

# Colyton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113067
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	311093
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alex Baxter

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 on roll</b>	
School	151
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Roger Bramley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gaye Williams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	The Butts West Street Colyton EX24 6NU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01297 552231
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is slightly smaller than most other primary schools nationally. Children's attainment on entry is broadly similar to that expected for their age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities varies, but generally matches that found nationally.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school does not provide an effective education for its pupils. A large minority of parents also shares this view. Results in national tests and school assessments in 2007 represent a substantial fall in standards and reflect inadequate provision and inadequate pupils' achievement. These concerns were first identified by the headteacher in the autumn of 2006 but are still evident in the school. Standards are mostly below average, especially in English and mathematics, and pupils' independent learning skills in particular are weaker than they should be. However, many pupils have good speaking and listening skills, showing that they have the ability to achieve more.

Teaching and learning, the curriculum and care, guidance and support are inadequate because pupils' needs are not met consistently. Recently introduced curricular targets and improved tracking of pupils' progress have brought improved learning in some classes, for example in Year 6 and at times in Year 2. However, the targets are still not used effectively in most classes to raise expectations and to make sure that pupils are challenged at the right level. These weaknesses are also apparent in the Foundation Stage where the quality of learning and provision are inadequate. In contrast, in assembly, for example, when pupils have consistent guidance and are set high expectations, their attitudes and quality of learning improve.

Pupils attend well and most enjoy being at school. They enjoy learning, but only when lessons are interesting. This is not always the case, as one pupil said, 'I wish we had more fun things to do.' Behaviour is mostly satisfactory in lessons, but slips at break times because of inconsistent supervision. Pupils have a sound understanding of how to live healthily and safely. When able to, they take responsibility seriously, for example, on the school council. However, such independence, especially in learning, is not promoted sufficiently and too many pupils also lack the basic academic skills needed for their future economic well-being.

The quality of teaching is inadequate. Pupils' learning is very variable, depending upon which class they are in, or who teaches them. The curriculum is also inadequate, including for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and potentially higher attainers, because it is not matched sufficiently to their differing needs.

The quality of leadership and management and self-evaluation at all levels is ineffective. School leaders have been slow to address weaknesses and have not always acted in unity to bring about improvement. The local authority is providing appropriate help, but the school is currently over-reliant on this external support. Many strategies are relatively new and have not yet been implemented with equal rigour across the school. For example, mechanisms to track pupils' progress are not used effectively to set realistic and appropriately challenging targets to lift pupils' achievement. Improvement since the last inspection is inadequate.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 4

Staff promote warm relationships with the children and offer learning experiences in all the required areas of learning. However, there is not enough challenge in the activities provided, children lose interest and the pace of learning slows. The use of space and resources in the Reception/Year 1 class is not conducive to good quality learning. Leadership and the quality of teaching, learning and support are inadequate. Although the school has worked to promote more effective links with pre-school providers, some parents are still not happy with the way that children are settled into the school. Current procedures for evaluating children's learning, although improving, are still not based on reliable assessments of children's prior attainment and capabilities, hence expectations are too low. Even though some children are attaining the early learning goals by the end of their Reception Year, not all make sufficient progress in relation to their starting points. Several children enter with a confidence in their own ability and are capable of becoming even more independent learners, but these qualities are not developed sufficiently through the teaching and support provided.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' achievement and standards, especially in English and mathematics.
- Ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching and support, improving particularly the way teachers engage pupils' interest and match learning to their individual needs.
- Strengthen leadership and management to make sure strategies introduced to improve provision and lift pupils' achievement are successful.
- Use assessments of pupils' attainment and progress more effectively to raise the expectations of staff, set appropriately challenging targets and show pupils how to improve.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Standards are below average in Year 6 and pupils' achievement is inadequate. In their Reception Year, children are not always challenged or supported to build on their skills sufficiently, particularly as independent learners. As a result, by the time pupils enter Year 1, too many have not made the progress of which they are capable. Overall progress through the remainder of the school is also inadequate. This is due to variations and similar weaknesses in the quality of teaching that constrain pupils' learning in too many classes. Pupils' progress accelerates in Year 6 and at times in Year 2, because teachers challenge them more effectively. Even so, standards remain below average in reading, writing and mathematics. National tests and school assessments in 2007 showed that a large minority of pupils underachieved. Although there has been some improvement, a significant level of underachievement continues. Many pupils demonstrate good speaking and listening skills, showing that they are capable of achieving more.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

