

Air Balloon Hill Primary School

Hillside Road, St George, BS5 7PB

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Strong leadership by the headteacher, senior leaders and governors, has improved the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. There are clear plans to ensure further improvements.
- Teaching is consistently good. The positive relationships between staff and pupils help pupils learn well.
- Pupils' standards in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are rising. In 2014, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average at both key stages.
- Children make a good start to their education in the Reception year. Good teaching and effective care and support contribute well to their good progress.
- The large number of learning support assistants work well with teachers when both planning and supporting pupils with their work. They provide pupils with clear guidance so they are clear about what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils and parents agree that the school keeps pupils safe and secure and that they are well looked after.
- This a caring school, where staff and pupils look after each other. Older pupils enjoy helping younger pupils with their reading.
- Pupils behave well both in class and at break times. Pupils like working hard and are very proud of their school. They want to do their very best, reflecting the school's motto, 'We look to the stars not our feet.'
- The wide range of subjects and experiences offered by the school supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Governors know the school well. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for further development to ensure the school continues to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The information on pupils' progress is not yet used effectively to bring about further improvements to their achievement.
- Middle leaders (those often responsible for year groups or subjects) are not fully involved in checking and monitoring the progress pupils make.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, learning was observed in 32 part lessons. Many of these were jointly observed with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors observed small groups of pupils taught by learning support assistants.
- Inspectors heard pupils from Years 2 and 6 read and they held meetings with two groups of pupils, including the school council.
- Inspectors spoke to three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority, and staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documents. They also considered records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of children. Inspectors scrutinised the school's arrangements for spending, including the additional funding for sports and the pupil premium.
- The inspectors took into account the views parents shared directly with them and 104 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, as well as the school's own survey of parents' views. The inspectors also had informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day.
- They took account of responses to the staff questionnaire from 53 members of staff.

