

# Colston's Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 108922               |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | City of Bristol      |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 356451               |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 16–17 September 2010 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Mo Roberts HMI       |

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>                      | 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> | 414   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                              |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Nick Mayfield                                   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mr J Gavaghan                                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 6 December 2007                                 |
| <b>School address</b>                      | 18 Cotham Grove<br>Cotham<br>Bristol<br>BS6 6AL |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 0117 3772610                                    |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. They observed 21 lessons and saw 16 teachers in all. Meetings were held with governors, senior staff, groups of pupils and inspectors spoke informally to some parents. They looked at the pupils' work and scrutinised community cohesion planning, tracking and assessment documentation and that related to the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Questionnaires from 172 parents and/or carers were also analysed.

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

- the quality of pupils' writing
- the attendance patterns of pupils and the strategies and support given to pupils with poor attendance
- the quality of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the effectiveness of the school's strategy to develop the quality and continuity of school leadership.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than average. It serves the local area and draws from across the central Bristol district. There is a higher than average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups than found nationally, many of whom are dual language learners and some who are learning English as an additional language. Currently, there are lower than average numbers with special educational needs and/or disabilities; the range of these needs is very diverse. An average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals.

**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 the overall outcomes for pupils are outstanding. Pupils' individuality and uniqueness are celebrated and they are given an outstandingly effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. This means that the community is harmonious and cohesive and its diversity is seen as a cause for celebration. Staff know pupils very well and are highly committed to promoting equal opportunities in an outstanding way. Pupils are exceptionally well-behaved, have excellent manners and show consideration to others. Pupils are encouraged to develop high levels of self-esteem, as evident in the impressive 'achievement' celebrations.

Pupils are generally confident and develop good speaking skills. This enables them to put forward their ideas, to help negotiate when any minor squabbles arise and to make an exceptionally positive contribution to the whole school community. Serving on the school council is seen as a privilege. The outstandingly rich and vibrant curriculum helps pupils to attain some of the highest standards in the country while also developing their performing arts skills to a good standard.

Pupils' academic attainment is high. A large proportion of Year 6 pupils regularly gain the higher levels in their reading, mathematics and science. They are slightly less successful in writing, although they are still above the national average at both the basic and advanced levels. Improving writing is rightly a focus of current school development plans.

Teaching and learning are good overall, but teaching ranges from outstanding to satisfactory and there is still room for greater consistency. It is especially good in mathematics, demonstrating the substantial improvements the school has made since the last inspection, as well as its good capacity for future development. Leadership roles are more frequently delegated with, for example, the mathematics coordinator taking a strong lead in the development of that subject. Leaders' self-evaluation of the work of the school is generally good, but, occasionally, the school's data is not used to full advantage by a wider group of managers to help target and rectify any inconsistencies in pupils' progress. The governing body gives the school good support. Governors also know when and where to challenge school leaders' thinking and to help evaluate the alternative merits of any proposed changes. The governing body has clear plans for future school staffing. The school values and builds effectively on its strong bond with parents. There are also exceptionally strong links with outside agencies and the local secondary schools. As a result all pupils,

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including the potentially vulnerable, are well cared for, guided and supported.

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

- Strengthen the role of middle managers by ensuring that they take fuller advantage of assessment information and monitoring opportunities to rectify any inconsistencies in pupils' progress and to assist in the development of more consistency in teaching and learning across the school in all subjects.
- Raise attainment in writing to match the exceptionally high standards in mathematics, science and reading by:
  - clarifying the teaching and learning objectives and focusing more on pupils' identified weakness, especially in teacher-led group sessions
  - ensuring pupils are always clear what their next step for improvement should be by improving the feedback in the marking of writing.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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Most pupils enter the school with broadly average or above-average attainment; this is sustained and developed so that attainment in Year 6 assessments is high. In science in 2009, for example, all Year 6 pupils reached the national level and a very large proportion gained the higher level. Mathematics, the school's weaker subject at the last inspection, in 2010 not only gave all pupils the solid skills they require for secondary school, it also provides good stimulus for those who are likely to excel in the subject with over 50% of pupils reaching the higher level. In an outstanding Year 6 lesson on geometry pupils were encouraged to set some of their own goals for learning and to check and report on their level of success in reaching them. In the Reception classes pupils develop their vocabulary, reading and writing skills well, together with their ability to socialise and talk about their experiences, thanks to the rich provision. Their rapid rate of progress slows a little in Key Stage 1, although pupils reach at or above the expected levels by the end of Year 2. Learning then accelerates again, especially in Years 5 and 6. Pupils told us they enjoy their learning in all years and are keen on drama and sports as well as their academic subjects. They are given interesting topics to write about, but sometimes concentrate too much on presentation rather than the accuracy and content in their writing. This contributes to their relatively weaker results in writing.

