

Avon Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 108914 |
| Local Authority | Bristol City of |
| Inspection number | 356450 |
| Inspection dates | 21–22 September 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Michael Merchant |

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

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 183 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Darren Jones |
| Headteacher | Jane Atkins |
| Date of previous school inspection | 28 February 2008 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and observed eight teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They also talked to some parents and carers who were present at the start and finish of the school day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings, data on pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a range of school policies. They also analysed questionnaires received from 31 parents and carers and 88 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Pupils' attainment and progress in English.
- How well teaching takes account of the needs of different groups of pupils, and how well teachers help all pupils to improve their attainment and progress.
- The effectiveness of the curriculum in motivating and inspiring all pupils and providing challenge and interest for them.
- The effectiveness of middle leaders and the governing body in monitoring and evaluating achievement and the quality of teaching and learning, and in contributing to school improvement.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than most other primary schools. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than is typically found. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, which are mainly moderate learning difficulties, is below average. However, the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is higher than is typically found. The school achieved the Healthy Schools award in 2008 and there is a breakfast club managed by the governing body. There is one Reception class in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school where pupils make good progress in most of their lessons and attainment is rising. One parent reflected the views of many by saying, 'I could not ask for any more from a school.' Key to this success is the introduction of rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating the academic progress and personal development and well-being of each pupil. Well-targeted intervention strategies and watchful care, guidance and support enable pupils to meet and often exceed their challenging targets.

By the time pupils leave in Year 6, they are confident, well-rounded young people, ready to play their full part in the world beyond school. A very positive atmosphere permeates the school and relationships are strong. Consequently, behaviour is good and pupils have a high regard for both their class-mates and for the adults who work with them. The school has worked effectively to promote more regular attendance which is average.

Pupils join the school with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age. All groups of pupils, regardless of ability, make good progress and by the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least good progress. The attainment and progress of some high attaining pupils, however, especially in English, is not as good as it could be.

One of the reasons for the school's strong improvement in recent years is its exciting and well-planned curriculum that brings together topics and subjects to enliven learning and make it relevant and engaging. Lessons are typically well taught so pupils are well motivated. Marking is regular and helpful. Where teaching is occasionally less effective, some pupils do not work independently enough and the more-able are not always sufficiently challenged to extend their learning. Limited opportunities for these pupils to practise lengthy pieces of writing prevent more of them reaching the highest levels in English. Although already good, there is scope to develop the curriculum further so as to boost the school's existing work on community cohesion and lift further pupils' awareness of people from different backgrounds and cultures.

The headteacher's calm and thoughtful leadership has given the school a clear direction and has ensured that the school has continued successfully on its journey of improvement. There is a strong sense of teamwork and pride in what has already been achieved, coupled with an absence of complacency. School self-evaluation is accurate and most importantly, the school knows exactly what to do further to sustain its improvement. This, together with improvements in achievement, teaching and learning and the curriculum since the previous inspection, means the capacity for sustained

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improvement is good. The governing body supports the school well and plays a key role in promoting effective safeguarding and good links with parents. However, they have yet to evaluate the work of the school fully and systematically or to play an active part in setting school priorities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment of higher attaining pupils in English by providing more opportunities for pupils to practise extended writing on a wide range of topics.
- Build on current good practice to further improve the quality of teaching and learning in all year groups by:
 - giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to be more active and inquisitive in class
 - ensuring that teachers specifically plan for and extend the learning of the more able pupils.
- Extend pupils' awareness and understanding of different cultures and ways of life by:
 - Increasing the opportunities through the curriculum for pupils to gain first-hand experience of culturally diverse communities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils greatly enjoy school, grow in confidence and develop positive attitudes to learning. The work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms an overall picture of consistently good progress. Boys and girls achieve equally well because most teachers expect much of their pupils and explain complicated ideas well. In an exciting and imaginative literacy lesson in Year 2, pupils were learning at a good pace because they were captivated by the challenging and enjoyable tasks the teacher set for them. Too few pupils, however, are working at the highest levels in English. The school is very conscious of the needs of all pupils and so there is very little difference in the progress made by most groups of pupils. For example, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who enter the school with particularly low levels of attainment make similar progress to that of their classmates

Pupils' well-developed understanding of right and wrong is reflected in their good and often impeccable behaviour around the school. They are lively, questioning and were keen to engage inspectors in conversation about their school. Pupils readily explain the value of adopting healthy lifestyles, the need for exercise and they have a good understanding of how to be safe in school and the wider community. Pupils work cooperatively, having good skills of listening, taking turns and giving and receiving positive criticism. This, together with secure key skills in English and mathematics, means that they are well prepared for the next stages of their lives. They eagerly take advantage of the many opportunities to participate in the community and are well-informed about other peoples' needs. The school is aware that more can be done to

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raise pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society and is seeking to do so.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |

How effective is the provision?

Teaching overall secures good progress and learning. Teachers are confident and knowledgeable and create a well-ordered and calm environment. Teachers are good at telling pupils exactly what they are expected to do in lessons and this helps them make sense of their learning. Adults ask perceptive questions and these help pupils to think and use more varied vocabulary in their answers. Learning is on a few occasions held back because:

- tasks set in lessons do not always adequately match the range of abilities in the class or build on pupils' prior knowledge, with the result that some higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough
- pupils are not learning actively and independently enough, resulting in slower progress.

The school has set up thorough systems to check on pupils' progress and these are used consistently well to ensure that none is in danger of falling behind, and to enable

¹ 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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teachers to set the next steps for pupils' learning.

