

# Air Balloon Hill Primary School

Hillside Road, St George, Bristol, BS5 7PB

**Inspection dates** 24–25 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>3</b>
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although achievement is rising quite rapidly, there are still too few pupils making better-than-expected progress by the end of Year 6, especially in writing.
- The quality of teaching, although improving rapidly, still has some inconsistencies, especially in Reception and Year 3. There has not been enough consistently good teaching over time to allow pupils to achieve well. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve and some lessons do not contain tasks that challenge all ability groups, especially those who are more able.
- Pupils' writing skills are not developed enough and the best teaching is not shared widely enough within the school.
- The school's systems for analysing data are not robust or sophisticated enough to produce the high quality information on the performance of groups of pupils for leaders and managers and governors.
- Some inconsistencies in guidance given to learning support assistants means that in some lessons they do not always make a good impact upon learning.
- The gap between the attainment of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals and all pupils is not closing fast enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching in Year 6 is consistently good and often outstanding, and the teaching in Years 2 and 5 is consistently good.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. They are kept safe and know how to keep themselves safe.
- The quality of leadership and management and governance is much improved, which is why achievement is rising and the quality of teaching is improving.
- High quality support is provided to teachers to enable them to improve their effectiveness.
- Marking gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 teachers during visits to 40 lessons or parts of lessons, some in partnership with the headteacher or one of the deputy headteachers.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff, and a discussion was held with the school’s improvement advisor.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, looked at the school’s self evaluation and the strategic plan for raising achievement, and evaluated samples of pupils’ work alongside senior staff.
- Other documents looked at included: curriculum planning, documents relating to attendance, safeguarding and child protection, records of pupils’ attainment and progress, records of behaviour, records relating to the monitoring of teaching and minutes of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of the 85 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Some parents and carers were spoken to at the start of the school day.
- Inspection questionnaires received from staff were analysed.

## Inspection team

Stephen Lake, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Anne Newall	Additional Inspector
Jo Brimscombe	Additional Inspector
David Westall	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much larger than most primary schools. It was formed three years ago from the amalgamation of an infant and a junior school.
- The majority of pupils are White British, with an average proportion of pupils from other ethnic groups. The proportion believed to speak English as an additional language is below average with very few at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average.
- A slightly below-average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational need. The most common identified needs are speech language and communication needs or moderate learning difficulties. A few have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties and a few have difficulties within the autism spectrum.
- Around one in every five pupils is known to be entitled to free school meals and also to support under the pupil premium. This is broadly average.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.
- The school meets the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially but not only, in Reception and Year 3, so that the large majority is consistently good or better by:
  - raising further teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in a given time so that more lessons proceed at a brisk pace
  - ensuring that all teachers provide clear guidance to learning support assistants that enables them to be fully involved in supporting learning
  - using assessment information more effectively to set tasks matched closely to the needs of all pupils, especially those who are higher attaining, so that more pupils make better-than-expected progress.
- Improve achievement of all pupils, but especially of those supported by pupil premium funding, especially in writing, by:
  - providing opportunities to talk about their writing and focusing on good descriptive language, and by making effective use of the best teaching practice seen in Years 2, 5 and 6 to demonstrate the best practice for all
  - ensuring all support staff understand clearly what is expected of them.
- Review the systems for analysing data to ensure that they provide high quality information on the performance of groups and cohorts that is quickly and easily accessible to all leaders and managers.

## Inspection judgements

### **The achievement of pupils** requires improvement

- At end of Year 6, attainment over time is average but improving at a faster rate than nationally, especially in mathematics. Attainment in writing is slightly lower than in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils known to be entitled to free school meals are attaining lower standards than all pupils nationally, and the gain in their average points score, at 11.2, is still below the rest of the school at 12.5. Their attainment is moving closer to that of all pupils nationally, especially in reading, but the lower attainment in writing means that the gap is not closing fast enough.
- Children start school with skills below the levels normally expected, especially in communication, language and literacy. Over time they make expected progress. The dip in attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage in 2011 has been reversed and children, this year, started Year 1 with broadly expected skills, although their written skill levels remained lower.
- Achievement by the end of Year 2 has been improving steadily over the last few years as a result of much-improved teaching. School data and analysis of pupils' current work show that the current cohort is now making good progress from their below-average starting points and their attainment is now in line with age-related expectations.
- Observations of pupils' books and the most recent school data show that pupils in the current Year 6 are on track for above-average attainment in reading and mathematics. This improvement is being sustained in Year 5. Attainment in writing is improving but the low attainment in writing several years ago means that, although pupils are now making good progress, standards in writing remain below those in reading and mathematics.
- Attainment in reading over time is average but pupils are making good progress against their lower starting points. The recent check on pupils' understanding of letters and sounds (phonics) was above average at age six. Pupils entitled to support through the pupil premium are making accelerated progress in reading because the funding has been used to provide additional teachers and teaching assistants working with these pupils in small groups and on a one-to-one basis. The most recent school assessments of reading show Year 6 pupils on track to be above average at the end of the year.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils because the support that they receive keeps them included in learning. Those with statements of special educational needs make slightly better progress.
- The large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View agree that their children make good progress, and pupils think they are now learning well.

