

Crossways Infant School

Knapp Road, Thornbury, Bristol, BS35 2HQ

Inspection dates

4–5 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' enjoyment of learning is evident in their enthusiastic involvement in lessons. Pupils are polite and respectful, both to adults and their classmates. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils achieve well. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly and progress well. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the rest of the school in their writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make particularly good progress in their reading due to the effective teaching of phonics. They read regularly and widely and are well prepared for moving on to their next school.
- Teaching is good. Pupils are engaged and keen to learn new things.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and their behaviour is outstanding. Attendance is average and improving.
- The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, provides strong and effective leadership. There is a clear focus on further improving pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- The governing body has a very detailed awareness of how pupils are achieving and the quality of teaching. It uses this information to challenge senior leaders and to ensure teachers are provided with continuous training to improve their skills.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Occasionally, teachers do not make the most effective use of time to ensure learning progresses sufficiently quickly. Sometimes, they do not move pupils on to more challenging work soon enough.
- Pupils' handwriting is not as neat and fluent as it should be. There are not yet sufficient opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces of work in subjects other than in English.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited eight lessons. All of these were joint observations with the headteacher. The inspector listened to pupils read from Year 1.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members, a representative from the local authority, members of staff and a group of pupils.
- The inspector took account of the 70 responses to the on-line survey (Parent View) and the responses from 15 members of staff.
- A wide range of documents was considered, including those relating to pupils' progress, teachers' planning, safeguarding, attendance and the minutes of the governing body.

Inspection team

Paul Edwards, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Crossways is a smaller-than-average-sized infant school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional money provided by the government for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families) is well below average. There are no looked after children in the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club. A privately-managed pre-school and an after school club operate on the school site and these are subject to separate inspections.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises two Reception classes.
- A formal federation was established with the junior school that shares the same site in September 2012. An executive headteacher has been appointed and will take up his position in September 2013. During a period of planned absence the deputy was acting headteacher until the return of the headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that more teaching is outstanding by:
 - ensuring an effective balance between the time teachers spend explaining activities and the opportunities pupils have for completing activities
 - moving pupils on to more challenging activities sooner in lessons.
- Accelerate pupils' progress further in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to produce longer pieces of writing in subjects other than in English
 - encouraging pupils to produce their best handwriting and presentation at all times.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception classes with skills and abilities that are similar to those expected for their age. An increasing number have lower than expected skills in communication and calculation. The consistently good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that by the time pupils enter Year 1 most are working at expected levels and are well prepared for the next stage of education. An increasing emphasis on problem solving helps children to tackle challenging activities with confidence. For example, children cooperated well together when asked to water potatoes that were growing in the playground.
- Good progress continues throughout Years 1 and 2 and attainment in both English and mathematics is above average. Pupils quickly become fluent and confident readers because they are encouraged to read regularly and widely. The effective teaching of phonics ensures that pupils of all abilities are provided with a secure grounding in reading.
- Although writing skills are progressing well, the school has rightly identified that pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to write longer pieces of work in subjects such as history and geography and this inhibits more rapid progress. An inconsistent approach to the teaching of handwriting results in a lack of fluency and neatness by a few pupils. Pupils' vocabulary develops well and in Year 2, for example, pupils were confident in using verbs, adverbs and adjectives when describing the movement of an animal.
- In the 2012 national assessments, pupils supported by the pupil premium were some 15 months behind their classmates in both English and mathematics. Senior leaders have addressed this issue and use the additional funding appropriately, for example by providing individual support and small group sessions. Funding has also been put in place for vulnerable pupils to attend the breakfast club, and this has improved both their attendance and achievement. The 2013 assessments show pupils eligible for pupil premium are now achieving at least as well as their classmates and better than their peers nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Carefully targeted interventions and support in class enable these pupils to take part in all activities. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are provided with bespoke support so that they are able to make progress in line with their peers. All pupils are provided with activities that are challenging and the supportive ethos of the school encourages them to do their best.
- Most parents who responded to Parent View feel that their children are well supported and make good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is usually good with outstanding features in all classes. Across the school, the teaching of reading is a strength. In the daily phonics sessions, there are small groups of pupils working at the same ability and teachers and support staff provide work and activities that are very closely matched to the pupils' needs. Consequently, pupils make good progress and quickly become confident and enthusiastic readers.
- Lessons are planned so that they encourage pupils to think for themselves and to put forward their ideas. In a Year 1 history lesson, pupils were encouraged to explain whether the photographs they were looking at depicted modern objects or objects from the distant past. In the best lessons, where teachers ask open questions, they encourage pupils to justify their views and ideas. This strategy has a positive impact on the pupils' confidence and speaking skills.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and systematically and give good verbal feedback. Pupils say that they have a clear understanding of what it is they have to do next to improve their work.
- Many opportunities are provided for pupils to ask questions of teachers, to discuss their work with other pupils and to assess the work of their classmates. This improves their understanding

and accelerates their progress. Teachers are good at encouraging pupils to choose efficient methods of working. For example, when solving mathematical problems pupils are encouraged to use methods which they find most efficient rather than insisting on pupils using a prescribed method.

