

Fonthill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131496
Local Authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	341148
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Mo Roberts

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	263
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Bartholomew
Headteacher	Stephen Dand
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons and saw nine teachers in all. Meetings were held with governors, senior staff, groups of pupils and spoke informally to some parents. They looked at the school's work and scrutinised community cohesion planning, tracking and assessment documentation and that related to the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Forty-five parental questionnaires were also analysed.

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

- the quality of pupils' writing
- the attendance patterns of pupils and the strategies and support given to pupils with poor attendance
- the accuracy of assessments relating to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the effectiveness of the strategy to use community cohesion planning to raise aspirations.

Information about the school

The school is slightly larger than average but has a falling roll. There are very uneven numbers of boys and girls in some year groups. The school has a higher than average number of pupils arriving at non-standard times throughout the year and a higher proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has become more ethnically diverse since it was last inspected. A significantly higher than average number of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities and many children enter the school with limited language and social skills. The school has achieved Healthy School status, and holds the Eco schools and ActiveMark awards. The Early Years Foundation Stage has achieved the Bristol Quality Standard.

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

Fonthill is a good school and it has improved considerably since the last inspection. In 2009 the Year 6 results were broadly at the national average in English and mathematics for the first time in recent years. Overall, this represents good progress as many pupils in this group started school with skills that were well below those expected of pupils nationally. The pupils with identified needs made good progress, in keeping with their peers. While the results in writing have also improved, they remained the weaker area. The school's continued focus on writing since then is working and standards continue to improve.

The school has adopted imaginative ways to tackle problem areas such as attendance. Through diligent procedures and positive encouragement it met the targets set by the local authority last year, but attendance remains, as yet, below the national average. To further tackle this it has developed strong community cohesion planning to ensure parents become more involved in school and are better informed about ways in which they can support their child's learning, including by being punctual. This, together with generally good teaching, has helped the pupils to gain better results.

Behaviour has also improved and is now good due to more adventurous teaching. This motivates pupils and they learn rapidly, especially at the upper end of the school. Teaching is good overall but still varies in quality. In a very effective lesson, good use of information and communication technology (ICT) stimulated pupils to write persuasively, prompted by the teacher's incisive questioning and good support for all pupils. However, where teaching is slightly less strong it is because some of the tasks do not stretch all the pupils sufficiently, the resources are less exciting or appropriate, and/or the teacher's questioning fails to pinpoint exactly what pupils need to learn next in order to maintain rapid progress.

The governors now have good oversight of school developments and have begun to challenge the school effectively. They fulfil all their statutory duties. Each member of the new school leadership team, ably led by the headteacher, leads on a specific aspect of school development. Most are tackling new areas of responsibility, so the impact of this devolved organisational structure and new management systems has yet to be fully realised. The school took innovative steps to ensure the accuracy of its self-evaluation; this involved cross-checks with another school and contributions from the pupils. This clearly thought-out and proactive approach, together with the improved results, demonstrates that the school has a good capacity to consolidate gains and improve further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rigorously continue the drive to raise attendance.
- Raise the quality of teaching to ensure it is all good or better, by:
 - ensuring that tasks are always sufficiently challenging
 - using more carefully selected resources to stimulate pupils
 - making sure questions always identify exactly what pupils know, and so what they need to learn next.
- Embed the new devolved management roles, making sure that all staff can track and analyse pupils' progress effectively and that they fully evaluate any new strategies used.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Standards are rising and are better than in previous years. In science, for example, they are now above the national average and mathematics, traditionally the school's best subject, gives pupils the solid skills they require for secondary school. In the Nursery and Reception classes pupils develop their vocabulary and ability to talk about their experiences and their social skills rapidly. This rate of progress slows a little in Key Stage 1 as they consolidate these early gains. In Key Stage 2 their learning accelerates again, especially in Years 5 and 6. In all year groups pupils enjoy their learning. They are especially keen on history. Their response to the school's social and emotional development programme is also very good. This has a positive impact on their well-being and they mostly make healthy choices. They enjoy exercise and all the clubs, including the good number for younger pupils. Pupils take an active part in school life and there is real competition to gain a place on the school council. They have learned to cooperate well with each other and enjoy working with pupils from other schools that are more ethnically diverse. Even potentially vulnerable pupils participate in the extensive school residential camp provision and find they can rise to new challenges. Right across the year groups, pupils are confident that they have trustworthy adults to turn to if there are any problems. They reported feeling happy and safe in school. In lessons a high level of partner work encourages pupils to explain their ideas and cooperate, as seen in a lesson where they planned and carried out a mock television interview prior to writing. In another class younger pupils, who were mostly boys, also managed to develop their written work because they had good opportunities to share ideas and predict imaginative outcomes, and this effectively made them keener to have a go at writing down their ideas.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum has been adapted well to stimulate and engage pupils by giving them a broader range of first-hand experiences. For example, the pupils have enjoyed visits from the fire brigade and an author. Themed weeks, especially the international week, broaden pupils' experiences and knowledge of the world. Their reading has improved as a result of the specific strategies that have been adopted to promote the pupils' grasp of letter sounds within words. This has also helped them to begin to be more confident writers. The bright and inviting classrooms support learning effectively with lots of charts and ideas for pupils to use. Teachers plan lessons carefully but they do not always evaluate sufficiently how different groups of pupils have progressed in a lesson. This means teachers are not always clear enough about the next step to use to rapidly develop these groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good in-class support. In all lessons teachers display good classroom management skills. These include getting younger pupils to cooperate as a group, for example by 'listening well to each other'. Pupils respond well to the positive management systems that earn them 'treasure'. Overall, the care, guidance and the support given to all pupils are of a good standard. Teachers know each individual well; they provide appropriately for those who have particular needs requiring an individualised approach, including for those new to learning English. Good support is given as pupils move up through the school and on to the next phase of learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The determined school leadership team has a strong vision for improvement. It has successfully improved provision for pupils' playtimes, and this has resulted in better behaviour. It also tracks pupils' attainment closely, and consequently teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have risen. This has had a good impact, especially on reading standards and science. The headteacher has begun to devolve responsibility to the newly appointed middle managers. These managers share a clear view of how to raise standards further but they have not yet all received the necessary training to make full use of the computerised tracking system. Many systems are new and evaluations of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are not yet sufficiently rigorous to ensure that maximum progress is always achieved. Safeguarding is given a high priority and this effectively promotes the well-being of all pupils, including the numerous new arrivals and any looked after children. The attendance rate is partly depressed because of the good, stringent safeguarding procedures employed. For example, pupils who suddenly move are kept on the register, often for substantial periods, until the school is certain where they have gone. Community cohesion is fostered effectively. The school has reached out into the local community, not just to improve partnerships but to form good relationships with families that had been hard to reach. The family support work is proving successful. The school has tackled racism and reduced racist comments through a programme of links with a multicultural school and its own international week. As a result of such initiatives, the school is now a more thoughtful and respectful community where all pupils feel welcome.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

