

Colyton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113067
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	357254
Inspection dates	13–14 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Rowena Onions

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Collier
Headteacher	Nicholas Harris
Date of previous school inspection	3 June 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Nine lessons were observed and six teachers were seen teaching. Meetings were held with pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at data on pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, reports from the School Improvement Partner and a range of other documentation. Seventy-three responses to the parental questionnaire were received and analysed, together with 81 pupil and 17 staff responses to their respective questionnaires.

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

- Pupils' progress - especially that of boys.
- The impact of provision on outcomes concerning pupils' personal development ? in particular, pupils' knowledge of cultural diversity in the United Kingdom.
- The impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning and enjoyment.
- The effect of shared leadership (including governance) on school improvement.

Information about the school

This smaller than average sized school serves its local area in rural Devon. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and speak English as their first language. However, there are a small number from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average and an average percentage of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities, including physical, moderate and specific learning difficulties. Pupils are mainly taught in mixed-age classes. This year, however, those in the Reception year have been taught in a single age group class. At the time of the inspection, the deputy headteacher had been acting headteacher for a period of four months during the illness of the substantive headteacher.

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

Colyton is a good school. Over the last four years, there has been a determination on the part of headteacher, staff and governors to improve the school. The success of their hard work can be seen in steadily improving standards and pupils' progress. Current Year 6 pupils are still showing the effects of prior underachievement and their attainment is average. However, inspection evidence shows that subsequent year groups are set to attain more highly. Pupil progress is good overall, although it remains less consistent in mathematics than in English, especially in Years 3 to 6. Parents, carers and pupils say there has been a marked improvement in the education provided. The strength of staff teamwork is evident in the way the school has continued to develop during the illness of the substantive headteacher. Outstanding governance has played a significant part in ensuring this. Parents and carers are very happy with the way the acting headteacher has led the school during this time, an opinion that is substantiated by inspection evidence. Over recent years, parental views have been listened to and acted upon. Communication and partnership have been improved. In the main, parents and carers are well informed. However, they have not yet been given specific information on how mathematics is taught in school, or how they can best support their child's progress in mathematics at home.

Children receive a good start to their education in the Reception class, they settle quickly and learn to like school. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about their work and the range of activities provided for them. They become very confident young people who are keen to voice their opinions and to work to make improvements in the school. They behave well and are markedly supportive of each other. Pupils demonstrate a thirst for knowledge, especially about the world in which we live. They collaborate well and are keen to succeed. These attitudes demonstrate good social, moral and spiritual development. The school has worked hard to develop pupils' experience and knowledge of the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom, and discussion with them shows that this initiative, which is part of a very successful revision of the way the curriculum is organised, has had positive impact.

Good teaching combines with the curriculum to promote good progress. The curriculum is now based on themes that are designed to interest pupils and to provide them with opportunities to consolidate and develop their skills in a meaningful way. This curriculum reorganisation has been used well to promote pupils' progress in reading and writing, and has been especially successful in improving boys' progress. There has not yet, however, been the same thought given as to how to use this approach to improve progress in mathematics. Teachers' enthusiasm for learning is very effectively communicated to pupils and this ensures pupils' interest and promotes good concentration. Pupils are known and supported as individuals, ensuring that they feel safe and happy in school. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are carefully monitored and helped to make good progress. The assessment of pupils' attainment has been developed well so that, in

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the main, pupils are correctly challenged. There are occasions, in whole-class parts of lessons, when some higher-attaining pupils are expected to listen to the teacher explaining things they already know, making less effective use of their time. Marking and feedback to pupils are better developed in English than in mathematics. The strong school team and the track record of accurate school self-evaluation is leading to successful actions to improve the education provided. This demonstrates the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in mathematics by ensuring that, by July 2012, pupils are making consistently good progress through:
 - planning more opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in topic work
 - developing the use of marking in helping pupils know how to improve
 - providing parents and carers with more information about how they can support their child at home.
- Ensure that teachers use their knowledge of pupils' attainments to target accurately work to their needs, especially during whole-class parts of lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils like school and clearly enjoy the education they receive. When learning is made relevant to them, as it frequently is, for example when a Year 5/6 class were studying a poem about world pollution, there is a particular buzz of enthusiasm. Topics that make learning appealing to both boys and girls, for example one that focused on 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes, are used successfully to increase boys' interest level and thus the boys work harder. Although a gap between their attainment and that of girls still remains, school data on pupils' progress show that this is rapidly closing. Pupils are well aware of how to keep themselves healthy and many are active, enthusiastically participating in the wide range of sport-based activities open to them. Pupils report feeling safe in school and most are sure that any problems or concerns can be shared with, and resolved by, the adults with whom they work. For example, pupils have discussed and are currently helping to implement improvements in the way playground activities are supervised at lunchtime, illustrating the purposeful way in which they make a contribution to the school community. Pupils are aware of the way they can make a small contribution to the global community through activities like recycling waste. The school is right, however, in seeking more opportunity for them to make an equal contribution locally. Pupils are respectful of each other and difference is celebrated. This is very evident in the way that pupils with different ethnic backgrounds talk proudly about their heritage. Above average attendance and rising standards, combined with pupils' positive attitudes to learning, show pupils are developing skills to support them in their future lives. There are occasions, however, when some pupils are not punctual, indicating that a small number of parents and carers find it difficult to ensure that their child arrives at school on time.

