

St Anne's Infant School

Bloomfield Road, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 3QJ

Inspection dates

9–10 January 2014

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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children enjoy a good start to their learning in the Nursery and Reception classes. They achieve well in all aspects of their learning, especially in their personal and social development.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and nearly all reach the standards expected in writing and mathematics, with many reaching above-average levels in reading.
- Teaching is good throughout the school and occasionally outstanding. Strong relationships help to promote pupils' confident and enthusiastic attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' behaviour and enjoyment of learning are good. They care well for each other and are polite and respectful to adults.
- Adults look after pupils very well and ensure that they act safely and are kept safe at all times.
- The school is led and managed effectively by the experienced and thoughtful headteacher. She is strongly supported by an enthusiastic team of senior and middle leaders and a well-motivated staff.
- The governing body is well led and is constantly involved in striving to improve the school through both challenge and support to school leaders.
- The school has good relationships with parents and has improved its provision for them to help with their children's development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding because teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough for some more able pupils to reach the levels of which they are capable.
- Although narrowing, the gap between the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding and that of other pupils is still too big.
- The organisation of the teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) does not pay enough attention to the needs of individual pupils and small groups.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons taught by 11 teachers. Six of these lessons were observed with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, or the Early Years leader.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and members of management teams, three governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work. They examined the school's improvement plans, checks on how well it is doing, safeguarding arrangements, health and safety records, school policies and a range of pupils' work and information about their progress.
- Inspectors took account of 70 responses to the online Parent Survey, and four letters from parents. They also had informal discussions with parents in school.
- The inspectors examined 20 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Rodney Braithwaite, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Christopher Crouch	Additional inspector
Christine Bennett	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Anne's is an average-sized infant school. Numbers are increasing rapidly.
- Nearly three quarters of pupils are White British, with the remainder coming from a range of other ethnic heritages. Just under a fifth of pupils speak English as an additional language, although few are in the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action is below average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding for particular groups, including children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families.
- The school has a Nursery and three Reception classes. There are three Year 1 classes and two Year 2 classes.
- The school is on a shared site with the junior school. As a temporary measure, while a new junior school is being built a quarter of a mile away, the Year 2 classes are housed in new mobile classrooms, also a quarter of a mile away. Upon completion of the new school, the infant school will occupy the old junior school on the present site.
- The school belongs to the South East Bristol Educational Trust, and also to a local infant schools group.
- There have been a number of changes of staff and several lengthy staff absences since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the proportion of outstanding teaching so that more pupils, especially the more able and those supported by pupil premium funding, achieve better by:
 - making sure that all teachers have high expectations of their pupils, particularly for the most able and those who receive the pupil premium
 - build upon pupils' improving knowledge of phonics by using teaching resources more effectively to teach pupils according to their different needs.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children in most years have started in the Nursery with skills a little below the levels expected for their age, although this has varied recently with the increase in numbers. Children are ready to learn and make good progress in both the Nursery and in Reception, especially in their reading and personal and social skills.
- Teachers and their assistants have a good knowledge of the needs of all children from the time they enter school. Children make good and sometimes better progress in their learning because they have very effective support based upon accurate analysis of their progress and areas for improvement.
- This was seen clearly in a Reception class when children wrote words on their whiteboards based on sounds; as a result, adults were able to adjust to their individual learning needs.
- Achievement in Years 1 and 2 has been outstanding in past years. However, in 2013, attainment dipped and few pupils reached the higher levels normally expected by the end of Year 2. In particular, pupils supported through the pupil premium and more able pupils did not make the progress predicted.
- However, the great majority of pupils made good progress, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- School leaders reacted robustly to this unexpected blip and introduced a number of learning initiatives, especially in writing and mathematics. There is now substantial evidence that attainment and progress in Years 1 and 2 have risen sharply as a result of measures taken.
- Successful improvement to writing skills was observed, for example, in an outstanding lesson in Year 1 when pupils sustained their learning when writing complex 'super sentences' both individually and in small groups.
- School leaders know that pupils supported through the pupil premium have not made as much progress as other pupils in English and mathematics, on average being at least a term behind in their development. However, the latest data on pupils' progress shows that this gap is narrowing as teachers develop a greater understanding of the individual needs of pupils.
- Pupils are enthusiastic readers and very competitive in comparing with each other the levels they are reaching. Even at the age of seven, some are beginning to read widely, quoting their interests as 'magazines about Doctor Who, sports stories in newspapers, and masks in Film and Theatre, which is about how they use graphics and computer-generated imagery'. Reading records are detailed and well kept.
- Pupils' understanding of phonics has improved considerably, but some pupils do not receive sufficient guidance to aid their reading development.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good throughout the school and occasionally outstanding. It is most effective when teachers have high expectations, set challenging learning tasks, and use their knowledge of pupils' progress in their planning for individual needs.
- However, this is not yet consistent enough in all classes to ensure all groups of pupils make outstanding progress. Learning is not always specific enough to meet individual needs, for example, for some pupils in receipt of the pupil premium.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers plan specifically for pupils, according to their abilities. This was seen in a lesson in the Nursery when children learned enthusiastically about mathematical shapes at several different levels of learning.