Pupils respond well to the school's social and emotional development programme and this has a beneficial impact on their well-being, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils make healthy and safe choices, especially enjoying tennis, climbing and robust activity at lunch and break times. School council duties are undertaken seriously. The members found out about planning permission when they wanted their exciting playground equipment installed as the school is in a conservation area. The numerous clubs are well attended,

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including those for younger pupils. Pupils cooperate well with each other and are thoughtful towards those with any additional needs. They are confident that adults will assist them if there are any problems. Partner work is encouraged and this helps pupils to hone their ideas. They learn to cooperate and this, together with their high levels of attainment, including in information and communication technology, ensures they are well set for future learning and overall economic success.

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

## How effective is the provision?

The curriculum is very stimulating and engages pupils by giving them a lot of experiences, especially in sport, music, the dramatic arts and dance. Links with the international community are strong and broaden pupils' experiences and knowledge of the world; most recently they focused on Mozambique through the work of an artist in residence. Pupils are currently planning how to help citizens affected by the flooding in Pakistan. Classrooms are made inviting and support learning effectively, with quieter areas and lots of ways for pupils to engage in learning in most rooms. This is despite some rooms being potentially difficult to arrange. Teachers' lesson planning is conscientious and carefully shows how different groups are to be catered for, and the best include subsequent evaluations showing how well individuals and groups progressed. Appropriate changes are made if the pace of learning is faster or slower than expected, but in writing lessons objectives could sometimes be sharper and be checked up on more frequently during the lesson. Teachers are usually clear about the next step to use to rapidly develop each group of learners, as they are

<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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good at assessing pupil progress. They do not, however, always include this information in their written responses to pupils’ work (marking) so pupils can help themselves to improve. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive both good in-class support and very clear follow-up. Teachers have good classroom management skills and their knowledge and understanding of the subjects taught are good. Pupils are often self-motivated but they also respond positively to the general management systems.

The care, guidance and support given to all pupils are of a good standard, as teachers know their pupils well, providing appropriately for those who require a more individualised or tailored approach. This includes those who are learning English as an additional language who benefit from some pre-lesson preparation for the technical terms and concepts coming up. Excellent support is given as pupils move up through the school from stage to stage and when they move on to the next phase of learning. Transition into the Year 1 classes is notably well supported. Attendance is improving, but procedures around registration and punctuality are not always sufficiently rigorous.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:   |          |
| The use of assessment to support learning  | 2        |
| <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>2</b> |

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The school leadership team has successfully improved the school due to leaders’ high-quality self-evaluation and subsequent actions. They track pupils’ attainment closely, and ensure class teachers are aware of anyone in danger of falling behind. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high, but the team acknowledges that there are still a few pupils who could achieve even more, especially in the more advanced level of writing. The headteacher now devolves more responsibility to other managers and systems are securely in place for the transition to a new headteacher. The senior managers share a clear view of how to raise standards further, but they have not yet made the most of some management data that is available, especially in English. The evaluations of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are rigorous and lead to good provision. Safeguarding is given a high priority and systems are secure, ensuring the care and safety of pupils. Equal opportunities are exceptionally well promoted.

