

May Park Primary School

Coombe Road, Bristol, BS5 6LE

Inspection dates 4–5 March 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 of teaching has brought about improvements to the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. As a result, pupils are making better progress and standards are rising.
- Leadership is good. The headteacher has created a school where staff and pupils want to do well.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points, which are often low, to reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are broadly average by the end of Year 6.
- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. The good teaching is helping children to learn well and develop successfully.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress and often outperform their classmates.
- Teaching is good, especially in developing pupils' language and communication skills. Reading is taught well and pupils read widely and with good understanding.
- Behaviour is good. The school provides a safe environment where pupils behave, work and play well together.
- The governing body is ambitious for the school. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and rigorously challenge school leaders in their pursuit of excellence.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- At times, teachers do not use questioning well enough to check pupils' learning and check their understanding.
- On rare occasions, teachers do not use resources as effectively as they could, or provide enough support in lessons to ensure rapid progress.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average.
- While most marking is good and clearly explains what pupils need to do next, not all staff expect pupils to act on suggestions to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 28 lessons. The large majority were carried out jointly with members of the school’s leadership team.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of pupils’ work from all year groups.
- One inspector observed an assembly and talked with parents and carers at the start and at the end of the school day. The lead inspector held a meeting with three governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked with several groups of pupils and individual pupils during lessons and at breaktimes to gather their views of the school. The inspection team listened to a sample of pupils reading.
- The inspection team held meetings with the headteacher, middle and senior leaders and other staff. Inspectors also took account of the 30 questionnaires which staff returned.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of information provided by the school, including self-evaluation and planning documents, and looked closely at the school’s records of performance, behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- Inspectors looked at the school website.
- Sixty five responses to the Ofsted online Parent View questionnaire were analysed.

Inspection team

Steve Bywater, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Joyce Cox	Additional Inspector
Frances Harding	Additional Inspector
Janet Dinsmore	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school, with numbers rising rapidly and expected to reach 870 by 2017.
- In the early years, children are taught in a Nursery and four Reception classes. The Nursery children attend part-time and all the Reception children attend full-time.
- The school serves an ethnically diverse community, where a majority of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. The largest groups are African and Pakistani.
- The number of pupils who join the school part way through their primary education is higher than the national figure. Many of these pupils have not had prior experience of schooling and many arrive with little or no English language skills.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is well above the national average. This is government funding for pupils known to be eligible to receive free school meals and those who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the overall quality of teaching to outstanding so that pupils' achievement improves further by:
 - making sure that pupils are always provided with sufficient resources to enable them to complete tasks and strengthen their understanding when needed
 - improving teachers' use of questioning to check understanding and by providing more opportunities for pupils to answer questions and explain their thinking to others in the class
 - ensuring that pupils respond regularly to teachers' comments in their books so that they improve their work over time.
- Improve pupils' attendance by continuing to robustly challenge parents who take pupils on extended visits abroad.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management is good

- Leadership and management are good. The shared vision, ambition and high expectations of the headteacher and school leaders have ensured the school has made significant improvements in dealing with the previous low attainment of pupils.
 - All staff and governors now share a common sense of purpose and leaders have made sure that teaching, achievement and pupils' behaviour are all good.
 - The headteacher knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school exceptionally well and skilfully identifies the correct areas for improvement. The school's improvement plan clearly sets out challenging but attainable targets.
 - There is a regular and robust system for managing teachers' performance. This is used well to support weaker teaching and staff at an early stage in their career. Teachers are set targets which clearly show how much progress their pupils are expected to make. Frequent checks on teaching, including observations and looking at work in pupils' books, show leaders where further improvements are needed. Staff are held to account through regular pupil progress meetings and information on pupils' achievements is used to help leaders make decisions about pay and promotion.
 - Middle leaders, such as those in charge of subjects, are much more involved in school improvement than previously and visit classes regularly. They are now making a good contribution to the school's development.
 - A very large majority of staff who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about the school and the way it is led and managed. One member of staff wrote, 'It has been a huge privilege to be at May Park. I continue to learn something new every day', while another commented, 'I love this school.'
 - Safeguarding procedures are effective and leaders have created a safe and caring environment.
 - The curriculum is carefully planned to provide pupils with a wide range of interesting activities in a range of subjects. It effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and encourages good behaviour.
 - Leaders have targeted the pupil premium effectively and measured its impact in detail. As a result, the gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and their peers are closing or have closed.
 - Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. This is because the school promotes equality of opportunity well, does not tolerate discrimination and successfully creates an ethos where good relationships can flourish. As a result, pupils celebrate the diverse community in which they live and are very respectful towards each other's faiths and cultures.
 - The primary sports funding is used effectively to provide specialist coaching for staff and pupils and to successfully raise attainment in physical education across the school. Pupils enjoy a good variety of additional sports clubs and clearly learn a wide range of physical skills.
 - The local authority has provided timely and effective support and guidance. This has had a very positive impact on the school's improvement planning and the development of leadership, especially in the early years.
 - Parents appreciate all that the school offers. Almost all would recommend this school to other parents. From the moment parents and pupils are met by the school crossing patrol in the morning to the moment they leave at the end of the school day, they report that they feel welcomed and supported. One parent wrote, 'The teachers are helpful and approachable and provide a safe, happy and calm learning environment.'
- **The governance of the school:**
- The effective governing body has a strong determination to aim for excellence and to make sure that the school becomes the first-choice school for the local community.
 - Governors are striving to ensure continuing improvement. For example, they have a good grasp of data and are asking challenging questions about pupils' relative performance as well as the quality of teaching. They recognise that these qualities provide a solid foundation for future improvement.
 - Governors understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement. For example, in order to develop further the links with parents, they are planning to appoint a parent liaison officer in the near future.
 - They are clear about what is done to reward good teaching and tackle underperformance and are rigorous and robust in using the procedures to link teachers' pay and performance.
 - Governors have a thorough understanding of the finances of school and how additional funding is being

