views of all pupils are valued and many have an opportunity to play a part in the life of the school such as in the five school councils including 'Health and Well-being', 'Rights Respecting Council', 'Eco

Council' and 'E-Safety', as well as a range of different jobs in each class. The school's highly inclusive approach fosters good relationships, and there are high levels of trust and respect between all individuals.

- Links with parents are very positive, and their views are regularly sought and valued. All of the parents who met the inspection team had high praise for the headteacher and the staff in the school. They feel the school communicates with them well and described the school as happy, safe and somewhere their children can 'make progress'. Parents commented on staff's 'accessibility' and feel confident that their children are prepared well for the next phase of their education. The vast majority of parents who completed the online questionnaire Parent View agreed that their child was happy at school.
  - Physical education (PE) and sport premium is used very well to raise staff expertise in the teaching of PE. Specialist coaches work alongside school staff, and the school has provided many additional opportunities to develop sporting skills.
  - Safeguarding and child protection procedures are robust, and pupils' well-being is the school's top priority. The school has in place comprehensive risk assessments to cover activities in and out of school. The school has a very proactive approach to the 'Prevent' strategy, which is designed to help schools in dealing and recognising extremism and terrorism; all staff have received training. The safeguarding policy includes dealing with extremism and terrorism.
  - The local authority's good support has helped to accelerate the school's transformation. The school has also benefited from the support and the expertise of staff from the Blaise Primary School.
- **The governance of the school**
- The governing body is extremely effective. Governance has been greatly improved since the last inspection. It is very well informed, incisive in its approach to school improvement, and analyses closely all performance information. Leaders and teachers are held to account for the quality of teaching and learning in the school, and their impact on pupil progress. Performance management procedures are robust and rigorous. Stringent monitoring of finances, including the pupil premium, has ensured the school is on a sound financial footing.
  - Governors make a meaningful contribution to the way in which leaders check the effectiveness of the school's performance, such as holding structured conversations with pupils, and are individually linked to the school development priorities. They are adept at helping to set priorities for development. Governors regularly attend training to improve their own skills and to keep themselves updated.
  - The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school knows its pupils very well, and detailed records are kept of all safeguarding issues. Parents report that their children are safe at school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching at Avon Primary is of a consistently good quality and has improved since the previous inspection. The previous inadequate teaching has been eradicated, and this good teaching has resulted in good learning and progress over time, with pupils reaching much higher levels of achievement than last year. Lessons are lively and enjoyable. The consistently good quality of teaching, though not reflected in the published data, is reflected in the standard of work in pupils' books, data on pupils' progress and the positive reports from the local authority.
- Teachers have benefited from the high expectations and the culture of the school to improve teaching and raise achievement. Senior leaders ensure that high-quality training enables teachers, including newly qualified teachers new to the school, to get up to speed very quickly and therefore deliver high-quality lessons. The newest staff have adjusted very quickly to the school's systems. Evidence shows that they are rapidly approaching the same high standards of teaching as the rest of the staff.
- Staff share their planning and discuss how they can help pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding. Lessons are interesting and organised well so that pupils enjoy the work and want to complete the activities planned.
- Teachers have good levels of subject knowledge and engage quickly and confidently to discuss aspects of their lessons with pupils and explore their level of understanding. Lessons are brisk and pupils are, in almost all cases, fully on task throughout. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to talk about their work.
- A significant improvement since the last inspection and one of the reasons for the improved teaching and learning is the close involvement of the teaching assistants in the lessons. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and provide effective support to help pupils learn. They are skilled at asking

pertinent questions that encourage pupils to think for themselves and develop independence, giving timely and constructive advice to pupils, including those who have special educational needs or who are disabled. The quality of support is high, whether adults are working with a group or an individual pupil, resulting in good academic progress, as well as strong social and emotional development.

