

# College Road Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113276
<b>Local Authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	357308
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 September 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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	186
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jim Warwick
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jim Wallace
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 November 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who saw seven teachers, visited 17 lessons and made six additional visits to classes to focus on opportunities for pupils to write, to learn about different cultures and to learn through making links between subjects. Additionally, the team met with governors, staff and pupils. They scrutinised a variety of documentation, including policies and documents related to safeguarding, monitoring and evaluation records and data about pupils' progress and the school improvement plan. Responses on questionnaires from 120 parents, 76 pupils and 24 staff were analysed.

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

- the consistency of challenge for the most able pupils throughout the school
- the school's effectiveness in promoting writing skills for pupils of all ages
- how effectively the school promotes pupils' awareness of British cultural diversity.

## Information about the school

This is a relatively small primary school with a falling roll until recently, reflecting local demographic trends. The inspection follows a period of significant staff changes, with two new class teachers this term, and only two teachers in school for more than three years. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school between Reception and Year 6 because of their family circumstances is higher than is typical nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has increased since the previous inspection and is now more than twice the national average. Most of these pupils have difficulties related to learning, speech and communication. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language has increased recently but is well below the national average. The school received Healthy School status in 2008 for the first time in recognition of its work to promote healthy lifestyles.

**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 school with rising standards and improving progress for all groups of pupils in all tested areas. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities reach higher standards than expected nationally. The school's existing strengths arise from accurate self-evaluation informing many positive developments since the previous inspection. This indicates a good capacity for further improvement. The school has developed a far more interesting curriculum, with a strong emphasis upon making links between subjects that add relevance for pupils and give them good opportunities to practise key skills. This has been most successful in reading, mathematics and science where pupils reach broadly average standards. While the school's increased focus on writing has begun to improve pupils' attainment and progress, there is more to be done. Recent and current attainment in writing is still below the national average for most pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. There are missed opportunities on a daily basis for pupils to write and they seldom have extended periods of time for uninterrupted writing. Teaching has improved and is now good because teachers make better use of assessment information than previously to plan for the varying needs of pupils in their class. That said, they sometimes keep more able pupils learning alongside their classmates for too long, often at the beginning of lessons.

Good care, support and guidance contribute to strengths in pupils' personal development. Newcomers are supported sensitively and helped to settle quickly, both into the Reception class and into later year groups. Pupils rapidly develop pride in their school and good behaviour enhances learning in lessons. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school successfully fosters tolerance of diversity and pupils identify that visits and visitors have helped them gain an understanding of cultures that differ from their own. The school is working diligently and effectively to improve average attendance and has substantially reduced the number of persistent absentees over the last academic year.

The school's successes arise from effective leadership and management. Governors, senior staff and teaching colleagues, including those who are either new to the school or to the profession, share a good understanding of the school's achievements and next priorities. Governors and staff regularly undertake monitoring activities. The findings are routinely shared, so all are actively involved in self-evaluation, determining priorities for improvement and spearheading projects. Consequently, staff share an accurate view of the school's work. Teamwork is very effective in quickly assimilating new teachers who share a strong sense of accountability for continued school improvement with their colleagues.

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

- Raise attainment and progress in writing by giving pupils more opportunities to:
  - write more frequently throughout the day
  - develop their ideas on paper over extended periods of time.
  - implement these strategies before the end of the Autumn term.
- Accelerate learning for more able pupils by giving them greater independence and a more consistent level of challenge, and doing this sooner in lessons.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Although individual pupils vary, most join the school with poor language skills and literacy and mathematics skills that are well below expectations for their age. Lesson observations indicated that boys' and girls' learning is often good because pupils develop knowledge and understanding in more than one subject simultaneously. Pupils in Year 2 acquired new scientific knowledge and understanding at the school pond when they observed a newt and water snail for the first time and identified their characteristics. In the same lesson they began to produce a pictogram of their observations which meant applying their mathematical skills and understanding. In this lesson more able pupils were challenged well because their extra mathematical challenge involved using one picture to represent two creatures. Skilful questioning from the teacher meant that they solved the problem of how to represent odd numbers.

