

# Blaise Primary School and Nursery

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109118
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bristol City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	337219
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Merchant

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>	383
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dave Wood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Rowlands
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 March 2010
<b>School address</b>	Clavell Road Bristol BS10 7EJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 3772424
<b>Fax number</b>	0117 3772423
<b>Email address</b>	head.blaise.p@bristol.gov.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 20 lessons and observed 13 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and an officer from the local authority. They also talked to some parents and carers who were present at the start and finish of the school day. They observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan, data on pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a range of school policies. They also analysed questionnaires received from 33 parents and carers and 94 pupils.

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

- pupils' attainment and progress, particularly that of girls, higher-attaining pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- how well the teaching takes account of the needs of groups and individuals, particularly girls and higher-attaining pupils and how well teachers help all pupils to improve their work
- how consistently teachers check the progress of different groups of pupils in each year group and how well they inform them about what they need to do to improve their work
- the effectiveness of subject leaders in checking attainment, progress and teaching and of bringing about improvements in the outcomes for all pupils.

## Information about the school

This school is larger in size than most other primary schools. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than is typically found. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, mainly behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, is above average, as is the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The school achieved the Healthy Schools award in 2007. There is one Nursery class and two Reception classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A new headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher were appointed in September 2009.

**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?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**4**

### Main findings

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.

Parents are supportive, and even those who have some criticisms recognise that their children really enjoy coming to school. However, the overall effectiveness of the school is inadequate because too many pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable and attainment is low, showing little sign of improvement. Pupils' achievement is inadequate.

The new headteacher has begun to tackle the school's weaknesses with energy and passion and has ensured that all staff have an accurate understanding of these weaknesses and, importantly, what is needed to put them right. However, although there are some signs of improvement in pupils' attainment and progress, there has been insufficient time for the actions introduced, by her, to overturn the legacy of underachievement. There are weaknesses among middle leaders. In addition, a decline in pupils' outcomes, insufficient progress on tackling the issues identified in the last inspection and a decline in many aspects of school provision since the last inspection, mean that the school's capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate.

Children start in the Nursery with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage and, at the end of Reception, work securely within most of their early learning goals. Progress declines sharply, however, as pupils pass through Key Stage 1 and does not pick up well enough in Key Stage 2. For the past five years, results in national tests at the end of Year 6 have been significantly below average. Limited opportunities for pupils to investigate and solve mathematical problems and a restricted amount and range of extended writing stop more of them reaching the highest levels. In science, pupils are often unclear about the purpose of their investigations and carry out tasks mechanically.

There are a number of additional reasons why pupils' progress is inadequate.

? Teaching does not cater well enough for the range of pupils' abilities in lessons and the pace of learning is too often slow. Often lessons are dull and uninspiring and teachers spend too long talking. Time at the end of lessons is not used sufficiently to check how well pupils have done and what they have learnt.

? There is inconsistency among middle leaders in the way they carry out their roles of

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monitoring standards, learning and teaching and this is holding back improvements in pupils' achievement.

? The attendance rate of just over 92% is well below the national average and the proportion of pupils that are persistently absent is double that seen nationally.

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

- Ensure that pupils reach the levels of which they are capable by:
  - giving more opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and writing skills in English, their problem-solving skills in mathematics and their investigation skills in science
  - making sure that at the end of each lesson, pupils have a clear idea of what they have learnt, whether they have fulfilled their personal objectives and what they need to do to improve further
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better in the very large majority of lessons by:
  - making sure that there is a sharper match between work set and the different abilities of pupils, particularly the more able
  - giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to be more active and inquisitive in class.
- Improve pupils' overall rate of attendance so that it is consistently 94% or better by:
  - working in partnership with parents to improve their awareness of the impact of absence
  - monitoring attendance carefully and taking action where appropriate.
- Increase the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
  - ensuring that all middle leaders are consistently accountable for pupils' attainment and progress in the subjects for which they are responsible
  - developing the role of governors so that they have the skills and knowledge to be better able to hold school leaders to account.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****4**

The work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms the overall picture of low attainment and inadequate progress. Learning is held back because many teachers expect too little of pupils and tasks set in lessons that are undemanding and lack imagination.

Consequently, pupils spend much time listening to teachers talking rather than learning from each other and 'finding out'. In English, a lack of sufficient opportunities for pupils to write lengthy pieces of work inhibits their ability to write well. Standards in mathematics are not improving quickly enough because many teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to talk about what they have learnt, and what they need to do to improve further. Pupils often carry out tasks mechanically, without knowing why

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they are doing them. In an inadequate Year 4 science lesson, pupils worked noisily and with some degree of confusion when carrying out an investigation into separating substances, because they did not understand what they were supposed to learn. Recently introduced ways of identifying and planning for the needs of all pupils, together with more thoughtful deployment of teaching assistants, are leading to an acceleration in the progress of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, although their progress remains too slow.

Most pupils enjoy school and are ready to learn. Where teaching is lively and pupils involved, their attitudes to learning are good. However, weaknesses in teaching often lead to low-level disruption and inappropriate behaviour which hold back learning, particularly of girls. In discussions, pupils are clear about how to stay safe and have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy being active and show this through their participation in activities at break times and in clubs. Pupils from all backgrounds work and play together well, and have a secure awareness of the different ways of life in other communities. However, pupils' attainment is well below average in English and mathematics and their high rate of absence mean that they are inadequately prepared for the next stages of their lives.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</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>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<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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## How effective is the provision?