### **The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time has not been strong enough to ensure good progress. This is improving because robust management of the performance of individual teachers has identified where improvement was needed. Intensive support programmes led by both senior staff and local authority staff have been very effective in improving the quality of teaching. The impact of this is only just starting to be seen in the results of national assessments. The rate of improvement in teaching is accelerating as more teachers are delivering high quality lessons that can be modelled and emulated by other staff. No inadequate teaching was observed during the inspection.
- Although some good teaching was observed with every year group, the quality of teaching is less consistent in Reception and Year 3 and to a lesser extent in Years 1 and 4. In many of the lessons requiring improvement, teachers have lower expectations of what pupils can achieve in a given time.
- In a significant minority of lessons, tasks set are aimed at the middle of the class. They are too easy for some and too hard for others. This affects more-able pupils slightly more because

additional support is often given to some of the less able through effective one-to-one teaching or small group teaching, often funded under the pupil premium. This helps accelerate the progress for these pupils, but those taught within the lessons sometimes have tasks that are too difficult for them.

- The quality of marking is almost always good. Pupils understand the school scheme and say it helps them improve their work.
- Pupils with disabilities or special educational needs receive good quality additional support in classrooms that enables them to be fully included in lessons. However, the support provided to other pupils by teaching assistants is variable. Some of them make outstanding contributions to learning, but in a minority of lessons, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers do not provide clear guidance and some learning support assistants spend too much time supervising.
- Teachers make good provision in most lessons for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. For example, in several lessons observed in Year 6 where pupils made accelerated progress, good attention was given to empathising with a character who was homeless. Talk partners and mini-drama sessions developed pupils' understanding of the social and moral issues involved and enabled them to consolidate their thoughts before writing. Activities such as these are helping improve writing, but they are not consistent throughout the school.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The school is generally an orderly community where pupils show respect for each other. Although the site is difficult at the moment because of the building work, the large majority of pupils move around the site carefully.
- Pupils are very positive about the way the school looks after them and helps them feel and stay safe. They say that behaviour is usually good and it is rare for any disruption to lessons to occur, although this has happened in the past. They feel that behaviour has improved in the last few years. The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View feel their children are safe, and a large majority agree that behaviour is good.
- A small minority of parents and carers were concerned about the way bullying is dealt with. Pupils say that this used to happen some years ago but now very little bullying takes place. Any that does occur is dealt with well by the adults. School records confirm that the number of bullying incidents has reduced to only a few.
- Pupils have a sound understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber bully and discrimination-based bullying. They are particularly aware of what can be deemed unacceptable language.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning support the accelerating progress being made. Nevertheless, in a few lessons where teaching is less effective, one or two pupils occasionally mis-behave, which slows their learning, although teachers make sure that this does not disrupt the learning of others.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Following the amalgamation several years ago, the combined staff now share with the senior leaders a common vision and a strong ambition to improve the school. All are committed to driving up standards and are enthusiastic about the opportunities that the new buildings will provide.
- The large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View agree that the school is led and managed well.
- The senior leaders have received good quality support from the local authority to enable

effective professional development of teachers that is linked closely to performance management. Subject leaders praise the way they are enabled to develop their leadership skills and play a part in school improvement. They now support senior leaders well in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

- A well-planned curriculum is focused well upon the development of key skills, especially writing, and the links between subjects. Good quality opportunities are provided within the curriculum for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
  - Procedures for safeguarding are secure and meet requirements. The school looks after pupils well and procedures for child protection are robust. Training in safeguarding and child protection is up to date for staff and governors.
  - Leaders and managers are effective in ensuring equality of opportunity and preventing discrimination. Senior leaders monitor the progress and attainment of all pupils through regular assessments of pupils' attainment. For those supported by the pupil premium this information is used to target extra support funded by this initiative where needed. At present this is supporting reading more than writing.
  - Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have a wealth of data on the school's performance. Nevertheless, as they seek ever more high quality information from this data, the systems presently in place do not provide this quickly and easily enough.
  - Areas for development are clearly identified and the school development plan sets out well how these will be addressed. The steady improvement in attainment over the last few years, together with improvements in the quality of teaching and especially in the quality of leadership and management, indicate a strong capacity to improve further.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body challenges the school well to ensure good quality provision for all pupils. Recent appointments to the governing body have brought additional new skills that are being used well. For example, accountancy skills to monitor the impact upon achievement of the way pupil premium funding is used.
    - The governing body checks rigorously upon the impact of all spending decisions, including those relating to how teachers are rewarded for good performance. They check upon the performance of the school by analysing the national data on school performance and school assessments of pupils' performance. Alongside regular reports from senior staff and visits to the school by link governors, this information enables governors to have a clear view of school performance and identify where improvement is required. Governors make good use of the training offered by the local authority to improve their skills.
    - The information on school performance is linked closely to the performance management of the headteacher. Regular checks are made on how checks on teaching and learning are used to address any underperformance and raise the quality of teaching.
    - Secure systems are in place to keep governors informed of the views of parents and carers.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135867
<b>Local authority</b>	City of Bristol
<b>Inspection number</b>	406638

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	675
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lisa West
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rob Worsfold
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8–9 December 2010
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