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	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their early educational experiences, both indoors and outdoors. The new canopy has made outdoor play more readily available for Reception children. Provision is rich and stimulates cooperative play and independent exploration. A good proportion of time is now given to children following their own interests. Where adults directly lead the learning they are adept at keeping the time short and sessions vibrant. Both Nursery and Reception children have plenty of free choice and they have, for example, enjoyed making pasta necklaces in the Nursery and following the development of the tadpoles in the Reception class pond. Children are keen to bring in their home experiences and staff skilfully help to develop children's language and ideas. Personal, social and emotional development is supported well by the caring atmosphere and adults' good knowledge of the needs of individuals. The school's assessment records confirm the good progress children make. Teaching and leadership and management are good resulting in clear plans for staff training and further development of the provision such as in the outdoor areas.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

The large majority of returns from parents and carers were positive. All concerns were followed up, and it was found that school staff knew about them and had either already addressed the issues or were preparing to do so. Risk assessments for health and safety were found to be in place and pupils are encouraged to think hard about the consequences of their actions. The school welcomes parents and actively helps parents to find extra ways to support their children's learning. The parents and carers of Reception and Nursery aged children who were spoken to say they are pleased with the

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way their children have settled into school life.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fonthill 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 244 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	60	16	36	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	64	13	29	3	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	56	12	27	8	18	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	42	23	51	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	28	62	15	33	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	47	18	40	4	9	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	40	24	53	2	4	1	2
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)	18	40	21	47	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	38	24	53	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	51	17	38	4	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	38	23	51	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	19	42	21	47	4	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	62	15	33	1	2	1	2

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). 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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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 Fonthill Primary School, Bristol, BS10 5SW

Thank you for the help you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed seeing you have fun and get good exercise at playtime with all the new equipment and the play pod. Thank you for answering our questions in your lessons. We would like to thank those of you who came to talk to us, and those who filled in the pupils' questionnaire. We agree with you that you go to a school that is continually improving. We think it is a good school, and is especially good at caring for you as individuals.

These are some of the other good things about your school.

- Most of you behave well.
- You listen and learn well in your lessons, and this means that by Year 6 you have made good progress to reach the standards expected nationally for pupils of that age.
- Your headteacher and his new leadership team are keen to make sure that your school gets even better, and are supported in this by the governors.
- Your school welcomes your parents' and carers' ideas and views and wants even more of them to come in and see what you do.

So your school gets even better, we have asked the teachers to do three things.

- Go on improving your attendance.
- Make sure all lessons are as good as the best, and include interesting tasks at just your level and questions and things to make you really think.
- Teachers with special jobs need to get used to their new jobs and to make sure they know and write down exactly what you can do and what you need to do next. This is so that they know if any of you could learn even faster.

Please help by trying hard in class and always coming to school unless you are ill.

Yours sincerely

Mo Roberts

Her Majesty's Inspector

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