The school’s emphasis on promoting pupils’ emotional well-being results in them feeling safe, secure and well looked after. Child protection procedures are rigorous. Despite this caring ethos, provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is inadequate. This is because links between support staff, the special educational needs coordinator and teachers have not been effective enough to ensure that these pupils make fast enough progress. Recently introduced systems to check the attendance of different groups of pupils have not yet had time to redress the school’s low rate of attendance. The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced, but senior leaders are aware that there are still not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their number and writing skills in different subjects and that this reduces the rate at which these skills improve.

Although there are significant pockets of good teaching, too much is inadequate or barely satisfactory and this has led to pupils not making the progress of which they are capable. In the effective lessons, teachers are good at telling pupils exactly what they are expected to do, and this helps them make sense of their learning. Here, teachers move learning on at a brisk pace and not a moment is lost. In these better lessons, pupils often work with eagerness and pride. Too many lessons, however, are dull and unimaginative and pupils are not well enough motivated or inspired to learn. Their learning is held back because:

teachers talk for too long, which restricts the opportunities pupils have to take a more active part in lessons

the rate at which pupils learn is too slow and they spend too long on tasks that do little to extend or develop their skills or sustain their interest

pupils are sometimes given activities that are either not challenging enough or too hard, and their learning is then restricted.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>4</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher inherited a legacy of persistently low pupil outcomes and low staff ambition. The headteacher has lost no time in putting in place the necessary actions to redress this legacy. She shows good analytical skills and is clear thinking. Following her

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appointment, she quickly identified key weaknesses in the school’s performance, and ensured that staff and governors were made fully aware of these deficiencies. She has worked successfully to involve staff in improving the school. For instance, the school development plan is well focused and has entirely the right priorities to improve the school; the senior leadership team has been reorganised and revitalised and is growing into its primary role of improving pupils’ standards. Although entirely appropriate, there has been too little time for these actions taken by the headteacher to have had a measurable impact on pupils’ attainment and progress.

The governing body fulfils all legal requirements and gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff with all safeguarding arrangements found to be effective at the time of the inspection. The governing body recognises that, although it has been supportive of the school, it has not held leaders to account for the school’s low standards and inadequate pupil progress. It currently gives good support to senior leaders and is fully committed to the recently introduced initiatives to raise standards. Subject leaders have been ineffective in checking and improving teaching and learning and the quality of pupils’ work. The school is inclusive and makes sure there is no discrimination on racial or gender grounds. However, its promotion of equality for all pupils is inadequate because too many are not making enough progress and attainment remains low. The school is at an early stage of evaluating how well it fosters an understanding of others from different ethnic groups and cultures and so community cohesion is satisfactory.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
<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>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**



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Children settle in to the Nursery quickly, are keen to learn, play together well and are well behaved. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff provide well for children’s welfare. The outdoor area is suitably laid out to promote learning and children respond positively to the opportunities it affords. Both inside and out, children have access to a varied and stimulating range of activities which support their personal development as well as their communication, language and literacy skills, creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. There is a clear, coordinated approach to using the indoor and outdoor learning areas. There is a satisfactory balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. The learning of letters and sounds (phonics) is taught daily. Adults generally support children well and their explanations are clear although opportunities are missed to develop children’s mathematical skills in the outdoor area. All adults make observations of children and carefully assess their learning. However, this information is not always used rigorously enough to ensure that the next steps in learning are sharply focused on children’s differing needs.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

The staff enjoy the confidence and support of those parents and carers who returned the questionnaire. A number of individual comments reflected the ‘big difference’ the headteacher has made since joining the school. The inspectors endorse these views. A very small minority of parents felt that the school could do more to help them with their children’s learning. Inspectors support these views; the school recognises that it can do more to communicate more effectively with parents.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Blaise Primary School and Nursery 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 33 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection.

In total, there are 351 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	36	20	61	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	13	39	18	55	2	6	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	27	19	58	2	6	3	9
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	30	20	61	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	33	21	64	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	30	21	64	1	3	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	30	22	67	1	3	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)	10	30	22	67	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	27	24	73	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	24	24	73	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	18	23	70	4	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	36	20	61	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	42	19	58	0	0	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.**



19 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Blaise Primary and Nursery School, Bristol BS10 7EJ

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we came to inspect your school. It was good to talk to you about the things you like about school. We had the chance to talk to many of you and it was really pleasing to hear about how you feel safe, how much you know about staying healthy and how much you enjoy school. You mostly get on well with each other and help your classmates if needed.

While these are some of the positive things, we found that the school is not providing a satisfactory standard of education. We have placed the school into a category called special measures because we feel your school needs some extra support and we have asked the headteacher, teachers and governors to make some urgent improvements. Inspectors will visit the school regularly to check how well it is doing. These are some of the things we have asked the school to do to make learning better for you:

make sure that far more of you make faster progress in lessons by making sure you understand what you are learning, have more pieces of longer writing to do in English and practise problem solving in mathematics

teachers should ensure that the work they plan for you is neither too easy nor too hard, and gives you opportunities to find things out for yourselves

make sure that the teachers who are responsible for subjects check on how well you are taught and how well you are doing and for the school governors to play a bigger part in helping the school get better

take steps to encourage more of you to attend school more regularly.

Mrs Rowlands, the staff and the governors want the school to continue to improve. You can all help too by making sure you work hard all the time, attend every day and always do your best.

Thank you once again for being so helpful.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead inspector

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