Learning for boys and girls of all abilities was impressive in Year 6 when, as 'archaeologists', they combined history and mathematics. They unearthed artefacts and used historical knowledge to make deductions about them and then plotted their precise location using co-ordinate grids. The organisation of pupils of different abilities working together combined with skilfully modified questioning for individual pupils ensured that pupils of all abilities were equally well challenged. However, there are occasions when more able pupils are not challenged as fully as possible. Most pupils made good progress in developing vocabulary and sentence construction verbally while preparing to write about Victorian poverty, but the more able pupils were involved for longer than necessary. They therefore missed a chance for independent writing.

Pupils are soundly prepared for the next stage of their education. In spite of the school's efforts, attendance rates remain close to the national average. The oldest pupils have yet to reach national expectations in writing. That said, pupils respond enthusiastically to the school's provision and willingly adopt responsibilities. Reflecting the school's award, they have a good understanding of how to make healthy choices. They keenly embrace the various sporting and cultural opportunities available to them. Participation in the wide range of clubs is high. Pupils are respectful of each other. When pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities work in small groups with their peers they do so effectively. Positive relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils help them to feel secure. Pupils are accustomed to welcoming new classmates and these strengths contribute to pupils who speak English as an additional language settling

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quickly and making good progress.

*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>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?

Teachers' good relationships with pupils underpin positive behaviour management so learning proceeds smoothly. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to supporting pupils' progress, especially those who are having difficulties with their learning. A key feature is that support avoids being over-directive and pupils have good opportunities to make their own decisions and work with classmates. Teachers' planning routinely identifies different learning goals for different groups of pupils according to their abilities, although when pupils begin different group work, teachers seldom give them specific reminders of their expectations. There is a good marking policy and examples of good marking, although its implementation is not entirely consistent, so next steps are not always very specific. Teachers have good subject knowledge which contributes to the clear introductions they provide for new ideas and topics. When teaching is satisfactory it is usually because the pace has slowed for part of the lesson while pupils are over-prepared and opportunities for independent work are missed.

<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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Staff now routinely help pupils to identify how they are learning and the skills they need to harness. The improved curriculum, combined with improved teaching, is underpinning school improvement, pupils' good personal development and the buzz of enthusiasm that is found in most lessons. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well chosen to meet specific individual needs. Enrichment activities are carefully selected to extend pupils' experience, whether within the local community or through international links with schools in China. Information and communication technology is used well in a variety of circumstances, for example pupils filmed the carnival they had organised as part of their International Arts Week.

The school provides good pastoral care which makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning and well-being. Pupils from very different backgrounds and circumstances are welcomed sensitively, and family members are invited into school to contribute to helping other pupils understand their new classmates' circumstances. Good links with parents and a variety of professionals and organisations outside the school help staff to support those pupils facing the most challenging circumstances and minimise any potential disadvantage.

*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 deputy headteacher provide strong leadership that is very clearly focused on raising attainment and progress. They are ably supported by the chair of governors and governance is good. A key feature of the success in driving improvement forward on many fronts over the last three years is the involvement of staff at all levels. These strong features give the school a good capacity for continued development. The extent of staff changes has inevitably meant some re-visiting of vision, issues and priorities, as well as re-training and re-allocating roles. It is to the school's credit that improvement has continued in spite of this. Senior colleagues keep a close eye on the quality of teaching and learning. They have an accurate view of strengths and address priorities robustly. Teachers demonstrate their commitment to doing the best possible for pupils by seeking to improve their practice. Governors hold senior staff to account effectively. They provide a good level of knowledge, expertise and involvement in ensuring that safeguarding procedures are based on an extensive range of policies which exceed those required. They ensure that policy and practice are relevant to the pupils in school.

