

Peasedown St John Primary School

Bath Road, Peasedown St John, Bath, BA2 8DH

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Standards are above average in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and continue to improve. Pupils make good progress from their starting points, especially in reading.
- Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is good and improving strongly. Following a dip in Year 6 standards in 2011, they improved in 2012 and are now set to return to above-average levels in 2013 and beyond.
- Teaching is good and improving. Teachers plan interesting activities and check that pupils are learning well.
- Parents and carers are content that their children are happy, safe and well looked after.
- Members of the governing body are very effective at asking the right questions to challenge the school's leaders. They make good use of the school's budget to achieve the best for every pupil.
- Leaders have very high expectations of all staff and pupils. They keep a close check on how well pupils are learning and take decisive action to sort out any issues quickly.
- Everyone shares a deep commitment to the school and to doing the best for every pupil.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well. They are extremely supportive of one another and take high levels of responsibility for themselves.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always use pupils' individual targets to help them develop their literacy and numeracy skills effectively through other subjects.
- In some subjects, teachers do not mark work in the same high-quality way or give pupils enough chance to contribute to their own assessment of how well they are doing, as happens in English.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 26 lessons or parts of lessons across the school. Of these, 14 were undertaken jointly with the co-headteachers and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books, listened to some pupils read and watched an assembly.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and talked to pupils during lessons, in the playground and as they moved around the school.
- Meetings were held with the senior leadership team and other staff with leadership roles, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors spoke informally with other members of staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 56 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke informally with about 20 parents and carers as they brought their children to school at the start of the day. The questionnaires completed by 30 members of staff were also considered.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation which included: the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement; evidence about how teachers are set targets to improve pupils' progress and records of observations of teaching; the governing body minutes; the school's information about pupils' progress over time; and records relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Sandra Hayes, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jane Wotherspoon

Her Majesty's Inspector

Colin Lee

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than most primary schools in England.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage with only small numbers from other ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is lower than in most schools in England. The proportion supported through school action is low. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is around average.
- The number of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is about average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has Nursery provision for two- and three-year-olds which is managed by the governing body but is registered with Ofsted and inspected separately from the school. It was not part of this inspection.
- The school has two co-headteachers. One works part time and is responsible for the strategic direction of the school. The other works full time and has day-to-day responsibility for running the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the opportunities for pupils to develop and use their literacy and numeracy skills to great effect across all subjects by:
 - making sure teachers miss no chances to reinforce pupils' targets in literacy and mathematics through other subjects
 - fine-tuning the way that teachers feedback to pupils and mark their work in other subjects
 - getting pupils to contribute to their own work in all subjects in the way that they do currently in English and mathematics lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was significantly above average in 2009 and 2010 but it fell in 2011. Results in national tests improved in 2012 and pupils' present attainment, as judged by the school's records and the observation of pupils in lessons, is again rising to above-average levels.
- Pupils in Year 2 reached levels of attainment in reading and writing that were significantly above average in 2012. Levels in mathematics were also above average, with more pupils reaching the higher Level 3 than nationally.
- The development of pupils' reading skills is a strength of the school. Results in reading for Year 2 and Year 6 in 2012 were very high. The impressive integration of the library has had a significant impact on pupils' attitudes, progress and attainment. Pupils know about a wide range of books and talk enthusiastically about special reading events and authors, including several who have visited the school.
- Since the previous inspection, the good achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has gone from strength to strength. Children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is at least good. Starting points are generally as expected for their age, but some children have weaker language skills. By the time they leave Reception, many children have gone beyond what is expected and so are well placed to start Year 1.
- Pupils rapidly develop their phonics skills (the link between letters and the sounds they make). In the Year 1 phonics screening test in 2012, many more pupils at Peasedown St John reached the levels expected than in other schools.
- Most pupils who left Year 6 in 2012, regardless of their background or ethnic origin, made at least the expected progress while at school. Their progress in mathematics and reading was similar to other schools.
- During this inspection, pupils made good progress in the very large majority of lessons observed and outstanding progress in some lessons. Such rapid progress seen in lessons supports the school's view that attainment is rising quickly and that more Year 6 pupils will reach the higher levels in 2013.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium is very good. The attainment of these pupils is below others in the school but the gap is closing very quickly.
- Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, but not always to the best effect. For example, the quality of pupils' writing in other subjects is often not as good as that in their English books.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall; some is outstanding. Parents and carers agree with inspectors that their children are taught well.
- Teachers work together to check if pupils are doing as well as they should. They set ambitious targets for each pupil, making sure these pave the way for good progress. Targets are shared with pupils so everyone is clear about what is expected.
- Lessons build well on pupils' existing knowledge. Teachers check pupils' understanding and adapt their approach if pupils are not grasping things quickly enough. Conversely, they speed things up where necessary so as not to waste pupils' time repeating what they can already do.
- In the main, teachers' questions challenge pupils to think deeply and check that they understand what they are learning. In a small number of lessons, teachers miss some chances to do this.
- A focus on developing pupils' language is a strength of the teaching at Peasedown. Teachers give pupils many opportunities to talk through ideas and expect them to use sophisticated

vocabulary. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher challenged pupils to include 'wow' words to bring a story setting to life. Very quickly, the quality of pupils' language took a step up. Some pupils made good use of a thesaurus to extend their choice of words. One pupil decided to use a simile to help paint a picture for the reader.