- Assessment systems are secure and linked to the curriculum. The processes, including agreeing the level of attainment and progress in pupils' books on a fortnightly basis, are thoroughly recorded. Although the final electronic tracking application is not yet fully operational, the current manual system is understood by all staff. This has led to the quality of marking improving significantly since the previous inspection. There is much greater consistency in applying the school's marking policy, with the result that pupils are receiving regular feedback about their work. Pupils enjoy reading their teacher's comments and quickly respond to any suggestions about how they could improve their work, in their 'Rapid response' sessions at the start of the school day.
- Classrooms are organised well with attractive displays both inside and along the corridors that reflect current topics. These displays give pupils opportunities to consolidate their classroom learning and demonstrate how much they have learned on a particular topic. They also help impart knowledge to other pupils in the school.
- The younger children make an excellent start in their early reading because of a systematic and rigorous approach to the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) in order to make sense of words. Pupils continue to enjoy and make progress in their reading, which is fluent and expressive, as their reading develops and they gain growing enjoyment from exposure to a wide range of books.
- Occasionally the progress of some pupils is not fast enough or is too variable as a result of insufficient challenge, especially for the most-able pupils. As a result, the pace of learning slows. This variance over time has resulted in pupils' rates of progress not accelerating quickly enough and consistently high standards not being reached.
- The newer staff have adjusted quickly to the systems of the school though they still need to embed them in their practice. Evidence shows that they are rapidly approaching the same standards as the rest of the staff.
- Pupils write enthusiastically and with imagination, often because the purpose for writing is linked to the topic they are studying, and so this fires their interest. Pupils in Year 1 were preparing questions that they would like to ask the 'man on the moon' from an advertisement. Children in Reception were using prompts to retell the Christmas story.
- Pupils enjoy undertaking investigations in mathematics. However, the vast majority of the calculations in the workbooks of the most-able pupils are correct, which indicates that tasks are too easy for these pupils. Teachers do not regularly provide activities which really challenge these pupils to make outstanding progress.
- Pupils are positive about the homework they receive. Homework is practised regularly (home learning takeaway menu) and pupils respond positively to it as a learning tool. It is often linked to work being studied in the classroom and frequently involves practical activities, such as model-making and art, which they enjoy.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare** **is good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident, sociable and caring for each other in school, but also for those less fortunate than themselves, both in the local community and further afield and abroad. Pupils serve the community well; they participate in many projects such as 'Paint Pals', which is designed as a way of encouraging communication between older people in care and young people. The pupils love the activity and have formed real attachments to their 'pals'. They are very pleasing ambassadors for the school and the society.
- Pupils appreciate the time that teachers take to comment on their work. They particularly like the congratulatory comments that they receive in English and mathematics. Work in books, particularly in Years 5 and 6, confirms both the teachers' high expectations and pupils' pride in completing high-quality work. This is making a positive contribution to developing pupils' self-esteem and well-being.
- The self-confidence and eagerness of the pupils to learn in lessons underpin their improved progress since the previous inspection.

- Pupils report feeling safe at school at all times. They are aware of the different types of bullying that they may encounter, including cyber bullying. They know how to stay safe in a variety of situations, including when online. They are confident that, should any minor instances of misbehaviour occur, staff will resolve them quickly and effectively. In their responses to the online inspection questionnaire, nearly all parents indicated that their children felt safe in school.
- Pupils undertake their responsibilities well, for example as members of the five school councils. From an early age, pupils are actively encouraged to develop their independence and self-reliance so that they take responsibility for their learning and their community.
- Pupils thrive as a result of the school's positive approach to promoting good work and behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good. They strive to succeed, are engaged and motivated to learn and value the contribution of their classmates.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. They have absolute faith that the adults in school will take action to sort out any incidents that occur. Pupils understand that name-calling is hurtful and disrespectful.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning in lessons. They want to learn and to do their very best.
- Staff set high standards to which pupils respond well. Pupils show high levels of respect and friendliness to adults, visitors and classmates. Older pupils show genuine care and concern for younger pupils, and this creates a real 'family feel' to the school.
- All behaviour incidents are recorded carefully by staff. Leaders including the learning mentor follow up the few concerns immediately and review the actions they take. All staff and governors place pupils' personal development and welfare at the heart of their work. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure. Most parents who completed the online questionnaire said they would recommend this school to other families.
- Pupils' behaviour in the playground, in the dining hall, in breakfast club and as they move around school is excellent. They are polite and courteous, and have excellent manners at all times.
- Pupils are punctual for school and attend regularly. Attendance is rising and is average and persistent absence has been reduced and is now low. There have been no permanent exclusions from school, and very few temporary exclusions, as a result of the learning mentor working hard to ensure that all pupils who have difficulties are well supported.
- Occasionally a few pupils can become disengaged from learning, lose concentration or are too slow to respond to instructions from the teacher, slowing some pupils' learning, but these occasions are handled sensitively so there is no disruption in the class to learning.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