Community cohesion is fostered very effectively despite pupils coming from a wide geographical area. The school prides itself on working with the local community and forms good relationships with families, including those that may be considered by

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some to be harder to reach. The school does not tolerate racism and promotes equal opportunities exceptionally well. It has links with a school in another town which has a different pupil population, so pupils develop a wider view of society. Thanks to everyone’s hard work and diligence, the school is a vibrant and respectful community where all pupils feel welcome and have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 2        |
| <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>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>  | <b>2</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>2</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

This stage has also improved from satisfactory to good since the last inspection. Adults provide an interesting and well-equipped environment for learning. They include resources carefully selected to reflect the diverse pupil intake. The adults are very skilled at promoting positive attitudes to learning and making it seem like an exciting adventure! The children, all newly arrived, were attending for half days during the inspection, but they were quite settled and secure due to the careful routines and good care and attention. The staff have established a good balance between the time they direct learning and the amount of time children have to select their own activities. This ensures children are motivated and enthusiastic. The steep steps to the outdoor area potentially constrain the free flow of pupils’ play from indoors to outside but staff do all in their power to limit this impact. The children were observed having a splendid time on the outdoor equipment which effectively promoted their physical skills. More reserved children enjoyed the hula hoops. Teaching and learning are good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well planned and well managed. As a result of good leadership, staff take part in a rigorous quality assurance scheme and are constantly reviewing and developing the provision. They have strong links with the parents and this supports children’s learning and comfort very effectively. Staff have worked hard to make good links to

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pre-school groups and nursery provision locally and this has paid dividends and got the year off to a good start.

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

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>2</b> |
| 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

Parents and carers overwhelmingly support the school. The response to the questionnaire was high; there were 172 returns and many families took time to add additional comments including about the excellent community feel of the school and politeness of pupils. About a third raised a concern and these were all followed up; the inspection team found that most reflected parents' very high aspirations and that often the school was doing all it could to meet these high demands such as by having three parents' evenings a year and the recent modifications to pupils' school reports on their progress. Inspectors agreed there is still some variation in the quality of teaching and that indeed a very small number of pupils could achieve more. They also agree that, ideally, communication with home and school could be better still, especially in regard to attendance.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Colston’s 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 172 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 414 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 125            | 73 | 46    | 27 | 1        | 1 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 118            | 69 | 52    | 30 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child’s progress   | 62             | 36 | 91    | 53 | 13       | 8 | 2                 | 1 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 87             | 51 | 64    | 37 | 13       | 8 | 2                 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 87             | 51 | 77    | 45 | 3        | 2 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school helps me to support my child’s learning  | 71             | 41 | 81    | 47 | 9        | 5 | 4                 | 2 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 89             | 52 | 75    | 44 | 3        | 2 | 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) | 103            | 60 | 60    | 35 | 3        | 2 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school meets my child’s particular needs  | 77             | 45 | 73    | 42 | 11       | 6 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 42             | 44 | 85    | 49 | 7        | 4 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 59             | 34 | 87    | 51 | 11       | 6 | 3                 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 98             | 57 | 65    | 38 | 4        | 2 | 1                 | 1 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school   | 119            | 69 | 39    | 23 | 6        | 3 | 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      | 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](http://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"><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.**

20 September 2010

Dear Pupils



### **Inspection of Colston's Primary School, Bristol, BS6 6AL**

Thank you for the help you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed seeing you learn in class and have fun and get good exercise at playtime. We also enjoyed talking to those of you who came to speak to us in the library. Thank you for filling in the pupils' questionnaire and we were especially glad to see how you all said you enjoy school. We agree with you that you go to a good school. We think it has some outstanding features.

These are some of the best things about your school.

- You all behave exceptionally well and are well-mannered, even in the tight corridors and up and down all the stairs!
- You listen and learn well in your lessons, and this means that by Year 6 you have made good progress and reach standards that are much better than most schools nationally for pupils of that age.
- Your headteacher and his leadership team do a good job and are well supported by the governors and they have improved the school since the last inspection – especially your results in mathematics.
- Your school welcomes everyone and is a strong community, partly because you all make an excellent contribution with your enthusiasm and ideas.
- You all have great opportunities to do lots of exciting things because the curriculum is broad and balanced with lots of opportunities for art and dance.
- You are exceptionally well guided by staff in spiritual, moral social and cultural matters.

So your school gets even better, we have asked the teachers to do two things:

- Make sure all lessons are as good as the best, and especially in writing lessons to see that you are very clear about what you are learning and exactly how to improve what you are doing.
- Teachers with special jobs need to use all the information available to see that everyone works really hard to be the best they can – we think there are just one or two of you who could still learn a bit faster.

Please help by trying hard in class and always coming to school punctually unless you are ill.

Yours sincerely

Mo Roberts  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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