Inspection team

Sarah Jones, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Christine Alexander	Additional inspector
Jo Curd	Additional inspector
Cheryl Weyman	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs is one fifth. This is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding which supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is one quarter. This is just below the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There has been an increase in pupil numbers since the last inspection. There are four classes in each of Reception and Years 1, 2 and 3, and three classes in each of Years 4, 5 and 6, making a total of 28 classes.
- Children in Reception attend full time.
- The school is part of the Columbus Family of Schools. This is a group of seven local schools that work together to help raise standards and improve the experiences of pupils.
- The school provides a breakfast club that is managed by the governing body. The school also provides a number of after-school and holiday clubs which include sporting activities, street dance and a choir.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase pupils' achievement further by;
 - continuing to develop systems that are rigorous in checking and monitoring pupils' progress
 - Identifying areas of pupils' understanding and skills that need improving.
- Increase the impact of middle leaders on improving pupils' progress by;
 - ensuring all have training on how teaching and learning can be improved to help raise pupils' achievement still further.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The strong leadership of the headteacher, supported effectively by senior leaders and governors, has successfully improved the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the last inspection. There are clear plans in place to ensure this improvement continues.
- The headteacher has created a culture in which all pupils want to learn and in turn be successful. This is a key strength of the school.
- Teachers pay awards are linked directly to the performance of pupils in their class. Senior leaders make rigorous checks on teaching and pupils' achievement over time and provide support and training where required to improve teachers' practice.
- Middle leaders work collectively as a team, but do not always use the information gained through monitoring activities to identify where pupils' achievement needs to improve more quickly. They are yet to receive training on how teaching and the use of assessment information can be used more effectively to bring about improvements to pupils' achievement.
- Pupils study a range of subjects and most lessons are well planned to engage pupils' interest. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school. Assemblies, lessons and school visits all contribute to pupils' experiences well. Pupils have opportunities to take part in activities within the community, as well as to engage with national events such as Black History Month. These experiences help pupils to appreciate the diverse cultures around them and prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- Parents are very positive about the school. They describe the staff as approachable and say that no matter what the problem is, staff are always willing to listen to any concerns, however small.
- The school is strongly committed to the ideal that all pupils should achieve well. The pupil premium is used effectively to improve disadvantaged pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, as well as to provide opportunities that broaden their educational experiences. Additional staffing, including the new family support worker is providing more personalised support for pupils. This approach is improving pupils' well-being as well as their academic achievements.
- The additional primary physical education and sport premium is used effectively to promote pupils' health and well-being. Sport coaches work alongside staff to teach high-quality physical education lessons which have increased the skill level of pupils. Additional equipment has been purchased to support this work. Pupils also enjoy learning new skills by attending a wider range of sports available. Pupils also participate in local tournaments with neighbouring schools. For example, the school hosted a joint sports day in 2014. Pupils benefit from working with pupils in neighbouring primary schools.
- The local authority has provided support for the school, who have welcomed the support to assist the improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement made.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well for all pupils at the school. The school welcomes opportunities to work with a wide range of people and is not afraid to tackle any discrimination.
- The school's arrangements to safeguard pupils are good and meet statutory requirements to ensure that all pupils are safe and well cared for.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is effective. Governors know the school well, as they are kept well informed. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for further development. This ensures they can both challenge and support school leaders. They question leaders on the performance of different groups of pupils in relation to all pupils nationally and what will help raise the achievement of all pupils at the school. Governors make regular visits to classrooms and take the opportunity to talk to pupils about their learning. The governing body ensures all of its members are well informed and trained in order to support the school. Governors have a clear view of the quality of teaching, including the management of teachers' performance. They are aware how the Teachers' Standards are used in relation to rewarding teachers and tackling any underperformance. Governors monitor spending carefully and understand how the school is using both the pupil premium and additional sports funding to improve pupils' overall achievement. The governing body has recently engaged two new governors to make sure all areas of the school are well supported with link governors. The governing body makes sure that safeguarding regulations are met and that there are appropriate procedures to check the suitability of staff appointed to the school.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They move around the school quietly and understand routines well. Pupils quietly chat to each other and staff in a calm atmosphere during school lunch breaks.
- Pupils are friendly and polite and welcome visitors to the school. They are quick to say how proud they are of the school.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and work hard in the majority of lessons. On a few occasions, pupils' behaviour can slip; this is because teaching does not always fully motivate them to learn.
- Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibilities, for example as Year 6 'reading buddies' who listen to younger pupils read at lunchtime. Members of the school council spoke about their achievements, including their suggestions for additional activities at break times and the introduction of the new play pod.
- The large majority of parents and staff who responded to the questionnaires agree that the behaviour of pupils is good.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection. Staff have worked effectively with parents to bring about this improvement. The school has recently employed a family support worker, who is continuing to support parents and helping them to ensure their children to attend school regularly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and the vast majority of parents agree that the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. They say there is very occasional bullying, but they would speak to an adult if they had concerns. They are confident that the situation would be resolved.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe when using computers. They say they have lots of reminders and they are aware that they are not allowed to be on social networking sites for teenagers.
- The school's work to promoting pupils' well-being and personal development is also having a positive impact on their academic achievement.
- The breakfast club and after-school clubs are well attended and pupils say they enjoy the range of activities available. Engaging and interesting activities help pupils to have a clear start and end to the day.

The quality of teaching is good

- As a result of actions taken by the leadership team, teaching is now consistently good. Pupils enjoy their learning and make good progress.
- Teachers and learning support assistants communicate well together about how pupils are doing and what they need to learn next. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They effectively support those pupils who find learning more difficult. This includes pupils new to the school, pupils with special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged. This support enables them to learn well in a safe and secure environment.
- Pupils say that teachers make most learning fun. This was observed in a Year 5 lesson when pupils were using different ways to support their understanding of counting in both French and Spanish. Occasionally teaching does not always capture pupils' interests, causing the behaviour of some to dip.
- Teachers and learning support assistants question pupils effectively to check pupils' understanding and assess the next stage in their learning. Occasionally, learning is not good when pupils are waiting for permission to move on to more challenging work.
- Both teaching and learning support assistants carry out the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) well to help pupils with their reading.
- Teachers use a range of resources well to support pupils' learning. Pupils make use of the information on display in most classrooms to help them, especially when they are working on their own.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful. Pupils are confident they can ask if they do not understand their work. Staff are reassuring, supportive and praise pupils' work well when it is merited.
- Teachers make sure pupils are aware of how they can develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills in other subject areas. For example, in a Year 2 history lesson, pupils examined the main differences

and writing about artefacts available to them as part of their topic on explorers.

