

# Parson Street Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108951
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bristol City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	337183
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jill Bavin

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>	471
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robin Clapp
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Lacey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Bedminster Road Bristol BS3 5NR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, who spent the majority of time observing learning. The inspection team saw 18 teachers, visited 23 lessons and made five additional visits to classes to sample science work. They met with governors, staff and pupils. Additionally they scrutinised a range of documentation, including data showing how well each pupil makes progress, a variety of policies and information about safeguarding pupils. They analysed questionnaires returned by 162 parents, 101 pupils and 41 members of staff.

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

- boys' progress in writing throughout the school
- the consistency of challenge for higher attaining pupils
- the involvement of governors and leaders in evaluating intervention programmes.

## Information about the school

This is a large school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than is typical nationally. These mostly relate to speech, communication, social and emotional needs. A high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Although lower than the national average, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups has increased since the previous inspection. There are a few pupils whose home language is not English. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader joined the school in September 2009.

The school provides a breakfast club which was included in this inspection. The school has received several awards which include ICT Mark in recognition of its technology work and 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

This is a good, well-led and improving school. Since the previous inspection several developments have contributed to improved attainment and progress. The curriculum has become more stimulating and imaginative. A 'Study Focus' makes interesting links between subjects and pupils contribute by determining what they want to learn. Systems for checking each pupil's progress are more thorough and used effectively, not only by senior leaders but also class teachers. This is contributing to teachers planning effectively and routinely to meet differing needs within their class. It also enables staff to evaluate more efficiently the effectiveness of any extra help they are providing. The rigour of the school's self-evaluation processes and the impact of various initiatives that have brought about improvement indicate that the school has good capacity for sustained improvement. The majority of teaching is good, although there are examples of both outstanding and satisfactory lessons. On occasions it is not always made clear to pupils what is expected of them when they begin individual or small group work, and so opportunities are missed for them to assess their learning very precisely. Similarly, when teachers keep higher attaining pupils with the rest of the class for too long, these pupils are missing the chance to get on with more challenging work and develop greater independence in tackling it.

Most children join the nursery with poor language skills and their early literacy and mathematics skills are well below expectations for their age. The school invests a great deal of time and resources in successfully helping boys and girls to develop confidence as learners. Its care, guidance and support are outstanding. This contributes significantly to the outstanding progress made by individual pupils who receive special support to help them overcome potential barriers to learning. The good progress made by the large majority of pupils throughout the school means that pupils leave Year 6 with broadly average levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' learning is enhanced by their good behaviour. They are friendly towards each other and cooperate well in lessons, contributing to a harmonious school community.

The leadership team provides much helpful monitoring of teaching and learning. This contributes to frequent dialogue about improving provision between leaders and teachers. Nevertheless, feedback to teachers focuses more on detail about their teaching strategies than on specifying what pupils have learned during their lesson. Ambitions for further school development are shared among a cohesive staff team, whose work is much appreciated by parents.

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

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- Ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - specifying precise expectations of different groups of pupils in lessons
  - encouraging pupils to assess themselves regularly against these expectations
  - giving teachers more precise feedback on pupils' learning in lessons
  - implementing these actions during the summer term.
- Accelerate learning for higher attaining pupils by providing a more consistent degree of challenge, and giving them greater independence earlier in lessons.

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

Inspectors took a particular interest in boys' progress in writing because this has been a recent school focus. Lesson observations indicated that boys are doing as well as girls in this area. During the inspection, both boys and girls in Year 5 enjoyed writing instructions, incorporating a wealth of gruesome details, to 'cure a Tudor ailment.' Learning for both boys and girls of all abilities was impressive when pupils in Year 6 wrote empathically about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. This was exemplified by boys who find writing quite difficult raising questions that Jesus might have asked. One showed his understanding of the dilemma as he wrote: 'Am I really wanted here?'

In these lessons higher attaining pupils made good and outstanding progress alongside their classmates. Their learning was excellent when they had the freedom to write independently for a significant period of time. However, there are instances when they are not always challenged as fully as possible from the beginning of the lesson. For instance, higher attaining pupils made satisfactory progress, alongside their peers, in a lesson when pupils were taught as a whole class and opportunities for more complicated mathematical calculations did not begin straight away.

Pupils consistently work well together and positive relationships help them to feel safe and secure. This contributes to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils whose home language is not English make good progress in their understanding and use of the language. Throughout the school, pupils' consideration for others reflects the school's well-established procedures for promoting good behaviour and good provision for personal and social development. Reflecting the work associated with the school's award, pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are interested in the world around them, appreciate opportunities to extend their experiences and value attributes such as kindness. While attendance rates match, rather than exceed, the national average, the school is doing all it can to work with the few, ever-decreasing proportion of families whose children are often absent. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities, and are soundly prepared for their futures. Their information and communication technology (ICT) skills are well developed, as are their skills in physical education (PE).

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<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>2</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?

Inspectors found many good features of teaching in all lessons. Teachers have good relationships with pupils which contribute to positive, and often very subtle behaviour management, so lessons are rarely interrupted. Teachers routinely share learning intentions with pupils, giving them a helpful context for their learning. They also usually share their expectations, but these are not always equally measurable and focused on learning. Consequently, expectations are not always precise enough for pupils of different levels of ability to be completely clear about what they are aiming for while working independently. This also makes it difficult for them to judge their own learning. When teaching is satisfactory, it is because the pace slows for part of the lesson and expectations are not high enough to accelerate pupils' learning. Occasionally teaching is outstanding when expectations are extremely high and very skilful questioning keeps pupils highly focused and continually appraising their work

Strengths in the curriculum lie in its interest and relevance to both boys and girls. Regular opportunities to write creatively and extensively contribute to improved attainment and progress for all groups of pupils. Recently the school has introduced systematic opportunities for pupils to express their ideas verbally before recording them on paper. It is too soon for the full impact of this to be felt, but it is already adding enjoyment. The school has a raft of special programmes to help pupils who find learning difficult, which are well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils benefit from specialist PE

<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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provision, and much appreciate a wide range of sporting opportunities. They also benefit from stimulating opportunities to use ICT that enriches other learning. While there are special events for pupils who show particular talents, such as joining other schools for sports or mathematics activities, developments to support higher attaining pupils in lessons are not yet embedded.

