

New Oak Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134915
Local Authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	316294
Inspection dates	11–12 June 2008
Reporting inspector	John English

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 on roll	
School	164
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah O'Farrell
Headteacher	Jennifer Cutler
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Walsh Avenue Hengrove Bristol BS14 9SN
Telephone number	01179 030203
Fax number	01179 030205

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school opened in September 2006, amalgamating an infant and a junior school. The current headteacher was appointed at that time. The school is smaller than average, and most of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is above average. There is a unit which supports nine hearing impaired children, of whom four are in the Reception class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is giving its pupils a satisfactory standard of education. This is a significant improvement on the experience of the pupils over the past few years during an uncertain period culminating in the amalgamation of two schools to form New Oak. The school is settling well and developing its own distinct identity. Standards are improving at a notably quicker rate in this second year of the new school, so pupils are now catching up much of the ground they had lost over recent years.

Children enter the school with standards that are well below expectations. They make good progress so that by the end of the Foundation Stage, they have improved but are still below expectations. Through the rest of the school, pupils' standards remain below average and their achievement is satisfactory overall.

Most parents are happy with the school. Almost all of them feel that their children enjoy school, are safe and happy and make good progress. 'The school is a happy, friendly place,' said one and others commented on the individual attention given to their children. Many praised the work of the headteacher in creating the new school, but a few felt that their ideas were not always listened to and acted on sufficiently. Inspectors believe that the views of parents and pupils are taken into account and have made a contribution to the development of the school. Senior managers have given a very strong lead for the work of the school. They have put in place measures to ensure improvements in standards of behaviour, the quality of teaching and the progress of all the pupils. They are at the heart of a rapidly improving school that until recently was clearly at risk of serious underperformance.

Most pupils enjoy school, particularly because they feel safe and well cared for by the adults, and they enjoy the company of their peers. They generally exercise well and eat healthily. They feel that behaviour and the way pupils treat each other has improved considerably. Pupils said that bullying incidents are rare and dealt with by the teachers immediately. Inspectors agree that behaviour in the classroom and outside is very good. The resulting atmosphere in lessons is conducive to learning and has had a major impact on improving standards this year especially. Allied to this have been improvements in the quality of teaching. However, there is still a significant proportion of teaching that, while satisfactory, lacks real stimulus and drive. Although the pupils in these classes are making satisfactory progress, they are not as engaged and able to develop as independent learners as effectively as in others.

The curriculum is satisfactory but is at present too heavily weighted towards English and mathematics. Links between different subjects that make the curriculum more interesting for the pupils are not consistently exploited. The children are very well cared for, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Guidance to pupils on how to improve their work, for example through marking, is generally good, but not all the teachers are using the data on the pupils' performance as effectively as they could.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to their education. It is well led and managed, and pupils are taught well by a team who work very closely together to support a wide range of need. Staff know the children very well. Good use is made of available resources and the outdoor area is being developed well, but is not yet fully utilised. Displays demonstrate