- Pupils undertake regular handwriting practice and show they are capable of writing neatly. However, this neatness does not transfer to their other books and teachers acknowledge the importance of ensuring that pupils practise their handwriting skills in other subjects.
- Teachers consistently plan work that is challenging and matched closely to pupils' prior attainment. However, on a few occasions, teachers do not provide pupils with sufficient time to complete activities. Occasionally, teachers do not move pupils on to more challenging work sooner in lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is excellent, both in and out of lessons. Children develop a clear understanding of school rules and develop a positive attitude to work in the Reception classes; this is built on most effectively as pupils move through the school. Pupils' enthusiasm for work ensures the pupils concentrate well on their work.
- Pupils are extremely courteous, they hold doors open and speak politely to their classmates and adults. They are most respectful and sensitive to those pupils who face challenges and are delighted to be able to help them, whether it is in class or on the 'friendship bench' in the playground.
- Pupils enjoy responsibility and take roles given to them seriously; for example, as part of the school council they contribute to learning through their roles as 'Challenge Champions' in the Early Years Foundation Stage and 'Leaders of Learning' in Key Stage 1. This contributes well to pupils' social and moral development.
- Poor behaviour and bullying are a very rare occurrence and both parents and pupils feel that issues are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Pupils are able to explain that bullying is not just about physical actions but can also be about persistent name calling. The close relationships that exist with staff enable pupils to speak to them with confidence should they have concerns.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school. They have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They talk knowledgeably about road safety and keeping safe on the internet. Pupils were actively involved in producing the risk assessment for when they are working in the woodland on Forest School activities. Parents who responded to Parent View are confident that their children are kept safe in school.

The leadership and management are good

- School leadership is strong and well established. The strengths of leadership are seen in the seamless transitions that occurred when the headteacher was absent and subsequently returned. Pupils continued to achieve well and the school has continued to improve since the previous inspection. Senior leaders have successfully addressed the issue from the previous inspection. Detailed tracking of information about how well pupils are progressing is now used effectively to plan future work.
- The headteacher communicates high expectations and all staff subscribe to the vision of improving pupils' achievement and raising the quality of teaching further. Since the advent of the federation, links with the junior school have become more established. The first federation full day's INSET has identified common areas for development.
- The performance of staff is monitored closely so that a clear picture is established of individual needs. As a result, the headteacher has good information to act upon when considering salary progression. The information is also used to identify training needs to improve teaching skills. As

a result of the federation, subject leaders are now developing their awareness of progress made by pupils in the junior school.

- The school's curriculum is well matched to the pupils' needs. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are provided with activities that match their requirements. Teaching assistants play a valuable and effective role in ensuring these pupils are able to take as full a part as possible in all the activities. Senior leaders are effective in ensuring all pupils are treated equally and that there is no discrimination.
 - There is a good range of visits that enhance pupils' learning. For example, regular visits to the library encourage pupils' love of books and their desire to read. The pupils vividly remember the visit from a Wallace and Gromit animator and enjoy the opportunities they have to create their own animations. The provision to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is wide ranging. The celebration of cultures represented in school provides pupils with a good understanding of people from different backgrounds. For example, they enjoyed the Chinese celebration.
 - Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and feel that their children are very well supported. There are good links with support agencies. The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have been effective in overseeing the school's move to federation with the junior school. They, along with staff, are fiercely ambitious, looking to provide the best possible education for the pupils. Governors are regular visitors to the school and ask challenging questions regarding expenditure and its impact on pupils' learning. For example, they question how the well-targeted pupil premium expenditure has made a difference to pupils' learning. Governors set challenging performance targets for the headteacher and monitor the performance of other staff, thus ensuring that salary progression is closely linked to performance. Governors have an excellent understanding of data and how teaching impacts on how well pupils are achieving.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	109049
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	412698
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Forecast
Headteacher	Lisa Jones
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2007
Telephone number	01454 867280
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