**are good**

- Progress and attainment have improved since the last inspection, especially in Key Stage 2. Assessment information, the school's own tracking information and work in books clearly indicates that current pupils in every year group are now making consistently good progress. This is the case in English and mathematics, as well as other subjects across the curriculum. Though progress in mathematics is not as fast as in reading and writing, it is still good.
- The school's data, work in pupils' books and evidence from lesson observations indicate that standards are rising fast in Years 1 to 6, though there are pockets where this progress stalls. Most pupils have made rapid progress since 2014 in reading, writing and mathematics and are now attaining at least in line with expectations for their age. Increasing numbers are reaching higher levels.
- The great majority of children enter the Reception classes with skills at levels below those typical for their age, particularly in the skills that relate to reading, writing, number and personal development. Children make good progress and leave the early years having reached a good level of development above the national and well prepared to start Year 1.
- Pupils now start Key Stage 1 with skills that are slightly above average, but this was not the case in the past. Achievement has improved since the last inspection and evidence from the inspection shows that current pupils in Key Stage 1 are making progress which is at least good. Pupils enjoy reading. Opportunities for pupils to read more diverse books in school are being developed. Younger pupils'

phonics skills are improving. Pupils in Year 1 attained above the expected level in the national phonics check in 2015. This proportion was higher than in the previous year. Data show that the current Year 1 pupils are comfortably above the figures for last year.

- Results in national tests in Year 2 in recent years reflect a legacy of inaccurate assessment, when standards were judged to be higher than they were, and poor teaching, rather than the current picture. Pupils who were in Year 2 last year, despite their average standards in statutory assessments, are making rapid progress this year and are catching up quickly.
- Progress data in the Year 6 national tests in recent years reflect the previous unstable teaching in lower Key Stage 2 and inaccurate assessment of standards. This was rectified and progress has accelerated significantly in Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection. Pupils now make good progress in learning from their individual starting points. Pupils are now well prepared for secondary school by the end of Year 6, both in terms of their achievement, as the data show, and in their knowledge of how to be a successful learner.
- Pupils did not make the expected rate of progress across Years 3 to 6 in 2015 in mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that, on occasions, the most-able pupils currently in the school are not always being challenged enough in lessons.
- The achievement of the most-able pupils in both key stages has been patchy over time. They performed poorly at Level 5 in mathematics in 2015, with no pupils attaining the highest Level 6. They made much better progress in reading and writing than they did in mathematics. Currently, assessment information shows that the achievement of the most-able pupils is improving across the school and their progress has accelerated. Many more are reaching the higher levels in mathematics and writing. The most-able pupils make similarly good progress, and sometimes better, to their classmates, although sometimes opportunities are missed to add further to the level of challenge and to stretch pupils' thinking, especially in mathematics, which would enable the most-able pupils to move on at an even faster rate.
- The few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language, achieve better than other pupils in the school. In many cases, in Key Stage 2, they make faster progress than their peers. The achievement gaps of different groups of pupils have narrowed since last year. For example, the attainment of pupils who speak English as an additional language improved in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Pupils speak confidently in lessons, in pairs, in small groups and in front of the whole class. They know when to speak formally and when it is appropriate to speak informally. Older pupils can present a reasoned point of view. Pupils are confident to ask questions and to challenge what others say.
- Pupils' writing skills have improved since the last inspection. Most now write fluently and legibly, using interesting sentences and imaginative language. An example of this was seen in a lesson in Year 6 where pupils were describing, in their own words, why a certain place was considered bad. This was drawn from their class reading book *Journey to a River Sea*. Skills in creative writing are well developed and the full impact is seen in the attractive displays around the school.
- The school is quick to identify any pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Staff make effective provision for them, including extra support the same day for any pupils who are not secure in a particular aspect of that day's learning. This also includes those pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs. These pupils make good progress because teachers give them activities well matched to their individual ability and needs.
- Some gaps persist between groups of pupils, but these are closing rapidly. In the 2015 end of Key Stage 2 tests, disadvantaged pupils made broadly similar progress in reading and writing as their peers, though lower in mathematics across Key Stage 2. They also made broadly similar progress to other pupils nationally in reading and writing but again lower in mathematics. Test results show that disadvantaged pupils were around two terms behind other pupils in the year group in writing and around three terms behind in mathematics and reading. Compared with other pupils in all schools, disadvantaged pupils were over four terms behind in mathematics and three and a half terms behind in reading. Current school data show that these gaps in attainment compared to others in the school have closed and disadvantaged pupils are now just over one term behind in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Early years provision