Most pupils enjoy coming to school and say they feel safe, as shown by their good attendance. This is despite the fact that many pupils feel their learning activities lack interest. Pupils show a good knowledge of healthy living and most behave appropriately in and out of lessons. However, a few pupils need more support and whilst this is available during lessons, misbehaviour at break times is not always managed effectively. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development is satisfactory. These qualities are particularly evident in assemblies where an ethos of achievement and community is promoted much more consistently than in some classes across the school. Pupils are not encouraged enough to express their views or to take responsibility, including for their learning, and so these skills are not as good as they should be. However, they express their views confidently, as members of the school council. The slow speed at which most pupils acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills also leaves them ill equipped for their future learning and economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent. Much of the teaching observed during the inspection was not well matched to pupils' needs. There was little evidence, other than in Year 6 and at times in Year 2, for example, to show that newly developed curricular targets and tracking systems were being used precisely enough to promote pupils' progress. Several teachers did not have a clear awareness of what pupils were capable of and consequently work lacked sufficient challenge. At times, effective features included productive questioning of pupils by teachers and assistants during group work and encouragement of pupils to share ideas as 'talking partners'. In general, many learning activities were either too adult-led or left pupils to fend for themselves whilst undertaking tasks that lacked interest or stimulation. In some classes, pupils were left to read books they had already read. In the Reception/Year 1 class, children's ideas and independence were not encouraged enough and one child told an inspector that she was bored. Other weaknesses included low expectations, variation in the use of teaching assistants, in the quality of teachers' marking and the homework set. As a result, not all pupils know what to do to improve and this further constrains learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 4**

The curriculum is not effective in promoting pupils' achievement. This is because learning activities are not always matched closely enough to pupils' capabilities. There have been some improvements to the planned literacy curriculum, for example, clearer learning objectives and curricular targets. These are used appropriately in a few classes, particularly Year 6, to set work, which builds on pupils' prior skills. Even though curricular targets are being set in most classes, including in numeracy, they are not related closely enough to pupils' abilities to improve their progress. This inadequate provision also applies to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for gifted and talented pupils. Information and communication technology is not used to best effect, for example, to develop pupils' research and problem solving skills. There is a satisfactory range of additional activities, for example, in physical education through links with other schools, which develops pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 4**

Pupils are generally supported appropriately in class where they feel safe. However, the quality of supervision during break times is inconsistent and sometimes ineffective, leading to over boisterous behaviour, squabbles and minor accidents. Parents expressed concerns about supervision and inspectors agree. Health and safety assessments, other than those carried out

before trips, are not completed sufficiently and there is no named child protection governor. The support given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also inadequate. As for other pupils, work and support, including links with parents and other agencies, are not planned or implemented robustly enough to ensure pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils receive clear guidance in assembly, for example, where they show good personal qualities when expectations are consistently high. This contrasts sharply with the inconsistent academic guidance pupils receive as they move from class to class and which results in slowed progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 4**

The ineffective communication and disagreements that the headteacher identified a year ago have constrained efforts to bring about improvement. Weaknesses in teaching have proved to be more serious than first thought, and underachievement has not been tackled effectively. The disengagement of too many pupils and disenchantment of a large number of parents are additional aspects that have yet to be rectified. Monitoring and support by the headteacher and local authority have brought about improvements in some classes. However, the school has not established effective strategies, such as the use of challenging targets, to bring about sufficient improvement. Consequently, teaching and learning and expectations of what pupils can and should achieve still vary considerably and inhibit pupils' achievement. The role of subject co-ordinators has not been developed sufficiently. Governors, too, although more effectively involved, have not been successful in bringing improvement. Their recent expression of full support for the headteacher is a positive step. However, despite continued assistance from the local authority, the school does not have the capacity to improve without further help.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	4
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

2 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Colyton Primary School, Devon, EX 24 6NU

Thank you for welcoming us, and special thanks to those of you who took the time to talk to us about the school. We were very interested to hear your views. Unfortunately, we found that your school is not as good as it should be and needs to improve a lot. We judge that the school should be placed in 'Special Measures'. This means that inspectors will continue to check the school and there will be extra support to help it improve.

- We found that
- Many of you do not make enough progress and do not reach the standards in English and mathematics that you are capable of achieving.
- Even though you do not always enjoy lessons, most of you like coming to school and attend well. Most of you know how to live healthy safe lives and behave appropriately in lessons, but some of you need more support at break times.
- Efforts are being made to help you learn better, but many parents lack confidence in the school because it is not improving quickly enough and because the school is not led and managed well enough.
- The quality of teaching, the learning opportunities given to you and the support and guidance you receive vary too much. As a result, many of you find it difficult to learn.

To make sure that your school improves we have asked the headteacher, governors and staff to help you to make better progress and learn more, especially in English and mathematics. We have also asked the school to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and to make sure that the work you do and the support you receive meets your needs. To achieve this, the school's leadership and management and its partnership with your parents will also have to be better.

For your part, you can help by trying hard to give of your best.

Thank you once again, and best wishes for the future.

Alex Baxter Lead inspector

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Lead inspector