The school is extremely caring and supportive of pupils, especially those who face particularly difficult circumstances. The roles of the inclusion leader, learning mentor and parent support adviser play a highly significant part in reaching out to parents and carers to the benefit of pupils. One example of this is the school’s success in reducing the extent of persistent absence. The breakfast club is well staffed and valued. It prepares its members well for the day with a variety of activities and a relaxed atmosphere. Several parents and carers, and pupils themselves, remarked on their extremely smooth transition from other schools because of the high quality care from staff and friendliness of pupils.

*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>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher, very ably supported by the deputy headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body, provide strong leadership and steer school improvement, while empowering others. The school successfully promotes equal opportunities. Most noteworthy is the success in closing the gap in the progress made by girls and boys in writing and also in reducing potential barriers to learning for those pupils in particularly difficult circumstances. Since the previous inspection, staff at all levels have taken greater responsibility for contributing to school improvement and raising pupils’ attainment and progress. This is a cohesive school where adults share a strong commitment to doing their best for pupils and have a good understanding of the school’s strengths and next priorities. The implementation of rigorous systems to check each pupil’s progress is holding teachers more closely to account. These systems are also being used by staff and governors to ensure that special support programmes are working effectively and to discard those not producing the required results. Governors play an active role in supporting the school’s endeavours and holding senior staff to account. They provide a good level of knowledge and expertise that underpins good safeguarding procedures. Governors and staff show a particularly strong understanding of child protection issues.

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Staff and governors have a thorough understanding of the local community. They have been very successful in promoting an ethos that is appreciative of the growing diversity within the school community. There are several examples of pupils gaining a good understanding of citizenship, for example, through their contribution to saving their local library from closure. The school has begun to make links with another school which has a more diverse population than its own as a result of the recognition that this is an area for further development.

*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</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

The Early Years Foundation staff team share a commitment to helping children make good progress in a safe and nurturing environment. They are particularly successful in promoting their personal and social skills and readiness to learn. Children make good progress in acquiring the key skills that underpin future learning in literacy and mathematics. For example, when children are immersed in a variety of interesting activities both inside and outside, they make good gains in recognising and ordering numbers. Their understanding is supported through, for example, using 'fishing rods' to catch magnetic numerals; painting crabs to represent a specific quantity and making number snakes. On the occasions when adults spend too long giving children explanations, learning is satisfactory rather than good because opportunities to learn through direct experience are constrained.

The new leader of the provision has rapidly gained an astute understanding of its strengths and priorities for future development. Consequently, children are increasingly learning through activities of their own choice, which enhances their experience. Most



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importantly, the team is making regular and useful observations of what children are achieving and using this information to plan further activities. The leader has correctly identified that this needs further development so that staff identify the next step in learning when they make observations of an individual child. That said, there are examples of skilful adult intervention that support children as they practise many skills through very stimulating activities. For example, children developed control of tools such as pencils and a computer mouse while scrutinising computerised maps and imaginatively creating their own maps of towns. Well-timed adult questioning meant they also increasingly voiced their ideas, explaining, for example, that they had included 'where the car gets food.'

*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**

Most parents and carers are highly appreciative of the school's work. Almost all think that teaching is good and their child is prepared well for the future. A few parents and carers were concerned about how the school deals with behaviour and takes account of their views. These concerns were not shared by most parents and carers nor substantiated by inspection findings or by pupils. During the inspection behaviour was good and pupils thought this was usual. Several parents and carers commended the headteacher and staff for their approachability.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Parson Street 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 162 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 471 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	95	59	59	36	7	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	94	58	63	39	5	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	78	48	79	49	5	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	70	45	86	53	5	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	82	51	77	48	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	76	47	81	50	4	2	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	65	40	93	57	4	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)	61	38	90	56	2	1	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	38	94	58	4	2	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	33	93	57	12	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	53	33	92	57	13	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	75	46	79	49	4	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	84	52	74	46	3	2	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.**



26 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parson Street Primary School, Bristol, BS3 5NR

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you all very much. A special thank you goes to those of you who met with me or my colleague to show us your work and share your ideas about the school. We agree with you and your parents that you go to a good school. Here are some of the good things we found.

- You make good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- You are developing good PE and ICT skills.
- You usually learn well in lessons because you behave well and the teachers plan carefully to give you work that suits your abilities.
- You have plenty of interesting activities and contribute good ideas to make the 'study focus' work even more interesting to you.
- The adults in school are extremely caring and supportive of you and give you extra help when you need it.
- The headteacher, governing body and senior staff do a good job running the school and in working with your teachers and support staff to make it even better.

We have asked them to make absolutely clear what they expect from you when you are working in small groups, so you can judge how well you are doing more often and more accurately. We have asked the senior teachers to make sure that they give other teachers clear feedback about how well you have learned when they observe lessons. We have also asked teachers to make sure that they give those of you who are quick to learn more challenging work earlier in the lesson and let you work independently more often.

You can help by continuing to work as hard as you do now. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jill Bavin

Lead Inspector

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