is good

- Children make a strong start to their education at Avon Primary School. Children starting school in the Reception Year have skills that are lower than is typical for their age. This is most noticeable in relation to their language and communication, number and social and emotional development skills. As a result of good teaching, and a safe learning environment, children make good and sometimes outstanding progress. The proportion of pupils who leave the Reception class with a good level of development is now above average. Children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Children quickly learn essential social and emotional skills. They are able to share, take turns, and concentrate and apply themselves to tasks. This underpins their good progress in all areas of learning.
- There are highly positive relationships between staff, children and parents. This helps children to quickly become confident learners and have a positive attitude to school.
- Staff encourage children to experiment and become independent through well-established and consistent routines. Though activities are well organised there is a need to give the children more opportunities than at present to explore and practise the skills as they play.
- Interactions between adults and children are good and help to develop children's speaking and listening skills. A range of thoughtful questioning designed to extend children's vocabulary and responses was observed as adults worked and played alongside children to extend their learning.
- Basic skills in reading, writing and number are promoted effectively. Opportunities for children to write, mark-make and count are all around the Reception area.
- All groups of children make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in the early years, including the most able, disabled children and those who have special educational needs. The work and activities provided for children create engagement.
- All children are kept safe and secure in the early years setting, and their behaviour is good.
- Staff in the early years know the children and their families well. They have identified the need to work more closely with parents as partners in their children's education and are looking to initiate digital home-school liaison records.
- The leadership and management of the early years are good and have improved the quality of the early years since the previous inspection. Staff are constantly looking to refine their practice in order to maintain high standards of provision. They accurately measure the progress children make. They have well-thought-through plans to make further improvements. These include the need to reorganise the early years environment both indoors and out to allow opportunities for children to choose their own activities. Staff are committed to secure the very best outcomes for all children.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108914
<b>Local authority</b>	City of Bristol
<b>Inspection number</b>	10002447

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	297
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andy Hamilton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Atkins
<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 903 0446
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://avonprimaryschool.co.uk">avonprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:headavonp@bristol-schools.uk">headavonp@bristol-schools.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11–12 September 2013

## Information about this school

- Avon Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. A smaller than average number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and an even smaller percentage speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is higher than average. The pupil premium is extra government funding to help the education of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school is a partner with Blaise Primary, which provides support for leadership, assessment development and improving teaching.
- The school has had a turnover of half of the teaching force since the previous inspection and one third of the staff are new since April 2015.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Early years provision is full-time in the Reception classes.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club and after-school sports clubs.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons, including eight jointly observed with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. In addition, inspectors listened to some pupils read in class and reviewed a sample of their work alongside the subject leaders.
- Inspectors also made a number of short visits to lessons to check the quality of provision.
- Inspectors held meetings with different groups of people involved with the school. These groups included pupils, a number of governors, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, other members of teaching staff, the newly qualified teachers, and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also talked with a small number of parents as they brought children into school.
- Inspectors viewed a range of documents, including information on pupils' achievements, the school's data on current and recent progress and attainment and the school's view on how well it is doing. They also viewed the school's improvement plan, documents relating to safeguarding and records of behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and 36 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff. The school's website was also scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Terry Mortimer, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Roberta Camble	Ofsted Inspector
Frances Harding	Ofsted Inspector

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