- Teachers are sometimes cautious in setting their pupils high targets. School leaders have realised this, and targets being set are now becoming more challenging, and encouraging higher expectations, especially for the learning of more able pupils.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, planning concentrates especially on the personal and social development of children, leading to them quickly developing self-confidence and independence.
- Teaching in the new nurture group is proving to be very effective. Teachers have created a calm and supportive environment where social skills are explained and encouraged, and pupils benefit when they return to their usual class.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent. Pupils are respectful and chatty but polite. They work well with each other and teachers encourage cooperation in all that they do. This builds their self-esteem and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- Teachers work well with competent learning support assistants who command equal respect from pupils. A feature of the school is the great trust pupils show towards adults in the school.
- Many pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good knowledge of their simple learning targets. They also understand the school's colour marking system. However, there is occasional inconsistency in teachers' marking, which can be very helpful but occasionally falls short of guiding pupils' improvement specifically enough.
- A large proportion of parents think that teaching is good, that teachers are approachable, and that their children make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils like coming to school because they think that 'everyone is friendly and kind, and we are all good friends with each other'.
- They are enthusiastic learners and particularly enjoy topics like volcanoes, pirates and the Jurassic age. They also talk excitedly about some of their clubs such as forest school, tap dancing and French.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel that the school is a safe place, that adults look after them well and that 'there is always someone who will listen to you'. The school pays great attention to safety, especially as the building is old and the school is on a split site. Parents and staff are almost unanimous in their view that their children are safe.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes settle quickly into school routines, and are very soon moving around with great confidence in their new environment. They mix together well and show considerable enthusiasm for all their learning activities.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. Occasionally it slips when pupils lose concentration and start chattering to each other, and one or two of them disturb others in their learning. However, pupils understand what is expected of them and nearly always respond well to teachers or learning support assistants.
- Pupils behave well around the school and outside, and are calm and sensible in the dining hall.
- Pupils report the only bullying in school as being 'a long time ago'. If there is any, which is not often, then the headteacher 'deals with it, and there are usually no more problems'.
- Pupils have some awareness of internet bullying, but say that they do not know of any happening to them or their friends.
- In a school with several different cultures, pupils co-exist well together and report no recent racial incidents.
- There are good links to external services which help to meet the needs of those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, or who have difficulty managing their own behaviour. The school's inclusion leader and other members of staff make effective, sympathetic and helpful contributions.
- Exclusions are rare, and attendance is consistently good because leaders and office staff have worked consistently over time to ensure this.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is effectively led by an insightful and experienced headteacher, who has a strong presence throughout the school and knows all the pupils individually. She has coped well with the need for staff changes and absences in the last two years.
- The management of the school, particularly since it has been based on two sites some distance apart, has been enhanced by the contributions of the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and other senior leaders. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is particularly effective.
- Other middle leaders are also fully involved in the day-to-day running of the school. Staff morale is high and all are equally enthusiastic and ambitious for the school to ensure that pupils' achievement is as high as possible.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because leaders are still working hard with staff to enable teaching and achievement to be once again consistently outstanding after the recent changes.
- Accurate school self-evaluation has pinpointed the need for the further development of identifying the individual needs of every pupil and using this information in planning for improvement.
- The checking of teaching and learning, usually jointly by two leaders, is rigorous and helpful, and concentrates on the development of teachers' skills. It is also closely related to school improvement priorities and teachers' targets to improve the performance of their pupils. Professional development is promoted strongly through the school.
- The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for pupils to give them exciting and rewarding learning experiences; a parent commented, 'The school plans topics like the Fire of London so well and with so much passion.'
- This, combined with other extra enrichment activities, and the nurture group, has enhanced pupils' behaviour and good promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. The school's promotion of its theme, 'Reach For The Stars', seen during an assembly, also helps pupils to focus on their learning and achievement.
- The school promotes equal opportunities and is fully inclusive. Leaders ensure that there is no discrimination through gender, disability, special educational needs or ethnic heritage.
- The local authority has a high regard for the school and its leaders. It works closely with the school and is ready to support it as and when requested.
- Parents have very positive views of the school, as shown by the almost unanimous response that they would recommend it to others. A small minority had concerns that they did not receive enough information from the school. The inspection team found that the school has several methods of giving information, including the internet, and that staff are always prepared to give information if requested.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well informed about the strengths and areas for improvement in the school. The governors are led effectively by an experienced Chair, and are visible daily around the school. Their self-evaluation is detailed and accurate, and they have a realistic view of the school's performance and the way ahead. They are well informed about the quality of teaching, and monitor pupils' performance closely. They are now relating this to their new staff pay policy based on performance. Governors have a good knowledge of the pupil premium fund and are involved directly in the plans for improving the achievement of these pupils. Governors also have a good knowledge of the new sports funding, and have been active in directing its use towards training school staff so that high-quality provision can be sustained in the future. Governors have school policies constantly under review, including safeguarding arrangements, which meet government's requirements, and are a standing item on every meeting agenda.

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	108956
Local authority	Bristol
Inspection number	432029

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	282
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adam Rumney
Headteacher	Mary-Jane Hinchliffe
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 June 2011
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