

Inspection of Colyton Primary Academy

The Butts, West Street, Colyton, Devon EX24 6NU

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The head of this school is Aerfen Mills. The school is part of The First Federation Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Paul Walker, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alexander Walmsley.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Colyton Primary Academy agree that they belong to a friendly community. They arrive each day with smiles on their faces and an eagerness to learn. Pupils meet the high expectations set for them in their learning because they try when something is hard until they succeed. The school's 'thinking frames' and 'thinking routines' help them to become confident, independent learners.

Pupils benefit from high levels of pastoral care. Parents and carers wholeheartedly agree that this helps their children to thrive. Pupils follow the school's principles well and display a deep sense of kindness and empathy towards others. This begins in the Reception Year, where children learn how to become 'Fantastic Friends'. There is 'Wonderful Walking' when moving around the school. Pupils' social times are harmonious.

Pupils behave well. They enjoy their class rewards and are proud to receive 'Thursday Shout Outs' or a 'Pride of Colyton award'. Pupils strive to be good citizens, in school and beyond. They take seriously the responsibilities that they have, such as being prefects and class ambassadors. The pupil ethos committee ably leads 'Flourish Friday' events across the school year to engage with their friends, their local community and the wider world in which they live.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The trust and the school have driven improvements to the quality of education. The curriculum, in all subjects, is designed with care. Important knowledge and ambitious vocabulary are clearly identified. This supports pupils to develop their knowledge and skills and ably make links between subjects. For example, in history, older pupils used their knowledge of the suffragette movement to consider the roles of women in World War Two.

The school, alongside the trust, have provided tailored professional development opportunities for all staff. As a result, teaching across the school supports learners to acquire new knowledge and skills. Lessons support all pupils to fully participate. However, in some subjects, the checks that staff make on pupils' understanding are not used to inform future learning. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their learning or misconceptions that go unaddressed. For example, in mathematics, gaps in some pupils' number fluency hinder them with more complex calculations. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get high-quality support to meet their needs.

The school has a sharp focus on reading. Pupils love to read. They describe how reading takes them to an 'imaginary world'. The school encourages pupils to read widely and often, both at school and beyond. Pupils regularly take home a wealth of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Children learn to read as soon as they start school. They learn the sounds that letters make and quickly read words with accuracy. The books that pupils take home are carefully selected to help them to practise these sounds. Well-targeted interventions successfully support any pupils who need additional help with their reading. As a result, pupils become confident, fluent readers.

The school has a steadfast approach to ensuring that pupils attend school regularly and on time. Strong relationships with parents have ensured that pupils' attendance has improved markedly over time. These relationships between school and home are positive, impactful and begin before children start in the Reception Year. Parents comment that the support for them is 'excellent' and this support 'makes school a positive experience'.

The school is passionate about expanding the horizons for pupils and ensuring they are well prepared for their next steps in education and life. Pupils learn about the skills they need to be successful in employment. They understand the different opportunities available in job sectors through their regular careers curriculum. Pupils benefit from the 'Colyton extras' programme, which provides essential life experiences, such as cooking skills, managing a budget and how to iron a shirt in preparation for secondary school.

The personal development programme, including personal, social and health education, is well designed. Pupils learn about equality, diversity and discrimination from a young age. They develop strong principles about treating others with respect and providing help for those who need it. Pupils understand about positive relationships and how to keep themselves healthy and safe. For example, visitors to school support pupils to understand water and sea safety.

Staff describe the school as a 'family where everyone helps each other'. This is because the school and the trust support staff to be successful in their roles. Staff value the effective support from wider trust networks and feel that their workload and well-being are fully considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the checks that staff make on pupils' understanding are not used effectively. Some pupils have gaps in their learning and misconceptions that go unaddressed. The school and the trust should ensure that assessment information leads to timely support for pupils to close gaps in their learning so that all pupils achieve well.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148011
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10344844
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alexander Walmsley
CEO of the trust	Paul Walker
Headteacher	Aerfen Mills (head of school)
Website	www.colytonprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Colyton Primary Academy converted to become an academy in July 2020. When its predecessor school, Colyton Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate for overall effectiveness.
- Colyton Primary Academy is part of The First Federation Trust.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the head of school, the deputy headteacher and the SEND co-ordinator. Inspectors also met with the CEO, the director of school improvement, the chair of the trust board, one other trustee, the governance professional and the chair of the hub board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils throughout the inspection to gauge their views of the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Donna Briggs, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jo Hicks

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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