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The school's commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for all its pupils is without question. It is evident in their successes with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as those pupils facing particularly difficult circumstances. Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation that judges its success in this area as satisfactory because ensuring full equality of opportunity for its more able pupils is still work in progress. The school uses its analysis of its social, religious and cultural context to enhance pupils' learning as well as their understanding of their local and other communities. Plans are in place to extend links with other communities in the United Kingdom, and meanwhile the school conscientiously promotes pupils' understanding of diversity within this country. Its positive impact is clearly evident in the harmonious school community, in spite of the constantly changing population.

*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>3</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**

Leaders and managers support good team work and staff share a commitment to continual improvement. Consequently, the provision is developing and becoming increasingly effective. There are examples of children recently making outstanding progress in their social development. Adults set a consistently good example to children of how to behave and speak. They are kind and supportive, so children quickly settle and become ready to learn. Children's welfare is paramount and all families are offered a home visit to ease children's start at school. Children make good progress in lessons because they are happy and secure, activities are suitable for them and teaching is good. Staff successfully enhance children's creative and imaginative learning, for example, by providing fabric that children drape around themselves to be saris or



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become princesses.

The team has responded well to the latest national guidance and assessment is thorough and used well to plan to meet individual children's needs. Children have good opportunities to learn through their own experimentation and discovery. For example, during the inspection one boy learned about size, weight and forces when he selected different pieces of equipment to attach to a large rocking horse in order to move it across the room. However, the team does not always ensure that there is a member of staff available to support and extend children's learning when they are working independently at an activity of their choice. There are regular opportunities for children to work outside but the team is seeking to extend children's access to outside activities whatever the weather. Staff have developed their contribution to the school's focus on improving writing skills by providing good opportunities for children to practise early writing in many activities. During the inspection a group of girls enjoyed using paintbrushes to make marks on large pieces of paper outside.

*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**

A higher proportion of parents returned questionnaires than is typical nationally, and almost all are highly appreciative of the school's work. How the school deals with behaviour was an area of concern for a very few parents. Inspectors found that behaviour was managed well and pupils said that they felt entirely confident in teachers resolving any disagreements. Parents were unanimous in their appreciation of several elements of the school's work, including good teaching and how safe the school keeps pupils. All who returned a questionnaire were happy overall with the school's work.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at College Road 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 120 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 186 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	80	67	38	32	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	99	83	21	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	78	65	41	34	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	78	65	41	34	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	86	72	33	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	76	63	44	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	72	60	48	40	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)	68	57	45	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	74	62	43	36	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	66	55	47	39	4	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	62	52	52	43	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	89	74	29	24	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	93	78	27	23	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are 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 and spring terms 2009/10 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.**



17 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of College Road Primary School, Plymouth, PL2 1NS

Thank you very much for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school recently. A special thank you goes to those pupils who met with us to share some work and give us your ideas about the school. We enjoyed hearing your views enormously. Here are some of the good things we found in your school.

- You make good progress especially in your reading, mathematics and science.
- You behave well and are kind to each other.
- You are very good at welcoming new people into school and understanding that people come from different backgrounds.
- Teachers and teaching assistants help you to learn well by making interesting links between different subjects such as history and mathematics.
- You know that staff care about you and work hard to keep you safe, so you feel safe and able to concentrate on learning.
- The headteacher, governors and teachers work closely together to keep improving the school and share good ideas about how to keep making everything even better.

We have asked them to prioritise helping you to become even better writers by giving you more chances to write in all sorts of activities throughout the day, and by giving you more time to develop your ideas on paper. You can help by offering to make notes in class discussions sometimes. We have also asked them to make sure that those of you who find learning quite easy, always have hard enough work and sometimes start working independently earlier in the lesson.

Thank you again for being such fun, we hope you always enjoy learning so much.

Yours sincerely

Jill Bavin

Lead Inspector

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