

Crossways Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109040
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	324885
Inspection dates	7–8 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Jennifer Taylor

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Jenkins
Headteacher	Janet Raven
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2006
School address	Knapp Road Thornbury Bristol BS35 2HQ
Telephone number	01454 866566
Fax number	01454 866565

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Crossways Junior School is situated in a town close to Bristol. It is of average size and numbers have been broadly constant over the past two years. Most pupils transfer from the adjacent infant school. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those pupils with a statement of special educational needs, has declined and now it is marginally below the national average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and all are English speaking. Extended care is available for pupils before and after school from the Kids Klub Crossways, which shares the site but is not managed by the governing body.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. The governors and staff have correctly identified key areas for improvement and have included them for action in the school development plan. The considerable mobility of staff, especially at senior management level, has presented the school with difficulties. Appropriate action has been taken to minimise disruption to the education of all pupils and to maintain high standards. Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to make learning more exciting and to develop skills to equip pupils for the demands of an increasingly technological society. ICT is a strength of the curriculum. This, together with other innovations, such as more efficient assessment procedures, has led to improvements in the quality of teaching. As a result of good care, pupils develop well to become confident, articulate and polite young people.

The achievement of pupils is good. They enter school with above average standards and make good progress so that by the time they leave the standards reached overall are well above the national average in English and science. Standards in mathematics are not quite as high. The school has identified this and has introduced a number of different approaches to raise standards. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is outstanding. Pupils show a positive attitude to learning and behave well both inside and outside the school building.

The quality of teaching is good. The new system for assessment is beginning to enable teachers to match work for individuals more accurately. Lessons now match the needs of all pupils more precisely. Targets are used well to challenge pupils appropriately and help them to raise the standards of their work further. Through detailed analysis of data, the school has identified the need to address the difficulties experienced by some pupils in mathematics, for example increasing the confidence of girls so that they take a more active part in discussion. There is good support for gifted and talented pupils and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that they make good progress. Pupils' personal development and well-being is also good. They fully understand the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle. They feel safe and many take an active role within the school. There are close links with the local community, particularly the infant school next door. Pupils develop good skills in literacy and numeracy, and competently use information and communication technology (ICT), which contributes well to their future economic well-being.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has successfully managed staff changes which have limited the options she has to strengthen the management of school at senior level. She leads a dedicated, caring team of teachers and assistants who work together to provide a happy, caring learning environment. The contribution of the governors to the effectiveness of the school is outstanding. They are well trained, perceptive and dedicated to supporting the headteacher and staff so that they can deliver a high quality education to the pupils in their care.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the effectiveness of marking so that it is consistent across all year groups.
- Increase pupils' understanding of the culturally diverse society in which we live.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement overall is good. Statutory national assessments at the end of Year 2 show that pupils enter school with standards of reading, writing and mathematics that are above the national average. They continue to make good progress and most achieve standards well above national averages by the time they leave Year 6. The most recent unvalidated results of national tests available indicate that these standards have been maintained. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, receive good support and they make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and enjoy 'everything at school'. Their enthusiasm and eagerness for learning is evident throughout the school. Pupils' attendance levels are the highest in the county which not only reflects their eagerness to come to school but is a result of the very effective attendance policy. Pupils are well behaved in both formal and informal settings. Their happiness and respect for one another was apparent in the end of school year French fashion show and during the Sports Day events. Pupils are considerate and kind to each other and they care for the environment, for example growing flowers and vegetables. Gardening contributes to their understanding of what constitutes healthy living, as do the many opportunities to participate in a range of sports activities. Pupils feel safe and secure and are not worried about being bullied or harassed because they know the staff will help them if they become upset. The school council makes a good contribution to the school community and parents have expressed their wish for a similar parents' council. There are strong links with the local community through Thornbury Children's Council and links with the local radio station. Spiritual, moral and social development is good and is promoted through many aspects of life in school. Pupils are reminded of how to be fair and to do their best with particular reference to sports events. Cultural understanding is developed well through art, music and literature, although pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of Britain is limited. They become independent learners and have a good grasp of literacy, mathematical and ICT skills which prepares them well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good so that pupils are able to make good progress and achieve well. Assessment information is used well so that teachers can plan their lessons carefully. Combined with well focused support from teaching assistants, the differing needs of a wide range of pupils, including more able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are met. This is important in mathematics where it has been identified that more able girls and less able boys do not always achieve as well as they should. Procedures are in place which should remedy this situation. Day-to-day assessment through marking is inconsistent and does not always provide the guidance necessary to show pupils how they can improve their work. Staff and pupils work well together. Pupils behave well in lessons, adopt good attitudes to work and are keen to learn. The brisk pace of lessons keeps pupils motivated and interested. Teachers

