

Paulton Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109089
Local Authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	309875
Inspection date	18 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Anthony Shield

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	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vacant Position
Headteacher	Matthew Grosvenor
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2003
School address	Plumtre Close Paulton Bristol BS39 7QY
Telephone number	01761 418137
Fax number	01761 415418

Age group	7-11
Inspection date	18 September 2007
Inspection number	309875

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, pupils' personal development and well-being, the quality of teaching, the curriculum, and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation (SEF), national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, policies, minutes and other school documentation. Observation of the school at work, interviews with senior members of staff and pupils, and parental questionnaires also provided evidence. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Paulton Junior School is of an average size. Most pupils are of White British origin and live in the immediate area, which consists of a mix of social and private housing. On entry, most pupils' attainment is average, although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very slightly above average. The school has a number of awards, including ArtsMark, Investors in People, Schools for Health Award, Basic Skills Quality Mark 1 and 2 and ActiveMark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'I cannot praise the school highly enough – a fantastic school!' This comment by a parent is typical of many and sums up the confidence of parents in this outstanding school. Paulton Junior provides a distinctive and very special education for its pupils. The most striking thing about the school is its sense of community. An impressive partnership between adults and pupils, alongside trust and confidence in each other, encourages very good relationships and a real family atmosphere. Both teachers and pupils exude pride in being part of the school community. In this supportive and challenging learning culture, pupils thrive.

Pupils reach exceptionally high standards by the time they leave in Year 6. On entry in Year 3, pupils' attainment is broadly average, and by the time they reach the end of Year 6, attainment is high. Sustained and rapid progress is made through the school and overall pupils' achievements are outstanding. Standards are particularly high in mathematics and science, where assured teaching leads to a confident use and application of number by most pupils. Attainment in English is also well above average, but does not consistently match the very high standards in mathematics. Aware of this, the school has made raising standards in literacy its number-one priority. Already impressive gains have been made in reading. Considerable attention has been recently given to making the library a welcoming environment and staff are more proactive in encouraging all pupils, particularly boys, to choose stimulating fiction books. Further development of pupils' confidence in writing, especially extended imaginative writing, remains a priority.

Another considerable strength of the school is the outstanding personal development of pupils. Through the school's careful attention to the individual child, pupils are thoughtful, kind and courteous. Children develop into sensitive and responsible young people as they move through the school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exceptionally good, and pupils enjoy school and all that it has to offer. They demonstrate high levels of care for each other and school systems, such as playground leaders, encourage these attitudes. Pupils readily express their opinions and take an active part in lessons. They speak enthusiastically about the school and feel that there is a 'friendly spirit'. This is reflected in the above-average attendance.

A clear code of values underpins the school's approach to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Regular opportunities to share ideas and feelings, and to use thinking and negotiating skills, are provided through circle time and in the school council. Pupils enthusiastically accept opportunities to take responsibility and make a contribution to their own and the wider community in, for example, managing the healthy tuck shop and raising funds for those less well off. Pupils have a very good understanding of issues related to healthy living and are exceptionally well prepared for their future well-being. The work, for example, of a group of pupils in planning, designing, budgeting and presenting proposals for improvements to the playground, with only limited consultant help from their teachers, is an outstanding example of their understanding of the world of work.

The excellent curriculum is very well adapted to individual learning needs. An impressive range of extra-curricular clubs supports and enriches the curriculum. Additional programmes such as the 'Learn a New Skill' project offer exciting new challenges. Pupils themselves talk enthusiastically about the way teachers 'set you your next challenge'. They all confirm they work hard and sometimes find the work difficult, but through a 'traffic lights' system are able to communicate how well they feel they are doing to their teachers.

First-rate teaching shows flair and imagination in the way topics are introduced and tasks presented. Characterised by high expectations, a cracking pace and effective questioning, the teaching focuses on how effectively pupils learn. In fact, the school's attention to the development of pupils as learners has become the cornerstone of its success. Increasingly as they move through the school, pupils are confident learners, able to research ideas on their own, persevere when they get stuck and show curiosity and independence. Marking is detailed and thorough, offering praise and challenge in equal measure.

The quality of both academic and pastoral care and guidance is exceptional, and at the heart of all the school's procedures. A high priority is given to all aspects of pupils' health, safety and welfare, including child protection and risk assessments. In the comforting embrace of this culture of care, pupils feel safe and free from bullying. The system for checking pupils' progress is thorough and comprehensive, ensuring intervention if potential underachievement is spotted. In this respect, the support given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by the special needs coordinator and her teaching assistants is exemplary.

The driving force behind the school's success has been the excellent leadership of the headteacher and his senior team. Determination to maintain and improve standards and the quality of provision has been pivotal to their work. A strong sense of teamwork is coupled with the hard work and commitment of all staff. The self-evaluation model the school uses – 'Learning by Numbers' – is robustly based on measurable data and takes into account the views of all stakeholders. It enables the school to know itself well and to plan realistically for further improvements. Governors carry out their responsibilities well and are increasingly effective as they become better informed through links with subject and classes. Given the school's recent track record, it has an excellent capacity to make further improvements and maintain its high standards. The school has the confidence of parents in the community it serves and seeks an increasingly close partnership with them.

Above all else, the school's motto, 'Learning Together, Learning for Life' has meaning and resonance throughout the school's work.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards of writing, particularly extended and imaginative writing, to match those achieved in mathematics and science.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 September 2007 Dear Pupils

Inspection of Paulton Junior School, Paulton, Bristol BS39 7QY

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I greatly enjoyed talking to you and particularly liked the friendly welcome you gave me. Your outstanding school is very special and you are rightly proud to attend it.

These are the most important things to say about your school

- There is a good spirit in the school. You enjoy going to school, get on well with the teachers and take part in everything with energy and enthusiasm.
- You are well behaved, friendly and play well together.
- You work hard in lessons and are increasingly confident to stick at it when you find work difficult, to take control of your own learning, and to find things out for yourselves.
- Your teachers make lessons interesting and fun, and provide lots of interesting things for you to learn.
- There is a fantastic range of clubs to join in.
- The school takes very good care of you and the support given to those of you who need most help is excellent.
- Your headteacher and all the staff have worked very successfully to make your school one of the best!
- Most of you make outstanding progress, but you could do even better in writing.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection.

With best wishes for the future,

Yours faithfully

Mr Tony Shield Lead inspector



20 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Paulton Junior School, Paulton, Bristol BS39 7QY

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I greatly enjoyed talking to you and particularly liked the friendly welcome you gave me. Your outstanding school is very special and you are rightly proud to attend it.

These are the most important things to say about your school

- There is a good spirit in the school. You enjoy going to school, get on well with the teachers and take part in everything with energy and enthusiasm.
- You are well behaved, friendly and play well together.
- You work hard in lessons and are increasingly confident to stick at it when you find work difficult, to take control of your own learning, and to find things out for yourselves.
- Your teachers make lessons interesting and fun, and provide lots of interesting things for you to learn.
- There is a fantastic range of clubs to join in.
- The school takes very good care of you and the support given to those of you who need most help is excellent.
- Your headteacher and all the staff have worked very successfully to make your school one of the best!
- Most of you make outstanding progress, but you could do even better in writing.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection.

With best wishes for the future,

Yours faithfully

Mr Tony Shield
Lead inspector