

The Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109017
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	377859
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2011
Reporting inspector	David Edwards HMI

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	493
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bill Robbins
Headteacher	Mark Dee
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 January 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 26 lessons, taught by 18 teachers. They held meetings with the executive headteacher, associate headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils. They observed the work of the school and looked at the school's documentation including evidence from the self-evaluation process and safeguarding procedures. They also analysed 159 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 96 by pupils and 26 by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well the school has secured improvements to teaching, particularly at Key Stage 1, raised standards in writing and improved outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- To what extent teaching sufficiently challenges and supports pupils in Key Stage 2 to secure better progress so that they might achieve their end-of-year targets.
- How well the school encourages pupils to take responsibility for their learning through having time to reflect on their work and setting personal targets that will help them focus more clearly on what they need to do next to improve.
- How well leaders and managers, at all levels, have managed to retain their high expectations and the good progress of pupils throughout the changes of the past year associated with federating with another local primary school.

Information about the school

The Park Primary School is a large school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low. A few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also above average. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in Reception. Earlier this year the school federated with another local primary school. A new governing body responsible for both schools was created as part of the federation process. This change has not yet been fully embedded and the role of a permanent Chair for the Governing Body has yet to be secured. The school runs an early morning breakfast club which is managed by the school.

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. Most notable is how senior leaders work as a team to ensure the organisational changes associated with becoming federated with another local primary school have not detracted in any way from ensuring pupils continue to make good progress in their learning. Not surprisingly, the school provides good value for money and has a good capacity to sustain further improvement. Supported effectively by the governing body and all staff, the care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. Another hallmark of this school is its highly effective engagement with parents, carers and other partners to ensure pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Overall, pupils develop and maintain good attitudes to learning throughout their time at The Park and their achievement is good. Senior leaders have effectively addressed the area of weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection so that teaching throughout the school, particularly at Key Stage 1, is now typically good and sometimes outstanding. Similarly, standards in writing have improved throughout the school and the outdoor provision for the youngest children is now good. Systems to monitor the progress of pupils are securely embedded and provide leaders with reliable information on how well pupils are learning.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because the provision is carefully planned to engage children's interests and support them to make good progress in their learning. By the time children enter Key Stage 1 they are well prepared to continue with their learning. When pupils leave school at the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils have reached their targets and attained in line with the national average in English and mathematics. One pupil, interviewed at the very successful daily breakfast club, summed up the views of many by saying, 'It's fun here and makes me ready to learn!' The school is working towards lifting standards further, particularly in developing pupils' writing skills. Most teachers' marking is constructive and makes a good contribution to the progress pupils make and pupils say they appreciate the way teachers work hard to make learning exciting and meaningful. However, consistency in the way teachers mark pupils' work to support them and point out their next steps in learning is not securely embedded in each class.

The Park is an extremely inclusive school. Senior teachers help those less experienced in developing their skills and understanding to ensure that all groups of pupils are appropriately challenged. The work of the school is rigorously monitored by senior leaders, and outcomes are shared regularly with the governing body which

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helps it to shape the strategic direction of the school. Self-evaluation is accurate and appropriately focused on improving outcomes for pupils. Assessment information is used by teachers regularly to identify pupils' next steps in learning, as well as to measure how much progress they are making towards their challenging targets.

The school provides pupils with a good curriculum as well as a wide range of extra-curricular clubs for which the take-up is high. The school's grounds have been carefully developed and enhanced since the previous inspection so that they make a strong contribution to the all-round learning experiences enjoyed by pupils. The carefully managed accountability and professional development of all staff underpin this good provision and this is further evidenced by the good levels of teamwork and high morale that are evident among staff throughout the school. Support staff who manage the day-to-day work of the school, as well as those who work directly with pupils, are highly valued by the school and all are well trained. They work very closely with teachers to provide the outstanding support that is carefully tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils.

The recently formed governing body is in the process of embedding its working practices. The current experienced leadership, along with good communication with the headteacher, is ensuring the governing body holds the school effectively to account and that the work of the school is regularly reviewed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment for pupils in English and mathematics to above average levels by:
 - ensuring the marking strategies teachers adopt to support pupils in acquiring their English and mathematical skills are agreed and consistently embedded throughout the school
 - giving pupils time to reflect and respond frequently to the marking and feedback provided by teachers.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' behaviour is good in and around the school and they say they enjoy very positive relationships with adults. They are proud of their school, evidenced through the popular choir and being an active Eco School, and regard it as a community. In most lessons, pupils are motivated and engage enthusiastically in activities, demonstrating a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them. Pupils say they feel exceptionally safe in school. They play well together, and say that incidents of bullying are rare and they know who to talk to if they have concerns. Pupils' understanding of how to use information and communication technology safely is well developed. They speak very confidently about what constitutes a healthy diet and lifestyle. Strategies to improve and support pupils in attending school are implemented and monitored well so that attendance is

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now high.