endeavour to make learning fun and this was apparent in a Year 5 lesson when pupils were asked to find words from coordinates given to them and then make up their own coordinates for others to find words.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets all requirements. It provides well for the needs of all pupils, including the gifted and talented and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The use of information and communication technology is a strength of the curriculum and it is used to link subjects together. For example, ICT is used for research, writing and preparing a presentation about a history topic such as The Second World War. Although pupils learn about other faiths and cultures, they have a limited understanding of the cultural diversity of Britain. There are many and varied enrichment activities to motivate and inspire pupils, including visits and visitors such as the artist who helped them make very attractive mosaic tiles to be incorporated into the school grounds. They make music through the choir and orchestra as well as the ukulele group in Year 4. They join forces and compete against other local schools in sporting activities. Learning French is popular and exciting. There is an effective programme to promote pupils' ability to keep safe and to raise awareness of healthy living.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is good, and often outstanding, which results in high standards of personal development and enjoyment of school. Staff and pupils show great respect for one another and an industrious, happy learning environment results. Current requirements for protecting and safeguarding pupils are met. Academic guidance has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Recent innovations in assessment are beginning to have a positive effect on lesson planning and setting targets for all pupils. Pupils understand and work towards the targets they are given to raise standards in literacy and mathematics. Marking in workbooks does not always show pupils how their work may be improved further. There is good support for all, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are very close links with local schools, especially the infant school, so that the transition from Year 2 to Year 3 is carefully managed. This is less apparent as children leave Year 6 to transfer to the next stage of their education, but those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities follow a year-long and carefully planned series of visits to the high school so that they are very well prepared for the change.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management overall are good and there is good capacity to improve. Leaders and managers know their school well and have accurately identified the strengths and areas to be improved. The headteacher, ably supported by the governors, has led the school well through a period of significant changes in staff at senior level. All staff show a dedication and common purpose in maintaining high standards of education for all pupils in their care. Recent innovations have been carefully introduced so that the improvement in assessment procedures is beginning to have a positive impact on the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The senior management team has a good understanding of the needs of the school and they work well

together. Governors are well trained and have an exceptional understanding of the areas for development. They take a very active part in the academic and social aspects of school life and make an outstanding contribution to the school. The provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils play an active part in the local community and are widening their understanding of national and international issues. The majority of parents support the school and endorse the view that their children enjoy coming to school because they enjoy the work and activities available to them.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

July 9 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crossways Junior School, Thornbury, BS35 2HQ

We would like to thank you for making us so welcome in your school. We enjoyed talking to you and watching some of the end of term activities, especially the French Fashion show and Sports Day

You have a happy, busy school with lots of exciting things to do and to learn. We were impressed with your knowledge and understanding of digital photography and how you put together PowerPoint presentations for your history projects.

You reach high standards, especially in English, science and ICT, but mathematics creates a few problems for some of you. Your teachers know this and are working hard to make sure you all achieve as well as you can.

You behave well and tell us you really enjoy school. We were very impressed by your attendance which is the highest in South Gloucestershire! You also know a lot about how to stay healthy and safe.

We think your teachers could help you more by making sure that when they mark your books they write comments which will show you what you need to do to make your work even better. We know you learn about other countries but we do not think you have a clear understanding of the traditions and cultures of people who come from other countries and choose to live in our community.

We hope you enjoy your summer holiday and come back to school refreshed and ready to continue to do your very best.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Taylor

Lead Inspector