

# Butts Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104147
<b>Local Authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	336244
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 April 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Driscoll

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	251
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jean Blackhall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Duncan Speirs
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 April 2010
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 21 lessons and nine teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and governors. The team observed the school's work, and looked at records of pupils' progress, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching, documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, and the responses to 89 parental questionnaires, 28 staff questionnaires and to the pupils' questionnaire.

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

- the effectiveness of actions to improve attendance
- the degree of challenge for the most able pupils in English
- reasons for the dip in performance in Year 2 in 2009.

## Information about the school

This large school serves an inner city area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The majority of pupils come from either a Pakistani or a White British background, but many other minority ethnic backgrounds are represented in the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is average. Several pupils have complex physical or medical needs. The school operates its own breakfast club and after-school club. Since the school was last inspected it has been awarded the ActiveMark and achieved Healthy School status.

**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

Butts Primary is a good school that has made significant progress in almost all areas of its work since it was last inspected. The school is being driven forward by good leadership and management at all levels, and self-evaluation that is accurate and honest. This leads to a complete lack of complacency and the ability to prioritise actions in those areas where they will have the greatest benefit. The procedures for monitoring and evaluation are now firmly embedded across the school and underpin the school's good capacity for continued improvement.

Achievement is now much better. Almost all groups of pupils make good progress year on year because they are consistently taught well. The curriculum has been adapted in order to focus on improving pupils' language skills as soon as pupils start school. This approach has been highly successful, and pupils' progress in writing is now outstanding because pupils of all abilities are given work that is challenging and have many opportunities to practise their skills in other subjects. The increased challenge has improved the progress of the most able pupils to a good level in English. Progress in mathematics is good but slower for the most able pupils, who sometimes find the work too easy and do not make enough use of their numeracy skills in other subjects. The marking of written work is of the very highest quality in most respects, but does not always inform pupils of what they need to do to improve in mathematics.

Most aspects of pupils' personal development, including behaviour, have improved and are now good. Pupils now play an outstanding role in both the school and local community. They respond enthusiastically to the many opportunities to take responsibility, and have played a major role in bringing the local community together through activities such as campaigning to save the local post office and organising huge multicultural events. Attendance, on the other hand, had been falling until this year. Good and successful actions have been taken to reduce the number of persistent absentees this year so attendance has improved, but it remains below average. There are still some pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern, and the school is not yet working intensively enough with these pupils.

Equality has been placed at the very heart of the school's work and underpins all that the school does. As well as taking a strong stance on racism and anti-social behaviour, several aspects of the school's work in this area are outstanding, including the support for vulnerable pupils. The school's leaders monitor very closely the academic progress of different groups and their involvement in activities to ensure all can do as well as each other. Any who may be falling behind are immediately provided with support specifically targeted to their needs. Pupils with complex physical or medical needs are completely integrated into the life of the school, providing an excellent example to others of what

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can be achieved. The school uses its outstanding range of partnerships to ensure that they receive expert support and guidance. Their inclusion has a notable impact on other pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Most of all though, the way the school has ensured that all pupils mix and get with one another provides a shining example to the wider community.

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

- Improve attendance to at least 95% by applying the approaches already used successfully with persistent absentees to all pupils whose attendance causes concern.
- Ensure the most able pupils make the best possible progress in mathematics by:
  - consistently providing them with suitably demanding work
  - providing them with more opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum
  - ensuring that marking is sufficiently detailed to show pupils exactly what they need to do to improve.

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

Attainment as observed in Year 2 is above average overall, and well above average in writing. This reflects good progress for these pupils, exceptionally so in writing. Attainment in Year 2 in 2009 dipped because the pupils had much lower levels of attainment when they started the key stage; they still made good progress. Many pupils, and not only those who speak English as an additional language, join the school with poor language skills. They make particularly good progress in their reading and writing from the nursery to Year 2, so by the time they start Year 3 pupils have all the skills needed to play a full part in lessons. Attainment is average in Year 6, but this year group contains a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, all of whom are making progress equally as rapidly as their peers. Pupils make consistently good progress in lessons. They arrive at school ready to learn and get straight down to work. Pupils are keen to do well and their concentration is often total. The only time their interest wanders is when they spend too long in whole-class activities that are not tailored to their individual needs. Their good social development is clear in the way they work in pairs or small groups, with excellent cooperation and sharing of tasks. Pupils enjoy the tasks they are given, particularly when they have the opportunity to apply their good computing skills, such as when using netbooks to research a trip to Llangollen. Behaviour is good both in and out of lessons. Pupils clearly think about others as they play or move around the school, ensuring that they help rather than hamper those with physical disabilities. The wide range of ethnic groups represented in the school is used to great effect. Pupils not only learn about each others' cultures, but also develop an interest in finding out about those who are not represented in the school. Pupils are good at choosing the healthy option, and are keen to have their

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lunchboxes assessed in assembly. A high proportion take part in extra sporting activities, as recognised by the ActiveMark award.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</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>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Learning starts as soon as pupils arrive at school. There is a task waiting on the board, often in the form of a challenge, which the pupils love and start tackling straight away. This sets the tone for the day; pupils are at school to work hard on tasks they enjoy. Pupils are clear about what they are to learn in lessons, although not always how they will be assessed. Teachers and teaching assistants demonstrate the skills pupils are to learn very well, so pupils are able to move quickly from learning a skill to applying it in different ways. English is now taught in a large number of small groups, each led by a teaching assistant or teacher. This is proving highly effective as work and questions can be targeted more precisely to individuals' needs, and provides detailed assessments that can be used to plan the next steps in learning. This approach works especially well with pupils who are at an early stage of learning English.