The early identification of pupils’ learning needs and the consistent excellent support all groups of learners receive is a notable strength of this school. Children enter the Reception classes displaying skills and abilities that are more often below those typically expected for their age. However, because of the excellent care, attention and good communication with parents and carers the school is able to identify and provide well for pupils’ individual learning needs. Lesson observations, a scrutiny of pupils’ work and speaking with pupils confirm that their attainment in all year groups is improving so that by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress towards achieving their age-related targets. By the time pupils leave the school, the majority have made good progress and their attainment is broadly in line with national expectations in English and mathematics, although the school is ambitious in its aim of raising these levels even higher.

Pupils demonstrate good concentration in lessons and the majority succeed in all areas of learning. More-able pupils, along with those with particular gifts and talents, also make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good and sometimes better progress, relative to their starting points, because support is especially well organised and matched to their individual learning needs. Pupils have good opportunities to contribute positively to the school and wider community, for example through fund raising for charity. Pupils’ regular opportunities to visit places of interest or welcome visitors into school help them to gain a secure appreciation of the United Kingdom as a culturally diverse society.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

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	1
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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 provides an active, skills-based curriculum that meets the needs of pupils well. Skills such as interpreting evidence, communication, drawing and construction are developed through subjects such as history, art, music and regular topic work. Teaching is typically good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers’ good subject knowledge and collaborative working between staff have helped support improvements in pupils’ writing. As a result, where teaching is at its strongest teachers plan stimulating lessons that engage pupils’ interests as well as provide appropriate challenge for all abilities. Pupils speak confidently about the good progress they make in lessons and they appreciate the effort teachers put into planning their lessons. They also benefit from teachers’ confident use of modern technologies that support their learning. Teachers work closely with support staff to ensure pupils engage positively with their work at all times. In less effective teaching, activities and resources to support learning are insufficiently matched to pupils’ differing abilities so their progress slows. Also, insufficient time is given to pupils to reflect and respond to the marking and feedback provided by their teachers. More generally, marking strategies adopted by teachers to support pupils in developing their English and mathematical skills and setting personal targets to improve are not consistently embedded throughout the school.

The school grounds, especially for the youngest children, have been developed effectively to enhance the curriculum and provide practical learning opportunities for all pupils. For example, building equipment such as wheelbarrows, cement mixer and hard hats engage children in good levels of collaboration and promote better speaking and listening skills. The indoor environment has been well designed to stimulate and engage pupils with learning. A particular strength is the good quality of display and art work evidenced through eye-catching displays throughout the school.

All pupils benefit from the excellent attention the school gives to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Particular care and attention have been given to the transfer of pupils between classes and on into their secondary education. This is made as seamless as possible for pupils so they remain confident and maintain positive attitudes to learning. The school has established very effective partnerships locally to support the development and well-being of all pupils and particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

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How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership of the school has undergone significant reorganisation as a result of the recent federation with another local primary school. The executive headteacher, ably supported by the associate headteacher, has built up a cohesive team of enthusiastic and aspirational professionals who provide a good learning experience for all pupils. Senior leaders have been consistent in communicating high expectations and promoting a culture of high staff morale, searching analysis and self-challenge that enables leaders to devise well-focused plans for further improvement. Systems to monitor the work of the school are well embedded and linked to teachers’ personal performance targets so that staff possess a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

All adults are appropriately trained and regularly updated in the procedures for safeguarding pupils and the school is exceptionally vigilant in keeping records and so cares and provides very well for the safety of pupils. There is no complacency within the school and appropriate plans are in place to further lift pupils’ attainment in English and mathematics. An appropriate focus on community cohesion within the local community and beyond ensures there is good access to equal opportunities for all pupils and any possible barriers to achievement are swiftly identified and removed. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated and there are no significant differences in attainment now between pupils. Pupils and their families are made to feel very welcome and encouraged to contribute to the work of the school in any way they can.