the value put on pupils' own work. Visits, for example to a nearby farm, are much enjoyed and provide a good first-hand experience for the children. Children are very happy and settled in this part of the school. They make good progress, especially in creative and physical development and in personal and social development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by ensuring that the quality of the teaching in all classes matches that of the best.
- Improve the curriculum by ensuring that adequate time is given to subjects other than English and mathematics and better links between subjects make it more stimulating.
- Ensure that all teachers use the performance data effectively to give more effective academic guidance to pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards that are well below expectations, with particular weaknesses in aspects of language and in personal and social development. They make good progress and enter Year 1 with standards that are improved, but still below expectations. Standards remain consistently below average in every year group up to the time pupils leave school. However, during 2007/08, there has been a clear acceleration in the rate of progress, which has enabled most of the pupils to regain ground lost in the preceding few years of instability. A recent focus on English has resulted in standards that are very close to the national average in the older classes. Currently the focus has switched to mathematics and there are indications of a similar impact, although standards are not as high as in English. Overall, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There are many pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who receive good support and also make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils of all ages relate well to adults and to each other. Behaviour is good, and parents and pupils confirm that it has improved considerably this year. Pupils enjoy school because they feel safe and well cared for. Some also enjoy school because they find lessons interesting and exciting. They have a good understanding of how to eat healthily and take sufficient exercise. They develop well socially because they are encouraged to express and manage their feelings. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school community through the school council and other responsibilities. A minority have developed a capacity for independent thinking and these pupils are able to make choices and decisions for themselves. Others are still rather passive participants in their education. Pupils are generally knowledgeable and respectful of other faiths and points of view. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is broadly average and improving.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching varies from class to class. Normally in every class the atmosphere is calm, activities are well organised, and the pupils know the procedures and understand what is expected of them. Because pupils' behaviour is good and they want to learn, teachers can concentrate on teaching. In some lessons, there is a good pace of activities, and the curriculum is taught in a way that interests and excites the pupils. Pupils then respond actively and develop their capacity for independent learning. However, in other lessons, teachers do not plan lessons in an interesting way. The pace is rather slow, and often the same work is undertaken by all the pupils in the class, despite their wide differences in levels of attainment. There is too much talking by the teacher, and insufficient involvement of the pupils in these lessons. Teacher assistants make a very good contribution working with individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or other small groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum was reviewed recently and now provides more opportunities for pupils to enjoy their learning. However, the links between subjects to put learning in a more interesting context are not exploited consistently enough to ensure that all pupils are stimulated sufficiently. Provision for literacy is improving rapidly and enabling most pupils to make up lost ground. The focus on the core subjects has resulted in less time than is desirable being given to other subjects. The curriculum promotes pupils' personal and social development well and work on healthy lifestyles is effective in influencing pupils' behaviours. There is a good range of clubs, visits out of school and other activities to enhance learning. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with hearing impairments, is good, and arrangements to support the more able are satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of pastoral care and support is consistently very good and is a strength of the school. Policies and procedures which guide good practice are in place and staff are trained and experienced in catering for a wide range of physical and medical needs. Support staff are enthusiastically led and provide high levels of extra support, especially for pupils with specific emotional concerns. Links with many outside agencies are effective. Arrangements for safeguarding are good. Procedures to monitor and promote attendance are effective and have resulted in improved attendance.

Guidance to pupils on how to improve their work is generally good. Some teachers use the data on pupils' performance well to provide advice to them, but this practice is not established in all classes. Marking is generally well directed and helpful. Older pupils make good use of individual targets and are beginning to assess their own work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The senior leadership of the new school, faced with a formidable range of challenges during and following the amalgamation, have responded with commitment and energy. They identified the key issues that needed to be tackled urgently and put in place measures aimed at improving standards as rapidly as possible. The focus on improving the pupils' behaviour, the quality of teaching, and the tracking system to ensure that pupils were working towards realistic and challenging targets has had a positive impact, starting from a low base. Their self-evaluation is very good, ensuring that appropriate issues are given priority. Subject leaders are developing their roles well but have not yet made a sufficient impact on raising standards and improving the curriculum. Governors take a full part in setting high expectations and monitoring the work of the school. There have been significant improvements, especially this year, in behaviour and pupils' personal development, in standards in English and mathematics and in the quality of teaching and learning. Capacity to improve is good.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

13 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of New Oak Primary School, Bristol BS14 9SN

Thank you for your welcome when we visited your school, and especially to all those who spent time telling us about your work and how you are getting on. We are glad to see that your new school is now settling down well and developing a character of its own. It is providing a satisfactory education for you all.

Your progress in your work is satisfactory and although standards are still below the national average, they are improving. This is because you have a good attitude to learning and behave well, so that in lessons teachers can concentrate on the teaching. You told us that you enjoy school, and feel safe and well looked after. Some of you find lessons exciting and fun. Others have satisfactory lessons, but they are less interesting, and sometimes are rather slow. We have asked the school to make sure that all lessons are interesting and stimulating, so that your standards continue to rise. We have also asked the school to improve the curriculum which, at the moment, does not have enough time on subjects other than English and mathematics.

Your teachers care for you very well, especially those of you who have special needs, and they are steadily improving the guidance they give you on how to improve. We have asked the school to develop its procedures and ensure that you all get consistently good guidance; you can help by following all the advice you are given on how to improve your work.

With very best wishes for your future schooling,

John English Lead Inspector

13 June 2008



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