- There is much good practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Adults in the Nursery work closely together to help children become independent and adaptable. Teachers in Reception think very carefully about what children need to learn next and challenge them to do well. In one lesson, very skilful questions helped children to recognise numbers that were two more or two less.
- In Key Stage 1, teachers build very effectively upon what pupils can do and challenge them to take an active part in their learning.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils' independence is developed further. Teachers give pupils many opportunities to work alone or in pairs and groups, to reflect on their learning and judge the quality of their own work. They have personal targets for English and mathematics, and can track their own progress.
- Pupils know how well they are doing in English because effective marking gives clear pointers for how they can improve. Pupils reflect on their work and follow up on teachers' comments. There is less evidence of this in other subjects.
- Teachers plan for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, but sometimes miss chances to reinforce pupils' individual literacy and numeracy targets, and so help them to achieve the higher levels.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils at Peasedown St John enjoy coming to school. They attend regularly and have exemplary attitudes to learning. They say it is fun and play an active part in lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable around school. There is a shared sense of pride with everyone pulling together to be the best they can. In the playground, pupils play safely and sensibly, even though sometimes the space is a little crowded. During the inspection, a serious electrical fault meant pupils had to be evacuated to the hall. They coped incredibly well; calmly and without any fuss.
- Pupils are polite and very well mannered towards adults. They spoke politely to inspectors and showed genuine interest about whether they had enjoyed their visit to the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage follow well-established routines. They are calm and well focused when choosing activities for themselves. They are developing good personal and social skills. Year 6 pupils take a high level of responsibility for their own learning. For example, they make sensible choices about whether to work with a partner or on their own.
- Pupils thrive on taking responsibility and are strongly committed to making a contribution to the quality of life in school. The Pupil Voice group ensures all pupils can share ideas and help support the school's chosen charity.
- Parents and carers believe that their children are happy, safe and well looked after. Pupils agree. They understand about bullying and know that there are many avenues to report concerns. One boy said that teachers sort out any problems 'Like that!' and clicked his fingers.
- The school deals promptly and effectively with any incidents of name-calling or bullying, though these are very few. Incidents are used as learning opportunities to improve what the school does generally, rather than just dealing with those actually involved.
- Pupils are exceptionally supportive of one another and take pleasure in one another's success. Inspectors saw pupils break into spontaneous applause, give each other a 'thumbs up' or a pat on the back in recognition of achievements. For example, in singing practice, pupils gave a heartfelt cheer after one child had finished singing a solo.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The governing body wants the school to be 'The first choice for the community and at the heart of that community', and the pupils say that the school is all about 'Achieving Excellence for ourselves and others'. High ambition to do the very best for all pupils is uncompromising and ripples through this school.
 - Leaders are acutely aware of what the school does well and continually look for ways to improve. When issues are identified, leaders waste no time in taking action and so improvements have been swift.
 - The dip in Key Stage 2 in 2011 was recognised quickly by the school as stemming from an issue around the quality of teaching. Decisive and prompt action, including deploying staff to make better use of their strengths, had the desired impact.
 - Leaders at all levels expect nothing less than the best teaching. They check the quality of teaching regularly by looking at how well pupils are learning. They are accurate in their judgement of the learning they see in lessons. High-quality training has helped teachers to meet the needs of all pupils more effectively.
 - Leaders set teachers very clear targets based on high levels of expectation of pupils' achievement. These expectations are checked and adjusted throughout the year.
 - Pupils are very well prepared to move on to the next stage of their education. The 'Irresistible Curriculum' is the school's innovative and highly effective approach to teaching different subjects. It gives pupils the skills they need to become lifelong independent learners. It helps them to develop excellent social skills and gives them rich, meaningful and enjoyable cultural experiences.
 - The school continuously looks for ways to work with parents and carers, who appreciate getting involved in the many opportunities on offer. There was an enthusiastic buzz around the room at a mathematics workshop in which pupils were 'experts', teaching their parents and carers about numbers.
 - The local authority has not provided much support for this school, which is recognised as one that is capable of sustaining its own improvement. Indeed, the expertise within Peasedown St John is used frequently to support the improvement of other schools locally.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Senior leaders provide the governing body with high-quality, detailed information which they use to build an accurate picture of the school. Governors challenge the school about how well pupils are achieving, including those who are supported by the pupil premium, and are prepared to take the decisions necessary to raise standards. They link plans and manage resources to meet their clear strategic vision for the school and to benefit all pupils. Information on the quality of teaching is shared with governors and this is used effectively to manage teachers' performance and pay progression. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well, and has exemplary systems for safeguarding pupils.
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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	109067
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	403077

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	567
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Day
Headteacher	David Tilling and Julia Battersby
Date of previous school inspection	September 2007
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