

# Inspection of a good school: Crossways Infant School

Knapp Road, Thornbury, Bristol, South Gloucestershire BS35 2HQ

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Inspection dates:

7 and 8 June 2022

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The past few years have seen significant turbulence for the school, not only because of the challenges due to COVID-19 but also due to several changes to the leadership arrangements of the school. Current leaders have ensured that the school continues to move forward, for example by introducing a new curriculum. However, leaders are honest and accurate in their evaluation that there are some weaknesses and inconsistencies in the quality of education.

Leaders and staff set and demonstrate high expectations, and pupils respond well to this. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Staff are a united, close and caring team who enjoy working at the school. Pupils say that they do not think that bullying happens. But if they needed help, they know who they could talk to in school.

Pupils are polite, confident and proud of their school. They say that school is 'fair and fun'. Pupils helped to develop the school's values of contribute, aspire, respect and equality. They say that these values support them to understand how to care for each other. Pupils enjoy the weekly awards for being friendly, for making someone smile and for when you get up on your tiptoes and try really hard!

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

The headteacher and his leadership team have stabilised the school and secured strong staff morale during a particularly rocky time. Staff say that their workload is managed well. They feel respected and valued. However, leaders recognise that there is still work to do to improve some aspects of the school that have deteriorated since the previous inspection.

Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses thanks to

their curiosity and leaders' accurate evaluation. Governors have remained resilient and determined, adapting their approach so that there has been the right balance of challenge and support for staff during this challenging time. The local authority has rightly prioritised support for the school, agreeing with leaders' evaluation of the weaknesses. Local authority officers have supported the school well, ensuring that leaders have the guidance they need. School leaders look outward, they work effectively with local school improvement networks. As a result, useful advice is helping to improve aspects of the school.

Leaders' roles have been reorganised. Subject leaders ensure that the curriculum, in most subjects, builds knowledge and that pupils revisit important content so that this knowledge really sticks. Teams of teachers support improvements to the curriculum. The curriculum is now nearly complete across all subjects. The music and computing curriculums still need work.

Subject leader roles are at an early stage of development. There is no systematic approach to monitoring how well teachers are implementing the agreed curriculum. As a result, there is inconsistency in practice across the school. Some disadvantaged pupils who need to catch up learn the curriculum successfully because assessment is accurate. Therefore, tasks that are set match what they know and can do. Elsewhere, assessment is less successful, which leads to weaker outcomes for pupils. For example, some pupils who need help to catch up with reading, struggle to read word problems set in mathematics. This hinders their understanding of mathematics. In phonics, some pupils repeat mistakes in forming letters, as they have not been shown exactly how to write these letters.

Children in the Reception classes get off to a flying start. The emphasis is on stories and these lead to meaningful learning experiences for children. For example, children collaborated well to make a structure with wooden blocks. Others made a model of a boat in response to a story they had read and enjoyed with their teacher.

Pupils who need help to catch up with phonics and early reading now have books that closely match their phonics knowledge. However, some of these pupils are not having sufficient opportunities to practise their reading. As a result, they continue to struggle to become fluent, confident readers. This slows their progress.

Leaders are aware that the support plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) vary in quality. Some plans do not specify exactly what the next steps are that will help pupils to move forward. Leaders have not made sure that plans are of consistently high quality. This weakens the progress of some pupils with SEND.

Leaders are aware of the importance of enriching the curriculum through clubs, visits, trips and visitors to school. Some clubs have now returned following the disruption due to COVID-19. These contribute well to pupils' personal development.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that how well pupils are helped to catch up with reading and how leaders check that the curriculum is being implemented well may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe and secure at school. They know who to talk to if they have any concerns. Leaders ensure that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard children. They ensure that staff have the training and information they need to keep pupils safe. As a result, staff are vigilant and know the signs to look for that could indicate a concern. Leaders manage recruitment processes and allegations well. They draw from a range of agencies to ensure that families have the help and support they need.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have ensured that most subjects are planned across year groups in a sequenced, organised way. Similar work for music and computing has yet to be completed. This means that in these subjects, pupils may not be learning new content effectively. Leaders need to ensure that a structured, well-organised curriculum is in place across all subjects.
- Subject leaders have ensured that teachers have the resources and subject knowledge they need to support them in implementing the school's new curriculum. However, work to check that the curriculum is being implemented effectively is at an early stage. Leaders need to ensure that there is a robust approach to checking that agreed classroom expertise, including the use of assessment, is consistent across the school.
- Leaders have rightly identified that the implementation of phonics is an area that needs to improve. Teaching resources, decodable reading books and training for staff are all in hand. However, not enough has been done to ensure that pupils who need to catch up with phonics and early reading do so quickly. Consequently, these pupils continue to struggle to understand and learn the curriculum. This slows their progress. Leaders must ensure that support for pupils who need to catch up with learning to read is prioritised.
- Leaders intend that pupils with SEND have support plans which identify their next steps and the strategies that will enable them to achieve these. Leaders have started to develop and improve the quality of support plans. However, inconsistencies remain. Weaker plans include broad targets which lack clarity. As a result, the provision for some pupils with SEND has not been considered carefully. Therefore, some pupils are not making the progress they could. Leaders must ensure that the planning of provision for pupils with SEND is managed effectively so that all pupils are helped to achieve well.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a

section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2013.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109049
<b>Local authority</b>	South Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227170
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	180
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Emma Aiken-Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Medlicott
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.crosswaysschools.co.uk">www.crosswaysschools.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The previous headteacher left the school in 2021. The school currently has an acting headteacher who is also acting headteacher of the junior school. There has been a re-organisation of the leadership teams across the federation.
- The school manages a before- and after-school club.
- The school does not use alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken this into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator. A meeting took place with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. The inspector had a videoconference with a representative of South Gloucestershire local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector talked to pupils and staff. The inspector also met with the designated safeguarding leads to explore the school's safeguarding arrangements. A range of documents related to safeguarding and recruitment were scrutinised, including the single central record.
- The responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and to a survey for staff were considered.

## **Inspection team**

Tonwen Empson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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