The curriculum contributes positively to pupils' good learning and personal development. Carefully and imaginatively planned themes with strong links between subjects have successfully motivated and enthused pupils and have done much to increase their confidence as learners. Well-supported, creative and educational activities outside the normal school day, including the well-attended breakfast club, make a valuable contribution to pupils' high levels of enjoyment. The curriculum fosters a good understanding of issues facing the local area and, through their links with a school in Uganda, the international community. It does too little, however, to encourage an understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures in the United Kingdom. Parents agree that children are looked after exceptionally well. The school's strong emphasis on promoting pupils' emotional well-being results in them feeling secure. Good support for vulnerable pupils and close partnerships with outside agencies ensures that the needs of these pupils are well met. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is especially strong and helps them to make good and sometimes excellent progress, particularly those with a statement of educational need.. Attendance is steadily improving due to the school's effective work to improve attendance and punctuality.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

Clear-sighted leaders and managers are at the heart of the school's success. The effective headteacher works tenaciously to improve pupils' educational opportunities. She communicates her high expectations clearly to staff so that all have a shared sense of direction and feel part of a successful team. The senior team and subject leaders check the school's performance rigorously and offer constructive advice and training. As a result of this, the quality of teaching and learning is steadily improving. A climate has been created where everyone is trying hard to make the school even better. Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and pupils' progress is accelerating. Members of the senior leadership team and the subject leaders fulfil their responsibilities well. Through this strategic approach, the school promotes equality of opportunity for all pupils and tackles discrimination, where it occurs, effectively. The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. It fulfils all legal requirements and gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff. All safeguarding

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arrangements were found to be effective at the time of the inspection. Good practice in safeguarding and child protection is evident in all areas of its work. The governing body has a wealth of relevant experience which assists the school. They are very supportive but are insufficiently involved in prioritising plans for improving the school. Their approach to evaluating the effectiveness of some policies and procedures is not yet rigorous enough.

Leaders ensure that pupils are developing into caring citizens who respect and value the views of others, and that a set of common shared values is embedded in every child. There is good involvement with the local community and a growing range of links with schools in other countries. There is a clear recognition that because the school is situated in a predominantly White British community, it should be developing more effective ways of widening pupils' first-hand experiences of the range of cultures present in the United Kingdom today. Consequently, the school's contribution to promoting community cohesion is satisfactory.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle into the Reception class quickly. They are keen to learn, play together well and are well behaved. Staff provide well for children's welfare and have created a safe, attractive environment in which the needs of all children are well met. Teaching is good and so children make good progress from their differing starting points. This is because a team of well-qualified adults support the children skilfully by asking focused questions to develop their understanding. There is a good balance of activities led by adults and those from which children can choose. Children are developing good social

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skills because they are making choices and fostering independence through working with others. All adults make observations of children and carefully assess their learning. However, this information is not always used rigorously enough across all areas. Measures are in place to ensure that next steps in learning are sharply focussed by the end of their Reception Year, most children are working securely towards the standards expected for their age in most areas. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader provides good leadership to her team. She has a very secure understanding of the Early Years' curriculum and constantly reviews her practice to ensure that all children receive high quality care and support.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |

Views of parents and carers

The school and its headteacher clearly enjoy the confidence and support of those parents and carers who returned the questionnaire. A number of individual comments reflected the high quality care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the good progress made by pupils. The few criticisms were followed up as inspection trails during the visit. For instance, a small minority of parents and carers raised concerns regarding the extent to which the school met their child's particular needs. Inspectors found, through discussion with a wide range of pupils, through lesson observations and through an examination of school data, that the needs of different groups of pupils were well met. The views of the parents interviewed informally at the end of the school day confirm the positive responses in the questionnaires.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Avon Primary 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 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 183 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 22 | 71 | 8 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 25 | 81 | 6 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 21 | 68 | 7 | 23 | 3 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 17 | 55 | 11 | 35 | 3 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 24 | 77 | 5 | 16 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 21 | 68 | 8 | 26 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 15 | 48 | 14 | 45 | 1 | 3 | 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) | 16 | 52 | 13 | 42 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 21 | 68 | 6 | 19 | 4 | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 18 | 58 | 9 | 29 | 3 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 16 | 52 | 10 | 32 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 23 | 74 | 4 | 13 | 3 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 23 | 74 | 5 | 16 | 3 | 10 | 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 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 | 58 | 36 | 4 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 43 | 40 | 9 |
| Secondary schools | 10 | 35 | 42 | 13 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 39 | 45 | 3 |
| Special schools | 33 | 42 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 18 | 40 | 29 | 12 |
| All schools | 11 | 42 | 38 | 9 |

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| 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.



Dear Pupils

Avon Primary School, Bristol BS11 9NG

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. What a lovely two days we had! We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. Avon Primary is a good school and you are right to be proud of it. Here are some of the good things we found out about it.

- Your personal development is good. You behave well around the school and in your classes and you look after each other well. You relish working in groups and helping each other to learn and you readily help your classmates when they find things difficult.
- You make good progress as you move through the school and your achievement is getting better all the time. By the time you leave at the end of Year 6, you reach standards that are similar and sometimes higher than those in most other schools. This is because of the good teaching which you receive and also because you also work hard.
- Your teachers and other adults take good care of you. They also give you a lot of advice about how you can improve your work.
- Your headteacher, governors and all the other staff know in detail how to make sure that your school continues to improve.

To help them to do this, we have asked your school to do the following.

- Ensure that more of you gain higher levels in English at the end of Year 6 by giving you more practice at longer pieces of writing.
 - Make sure that in all lessons, teachers plan activities that challenge you.
 - Give you more opportunities to learn for yourself in lessons.
 - Help you to find out more about people from different cultures and backgrounds.
- You can help by always being ready to ask your teachers how you can improve your work, by always working hard, and by aiming really high. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead Inspector

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