The school provides a nurturing and caring environment where pupils feel safe. Support

<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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for vulnerable pupils is of the highest quality. In particular, the school is tenacious in following up any concerns about child protection and can point to several cases where its intervention has had a marked impact on a child's welfare. Staff are well trained and experienced in supporting pupils with a wide range of medical or physical disabilities. This is supplemented by calling on the services of specialists whenever necessary. The breakfast club has proved effective in supporting the most vulnerable pupils and improving their attendance. The after-school club caters for some children who are not pupils at the school, and procedures for checking their attendance are not always followed. Good attention is paid to ensuring those who have a planned absence do not fall behind, but the school does not always ensure that those who are absent for shorter periods make up the work they have missed.

*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and his deputy have instilled a good team spirit among staff, all of whom are pulling together to improve all aspects of the school's work. All those responding to the questionnaire said they were proud to be a member of staff at the school. The school adopts good practice across all areas of safeguarding. The school's leaders, including governors, are well informed about pupils' progress and the quality of education provided. Checks on teaching are triangulated with others, such as results from assessments and frequent analyses of attainment as seen in books. This ensures an accurate view of performance and identifies areas for further improvement. When actions are taken, they are invariably successful, although the expected impact on achievement is not made clear in development plans. The school's expertise in improving writing, and supporting vulnerable pupils is now being called upon by other schools to aid their own improvement. This, added to the work with a remarkable range of agencies and groups within the local community, provides clear evidence of the school's exceptional use of partnerships. Good efforts are made to support community cohesion. This is very strong in the local community. Pupils develop a good understanding of other areas in Great Britain, through links with a partner school in a rural area for example. International links are not as well developed, but the planning of the curriculum ensures that this aspect is adequately covered. Parents are now much more involved with the school. They receive frequent information about their children's progress, and the school is very effective in providing guidance on how parents can help their children further.

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*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: 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>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the nursery with skills and knowledge that are well below the levels expected for their age. They make good progress, although they still start Year 1 with standards that are below average. Progress is exceptionally good in some aspects of literacy, especially writing, where standards are now above average. This is brought about by concentrating activities on promoting language development and encouraging children to speak whenever possible. Adults are particularly skilful at questioning in order to develop children's language skills, teasing out answers and introducing new vocabulary. Creative development still lags behind other areas, but the school has introduced more music activities to address this weakness. Children enjoy their lessons and cooperate well, especially when there is a need for care, such as when they go pond dipping. They get on well with one another and quickly learn the importance of obeying rules for the safety of everyone. There is a good balance between activities that are led by the teacher and those chosen by the children themselves, but not enough of these latter activities are used to assess pupils and gain a complete picture of their progress. The setting provides a safe and stimulating environment for children. This is a major improvement on the previous inspection. The sensory room provides an excellent facility for developing all the senses, not only for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but also for older pupils with particular needs. Good leadership and management have accurately identified and tackled weaker areas in provision and this has resulted in a significant rise in achievement.



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*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 are highly satisfied with all that the school does. They are particularly pleased with improvements to the way in which it engages and encourages parents, helping them to support their children at home. They are most impressed with the way the school helps their children to lead a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. There were no particular patterns to the small number of negative responses from individual parents.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Butts 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 89 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 256 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	47	44	49	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	47	53	39	44	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	42	51	57	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	39	52	58	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	48	42	47	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	43	48	54	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	37	54	61	0	0	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	38	48	54	3	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	38	49	55	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	44	42	47	5	6	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	30	56	63	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	40	46	52	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	53	40	45	1	1	1	1

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	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is 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 term 2009 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 pupil's 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.**



28 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Butts Primary School, Walsall WS4 2AH

Many thanks for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. We found you to be well behaved and very friendly. We were particularly impressed by all the jobs you do in school and the ways in which you help in the town, such as helping to keep the post office open. The way that you all get on with one another is an example to us all.

You told us that you enjoy coming to school and learning, especially about how to stay healthy. We can see why. You go to a good school. The teaching is good and you learn more quickly than we often see. You make particularly good progress in your writing because you are given difficult work to do and plenty of opportunities to write in different subjects. Some of you told us that you sometimes find the work in mathematics a bit easy, or are not sure what you need to do next. So, we have asked your teachers to make sure that the work in mathematics is equally as challenging as it is in English, and to tell you how to improve when they mark your work. We have also asked them to give you more opportunities to use your mathematics in other subjects. Some of you do not come to school as often as you should. Your teachers have helped some of you to come to school more frequently, and we have asked them to work with more of you. You can help yourselves by coming to school whenever you can.

Your school is getting better and better. The headteacher and all the others who help him to run the school work well together and you rightly say that they are doing a good job. They are very good at spotting what could be better and then doing something about it. Whenever they try to improve something, it always works. They are brilliant at making sure that all of you are treated equally. Some of you need extra help from specialists, and you always get exactly the help you need.

With all our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll

Lead inspector

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