spent. They check it is making a positive difference. For example, they are very aware that the school is working successfully to close the gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils. Similarly, they are well aware of the positive impact of the additional sports funding.

- Governors are vigilant in ensuring a safe and secure environment.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and arrive ready to learn.
- Pupils show a real pleasure in coming to school. 'It's hard work but it's fun. I love it when I get things right,' said one Year 6 pupil, expressing a typical view. Another explained, 'There are always lots of interesting things to do.'
- Pupils get on well together. They move around the school with care and consideration for others and are polite and well-mannered at all times.
- Pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work and produce a good amount. They enjoy learning very much and are keen and eager to succeed, which ensures they make good progress in most lessons. Just occasionally, pupils lose concentration when the teaching does not fully engage or challenge them.
- Relationships between adults and children are strong. Despite the rapidly growing numbers, all pupils are known and valued as individuals in May Park.
- The school accurately monitors and records any incidents of poor behaviour and logs these carefully. There is a very positive approach to behaviour and pupils are taught to take responsibility for their actions.
- Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities, such as the eco-warriors who were proud and delighted in showing an inspector their woodland environment. On another occasion, the school council took part in the assembly and spoke fluently about overcoming adversity and improving achievement.
- In the assembly observed during the inspection, pupils were attentive and well focused but also responded enthusiastically to the achievements of others and clapped spontaneously to congratulate and celebrate successes.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good and parents and pupils agree.
- The school has effective systems for supporting vulnerable pupils and their families. Well-trained designated staff deal with these issues and the whole-school approach ensures the needs of these families are fully met.
- Despite a robust approach from the school to raise the level of attendance, the school absence rate has been adversely affected by extended visits abroad, and attendance figures are below average. The school recognises the need for continued vigilance and also stresses the statutory guidance and safeguarding advice to protect children.
- Pupils say they feel safe and know whom to speak to if they are worried. They are aware of bullying and the various forms it can take. For example, pupils explained how they need to take care when using the internet. They are confident that staff will deal with any problems they might have.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good throughout the school, including in the early years. The headteacher and senior leaders have taken effective action to address the inconsistencies in teaching which were present at the time of the previous inspection.
- Teachers generally have high expectations and set work at the right level of difficulty for individual pupils. Tasks challenge pupils' thinking and enable them to develop a thorough understanding and secure knowledge. This was seen to very good effect in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, where pupils used their skills to solve problems of reductions and increases in the cost of goods, using percentages.
- Just occasionally, teachers do not use resources as well as they could, or give enough support to pupils to make sure they understand the work set. For example, in Year 1, middle ability pupils found it difficult to strengthen their learning about 'halves' and 'quarters' because resources were not used well enough.
- Overall, teachers have good subject knowledge. They have a very clear understanding of what pupils already know. This enables them to plan challenging work because they are clear about what pupils

should learn next.