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

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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and the curriculum combine well to gain the interest of pupils and to promote good progress overall. The curriculum provides them with a breadth and richness of opportunity that significantly enhances their learning. Pupils enjoy class activities, but also appreciate the opportunity to go on visits, such as visiting a local environmental centre. In a large majority of lessons, pupils make good progress because teaching is good. Teachers plan frequent and relevant opportunities for pupils to practise skills learned in English lessons through topic work, but this kind of work is not yet as systematically planned for mathematics. The skills of teaching assistants are generally deployed well, particularly in the effective support of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Improvements in the way teachers assess pupils' attainments mean that they are well aware of the needs of each pupil. In the main this knowledge is used to provide a good level of challenge. On occasion, however, teachers' knowledge is not used to best effect in ensuring the highest attaining pupils are fully challenged especially when the class is being taught as a whole. The needs of gifted and talented pupils are, however, promoted well through support in school and good links with local secondary schools. Marking is used well in English to show pupils the next steps they need to take to improve. Although there are some examples of good marking in mathematics, teachers' marking often fails to focus pupils' attention on improving the methods the pupils are using to get to an answer. Good care is taken of pupils and good guidance is offered to each one. The

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respect evident between staff and pupils means lessons are run in a positive, productive way and also helps to ensure pupils feel protected and safe.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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?

Systems for school self-evaluation are good. Staff and governors are involved in checking the quality of the provision and in planning well-targeted improvement work. The success of this can be seen, for example, in the development of the curriculum and in the improvement of writing. Parental approval of the changes to the curriculum are summed up by one parent who wrote '...the themes catch their imagination and are very motivating'. Good tracking of pupils' progress means that individuals whose progress is not as rapid as others are identified and supported. This approach helps promote equality of opportunity and has been successful in reducing gaps in progress, such as that between girls and boys. The governing body has been particularly proactive in the way it has supported the acting headteacher in fulfilling his role. Strong governance has ensured that the school's vision for improvement has been communicated, promoted and maintained during this period. The teamwork evident amongst staff has also actively promoted this. Governors very systematically hold the school to account for pupils' progress. Staff and governors are very diligent in ensuring pupils are properly safeguarded. The school has paid particular attention to improving the way the local community views its effectiveness and the success of this is evident in the school's rising popularity. The success of work to extend community cohesion provision is also evident in pupils' increased knowledge of wider communities.

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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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children do well in the Reception class. Most children attain the levels expected for their age and a good number exceeds these. The children benefit from well-planned activities both indoors and outside. The teachers are skilled in setting out equipment which encourages the children to choose for themselves productive tasks that promote their learning. For example, in one session, printed bear faces and lolly sticks left on a table with easy access to scissors, glue and colouring pencils meant that, completely without direction, pupils practised fine motor skills and went on to play imaginatively with the masks they had made. Teacher-led activities are very productive and promote progress in gaining basic skills in communication, language and literacy and in early mathematical development well. The combination of adult-led and self-initiated work generally supports good learning. However, the small number of children currently in the class means that there is sometimes only one adult present, and this inevitably reduces opportunities for the support and development of skills when the children are engaged in activities they have chosen or designed for themselves. Good leadership and management have promoted the development of outdoor provision well and ensure that good care is taken of the children so that they thrive in a welcoming, safe environment.

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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 large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire expressed positive support for the school. They particularly like that their child is kept safe and that they enjoy school. Parents and carers were very positive about the leadership of the acting headteacher. Inspectors' judgements match these positive opinions. A small minority of parents and carers feels unacceptable behaviour is not well managed and some feel their suggestions are not acted upon. Inspection evidence showed that behaviour is well managed and that there are many instances where parental concerns have been acted on. For example, the quality of information in newsletters has been improved after this was identified as a concern in a parent questionnaire.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Colyton 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 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 125 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	53	29	40	3	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	42	58	30	41	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	37	43	59	1	1	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	41	37	51	5	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	39	53	34	47	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	47	31	42	6	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	49	34	47	3	4	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)	34	47	31	42	0	0	3	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	48	32	44	3	4	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	41	33	45	8	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	41	31	42	8	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	38	52	31	42	2	3	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	49	36	49	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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">■ 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 pupils' 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.



15 June 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Colyton Primary School, Colyton EX24 6NU

We really enjoyed our time at your school and would like to thank you for the way you made us feel welcome. We are really pleased that you like going to school and agree with you that yours is a good school of which you are rightly proud.

These are some of the things we liked best about your school.

- The good progress you make in learning to read and write.
- The efforts your teachers and assistants make to provide lots of exciting things for you to do.
- The way you work hard and try to succeed.
- The good teaching you receive.
- The care that adults take of you, so that you feel safe and secure.
- The work the staff and governors do in helping to make your school even better. We think your acting headteacher needs special congratulations for the way he has ensured things continue to get better while your headteacher is ill.

To improve things further we have said your headteacher and teachers should:

- help you all to make good progress in mathematics by:
 - planning more opportunities for you to use mathematics in your topic work
 - making marking more helpful in showing you how to improve
 - helping your parents and carers to know how they can help you at home
- make sure that teachers use what they know about what you can already do to give you challenging work during every part of each lesson.

Thank you again for the way you made us feel so at home in your school. We know that you will continue to contribute to making your school better in any way that you can. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Rowena Onions

Lead inspector

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