- Most teachers follow the school's marking policy. Where marking is most effective, pupils have opportunities to act upon the teacher's feedback. However, the variations in marking and assessment across subjects and year groups is one reason why pupils' achievement is not yet outstanding.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' overall achievement has improved since the last inspection. Pupils enter the Reception year with skill levels that are below those typical for their age. They make rapid progress so that the proportion of children who reached a good level of development before starting Year 1 was above the national average in 2014.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 screening check on phonics has continued to improve. The impact of improvements was evident when listening to pupils read, as they used their good phonics knowledge to tackle unfamiliar words.
- The attainment of pupils in Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics has continued to improve and is now above the national average in these subjects. The proportion of pupils reaching and achieving the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1 also compares well with national figures.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 continue to rise. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the highest levels in mathematics by the end of Year 6 has continued to rise. A few pupils also achieved the highest levels in the grammar, spelling and punctuation assessment in 2014.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their various starting points because their needs are well met and a real strength of the school. Their progress is rigorously tracked and monitored and support put in place to meet their needs.
- The school's most able pupils achieve well. They enjoy the challenges presented to them. This was observed in a Year 6 mathematics lesson when pupils were working on a problem usually tackled by secondary school pupils. They rose to the challenge and clearly had a thirst for the subject and were very keen to speak about the task.
- Pupils read regularly both at home and in school. Pupils spoke about their preferences when choosing books, such as adventure stories. One pupil said that reading helps with her writing as she can take some of their ideas and adapt them in her own stories.
- In some year groups teacher work together to look at pupils' work. This helps to make sure that there is consistency between classes. However, this is not the case in all year groups. This means that some teachers are not always aware of pupils' next stage of development.
- The attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium is improving in relation to that of other pupils in the school. In 2014, eligible Year 6 pupils were two terms behind other pupils in mathematics, one-and-a-half terms behind in reading, and a term behind in writing. Compared to pupils nationally, the gap is closing more rapidly. Pupils are behind one-and-a-half terms in reading and writing and two terms behind in mathematics.

The early years provision is good

- Early years provision is well led and managed. A strong team has been built, with teachers and learning support assistants working well together to support children effectively.
- Children have the opportunity to visit the school on three afternoons before they start to help familiarise them with the setting and activities available. Children are assessed when they start Reception to help staff plan activities to meet their individual needs and abilities.
- Children are safe and well cared for. They quickly settle into the routines and they achieve well as a result of the consistently good teaching within a calm and caring environment.
- In 2014, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development at the end of Reception was above the national average. This means children are well prepared to continue their learning as they enter Year 1.
- Behaviour is good. Children quickly learn to share resources and play together well. One child said, 'I love this school.'
- Teaching is good. Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and assess their progress regularly. Staff have created stimulating activities using both the indoor and outdoor spaces well to support children's learning. Staff make learning fun and in one lesson observed, they used their voices well in a lively and encouraging way when talking about pirates. This both engaged the children and made

them laugh.

- The progress children make is recorded in individual 'learning diaries'. These illustrate children's development well with photographs and commentaries. This helps to ensure that children and parents see clear evidence of the progress made. Safeguarding is effective and the procedures in place ensure children are safe at all times whether using the indoor or outside spaces.
- Parents spoke highly of the setting and said they felt well informed about the progress their children were making. They said staff are very approachable and supportive.

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	135867
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	453746

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	740
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lisa West
Headteacher	Rob Worsfold
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 January 2013
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