- Mutual trust between teachers and pupils means that the pupils feel confident to ask questions and are not afraid of making mistakes.
- Teachers generally use questioning well to correct any misunderstandings or misconceptions and generate informative responses which support pupils' progress. However, occasionally teachers do not use questioning as effectively as they might to check pupils' understanding. In addition, they do not always encourage pupils to give detailed answers and discuss each other's responses. This can limit pupils' ability to think about their own learning.
- In most classes, pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects.
- Throughout Years 1 and 2, the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) and reading is good and teachers are skilled at developing pupils' knowledge and use of letter sounds. Pupils in Key Stage 1 read with interest and expression. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are reading confidently and fluently.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support, especially for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Teachers' marking and feedback are generally of a good standard. However, pupils do not regularly act on marking to improve their work, and this slows their progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Throughout the school, pupils achieve well from their individual starting points. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils' standards are broadly in line with the national average and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Children start the Nursery and Reception classes with skills that, overall, are significantly below those that are typical for their age, particularly in language and communication. Inspection evidence and assessment from the school indicate that by the end of Reception, the majority of children are on track to achieve a good level of development and will be well prepared for Year 1.
- The good progress and solid foundations during the early years are built upon effectively in Key Stage 1.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in the Year 1 phonics check was below the national expectations. Staff have received training and support in teaching phonics and current Year 1 pupils are on track to achieve well and attain results which are closer to national levels.
- Reading is a particular strength. Pupils read well. Younger pupils know how to sound out unfamiliar words and by Year 6 pupils are mature readers, with a growing number reading at the higher levels.
- The most able pupils achieve well overall. Their progress in reading is particularly good; they read fluently and competently and discuss in depth their favourite books and authors.
- Achievement in writing is good. Younger pupils write in sentences and are beginning to use interesting vocabulary and punctuation to brighten and enliven their writing. Older pupils relish using new words and descriptive phrases.
- Pupils' achievement is also good in mathematics. A strong focus on mathematical skills, such as learning times tables, ensures pupils have a good grasp of the subject. On occasions, some of the younger pupils are not always given resources and apparatus to strengthen their understanding and this can slow their progress.
- Achievement in Key Stage 2 is good. Progress has been good over the past two years in reading, writing and mathematics as pupils make up previous gaps in their learning. Inspection findings confirm the school's own accurate tracking of pupils' progress and attainment, which shows that current Year 6 pupils are on track to meet national expectation in terms of their readiness for secondary education in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Throughout the school, there is effective and well-targeted teaching and additional support provided for almost all pupils and groups of pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as their peers. Staff are quick to identify pupils' specific needs, working closely with outside agencies to address gaps in understanding and remove any barriers to learning.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve well. Those who speak English as an additional language, particularly those at an early stage of learning English, also achieve well as they have effective support from teachers and bilingual staff.
- Throughout the school, effective use of additional funding has resulted in the gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils being closed. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 outperformed other pupils within school. Compared to other pupils nationally, they were between one and

two terms behind in reading, writing and mathematics.

- The vast majority of parents surveyed through Parent View agree that pupils make good progress and are taught well.

The early years provision

is good

- Good leadership and management ensure that teaching in the early years is now consistently good. Children's progress is assessed and tracked meticulously. They experience a wide variety of exciting activities that instantly capture their interest and help them to make good progress in developing a range of skills.
- The children's varied backgrounds and heritages are celebrated and respected. For example, nursery children took digital cameras home and parents took photographs and wrote captions of home life conversations. Staff displayed these photographs in the Nursery for children to enjoy and talk about.
- Many positive changes have occurred in the early years provision since the last inspection. The outdoor areas have been improved and are used daily all year round. Staff are aware that more work is required to ensure that children's indoor learning is taken outdoors and this is why the early years provision is not yet outstanding.
- The early years team work very closely with parents. They visit children in their homes before they start school and run successful courses to encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning. For example, a recent parent workshop based on the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' was well attended and enjoyed. The most recent cohorts of Nursery and Reception children are better prepared to make the most of what the early years provision has to offer. Consequently, an increasing number of children are reaching a good level of development at the end of their Reception Year and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Staff skilfully provide children with a vibrant and interesting learning environment both indoors and outdoors. Role play areas are of a high quality, such as a hospital complete with nurse's uniform and medical instruments. Children really enjoy being doctors and nurses and learning new vocabulary such as 'stethoscope'.
- There is a good balance between adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves. Children can easily collect their own resources and bilingual staff slip skilfully between English, Urdu, Arabic and Punjabi so that every child is included in all learning and play activities. The early years team excels at encouraging children to communicate so that they make rapid progress in speaking English.
- Staff work well with small groups of children and individuals and model good behaviour and play. Consequently, children learn to behave well, have good attitudes and share resources sensibly. Adults are enthusiastic play partners and share children's delight in activities such as planting wildflower seeds in the garden and dressing as book characters for World Book Day.
- Children are kept very safe, both indoors and outdoors, and staff ensure resources are clean and well maintained. Staff skilfully adapt learning to match children's abilities. The most able children can write sentences with capital letters and full stops and all children make good progress in learning the names and sounds of letters.

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	109131
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	453744

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	681
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Hussey
Headteacher	Jan O'Hara
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 February 2013
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