The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities effectively and deploys its skills and time wisely. Effective communications with senior leaders, despite some uncertainties over new leadership, ensure governors are kept informed about the work of the school and areas for improvement. Links with parents and carers have been maintained to a high level. Governors are increasingly holding the school to account in a rigorous, yet respectful and supportive way, which enables them to contribute effectively in setting the strategic direction of the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and	1

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tackles discrimination	
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
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

Most children start school with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age. Currently, children are weaker in communication and literacy skills. However, children make good progress, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development so that they are well prepared to continue their learning at the start of Key Stage 1. This is because trusting and supportive relationships are quickly established between the school, children and their parents and carers. Good communication ensures high levels of satisfaction and regular opportunities for parents and carers to be involved in their children’s learning, for example through contributing to the smooth transition of children into school and regular opportunities to contribute to their children’s ‘learning journey’ records.

Provision has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The consistency in the quality of teaching throughout the setting is now securely good and appropriately centred on the needs of the individual child, ensuring the learning environment both inside and outside is well planned to provide for children’s interests and learning needs. Activities engage and support the development of children’s all-round skills. For example, one child showed sustained concentration in creating a small ice world in the snow scene provided that day. Nearly all children show quickly growing personal independence, for example when they dress themselves to play outside or in tidying up.

The leaders have shown determination and commitment in addressing areas for further development. They are aware that children do not always have enough opportunities to promote their language development through play or to give them more time to practise their developing writing skills. However, teachers apply their good knowledge of teaching of phonics effectively which ensures pupils make secure progress in learning to read. A strong team has been forged to make planning, provision and assessment much more consistent. All staff work well together and are good role models to children. The children’s welfare is a high priority. Robust safeguarding ensures all policies and risk assessments are in place and regularly monitored. The work with parents and carers has been extended and strengthened through the robust induction procedures and this is also having a positive impact on the rates of children’s learning and progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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 overwhelming majority of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about the school. In particular, parents and carers have confidence in the school’s ability to provide a very safe learning environment where their children enjoy coming to school. One parent summed up the views of the majority by writing, ‘I am extremely happy with the quality of education my children are getting. They are both extremely happy to be at a school which has a lovely feel about it’. Another satisfied parent wrote, ‘My child will leave Year 6 with great communication skills, well adjusted and enjoying learning’.

In essence, the findings of the inspectors endorse these positive views. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed their concerns about the problems caused by traffic outside the school at the start and end of the school day and standards of behaviour within the school. A few others feel their concerns are not always listened to or acted upon swiftly enough. The inspectors discussed all these issues with the school. For behaviour, inspectors observed behaviour in lessons and around the school, held discussions with staff and pupils and scrutinised behavioural records. The findings are in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Park 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 159 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 493 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	111	70	41	26	6	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	105	66	477	30	2	1	3	2
The school informs me about my child’s progress	84	53	61	38	8	5	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	102	64	50	31	3	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	102	64	54	34	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	82	52	70	44	4	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	80	50	72	45	3	2	1	1
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	78	49	5	3	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	77	48	76	48	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	71	45	62	39	13	8	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	67	42	68	43	12	8	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	87	55	64	40	5	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	101	64	52	33	1	1	2	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 all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.

10 December 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of The Park Primary School, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 9TP

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. I was impressed with how popular your breakfast club is and I enjoyed sharing Christmas lunch with some of you. We have decided that yours is a good school! This is because your headteachers, governors and all those who work in the school care for you very well. They ensure the support and guidance you enjoy are exceptional because your headteachers, staff and governors work very closely together to provide you with good learning experiences. I was not surprised therefore to find that your attendance is well above the national average. Well done!

Inspectors noticed your good behaviour in school and outside and your enthusiasm to learn in lessons. Most of you make good progress in learning so that by the time you leave school at the end of Year 6 your skills in English and mathematics are in line with the national average. Those of you we spoke with told us the school is a very safe place, and that you learn a lot about staying healthy through regular exercise and eating a healthy diet. We noticed that you have good opportunities in lessons to work well together and most of you take the opportunity to extend your learning through a wide range of clubs. You have regular trips out and opportunities to represent your school, for example through your popular choir and Eco School work. We were particularly impressed with the strategies some teachers use when marking your work to help you to understanding what you need to do next to improve. For example, some of you showed us how you use your 'jotters' to develop your confidence in solving problems.

Even in good schools like yours there will always be room for improvement, so we have asked that your teachers help you to achieve higher standards in English and mathematics by ensuring they all use similar marking strategies to support you in understanding how to improve your work. Also, that you have sufficient time in lessons to reflect and respond to their marking.

Finally, I would like to say how much I enjoyed visiting your school. If you continue to keep up your good standards of behaviour and make the most of every opportunity, you will have every reason to succeed.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards
Her Majesty's Inspector

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