

# Ashton Gate Primary School

Ashton Gate Road, Bristol, BS3 1SZ

**Inspection dates** 26–27 September 2012

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- Pupils make excellent progress during their time at school and their achievement is outstanding. All pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, reach levels of attainment that are well above national averages.
- Teaching is outstanding. Lessons provide high levels of challenge for pupils of all abilities; they are enjoyable and have excellent pace.
- The most able pupils are given opportunities to reach high levels of achievement across all subjects. However, occasionally, pupils are not given the chance to fully understand their progress during lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and makes a strong contribution to their learning. Their attitudes are excellent, making the school a very harmonious and safe place for everyone. Bullying is extremely rare and parents and carers express how confident they are in the school's work.
- Leaders and managers ensure their high expectations for pupils and their ambitions for the school are shared by all the staff. The leadership and management of teaching are outstanding and so it continues to improve strongly.
- There is outstanding support and challenge from the governing body whose many activities help to further enrich the highly imaginative curriculum and the teaching. This supports pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with half a day's notice. Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised its policies, a range of documents and records of pupils' assessments.
- The inspectors observed 30 lessons taught by 14 teachers over 15 hours. They held meetings with staff, pupils, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and held informal discussions with parents and carers.
- The inspectors took account of the 163 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire, Parent View, in planning and carrying out the inspection.

## Inspection team

Carolyn Carnaghan	Lead inspector
Kerry Rochester	Team inspector
Rodney Braithwaite	Team inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Ashton Gate is a larger than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Those from minority ethnic groups and with English as a second language form groups that are smaller in proportion than those seen nationally. Most pupils are from a White British heritage.
- The proportions of pupils supported through school action, school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs are below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the Pupil Premium is below the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Ensure pupils always know and understand their progress by:
  - making sure that teachers use assessment systematically during lessons to check pupils' understanding
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and that of their classmates during lessons.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children come into Reception with skills that are broadly in line with those expected. They make outstanding progress across the school, leaving at the end of Year 6 with well above average levels of attainment. Achievement is outstanding for all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Those who receive extra funds to help with their education also do very well with many making outstanding progress, both academically and in their personal development.
- The progress pupils make in English and mathematics is outstanding and they use these skills across all other subjects. Their writing is not quite as successful as their reading but the school is already tackling this well by ensuring there are all kinds of opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills. This means that pupils produce very high quality work for topics and projects.
- Pupils read widely and enjoy doing so. They report that they read both at school and at home across a broad range of styles and genres. Their skill levels are very high. This allows pupils to tackle difficult texts with confidence, particularly in Key Stage 2, such as the plays of Shakespeare. Attainment in reading is well above average at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those supported by school action, school action plus, and those with a statement of special educational need, make excellent progress. Progress is just as strong for pupils from minority ethnic groups and those for whom English is an additional language. This outstanding progress for all groups of pupils is because their needs are very thoroughly explored and outstanding support is put in place to help them make such positive strides. Their personal development is similarly outstanding.
- Those who receive additional financial support to overcome difficulties are given excellent chances to enjoy the full range of experiences that other pupils can. For instance, the exciting opportunities for trips to local centres for science and technology led to pupils working towards the production of a wind machine.
- Children in the large and lively Reception classes make rapid progress in their acquisition of skills. They enjoy plenty of outdoor activities and develop excellent speaking and listening skills. Children are encouraged to be independent, be polite and respectful to each other and the staff.
- Challenges in their learning to read and write, and the interesting range of both adult- and child-led play and educational opportunities, ensure children develop into confident pupils, ready to enter the main school by the end of the year.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The good and excellent teaching across the school builds upon high levels of understanding of pupils' needs and their prior learning. Regular assessments are used to drive progress across all subjects. The outstanding knowledge teachers develop of the academic and personal needs of their pupils leads to interesting challenges in lessons, stimulating pupils' curiosity and ambitions.
- Parents and carers and families form a partnership with the school, coming into lessons to hear pupils read or bringing their expertise to bear on challenging projects. For example pupils are beginning to learn about computer programming from one of the parents or carers.
- Local facilities, such as a recent art event, enabled pupils and their teachers to work closely with a gallery as it put an exhibition together. Pupils are working with a local theatre to extend their understanding of the play *Macbeth*; these lessons bring together the expertise of teachers, theatre staff and parents and carers. Their outstanding contributions have helped pupils engage closely with the play so their understanding has reached a very high

level.

- Lessons are fast paced and are carefully structured to generate curiosity. Teachers are very imaginative in the ways they engage their pupils, giving plenty of opportunity for these articulate pupils to develop and express their opinions. They ensure pupils work in all sizes of groups, as well as independently, so helping to encourage cooperation and teamwork. This helps pupils to enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Assessment is used carefully to ensure teachers understand what pupils need to do to improve. Just occasionally, pupils do not have enough opportunity to fully understand their own progress during lessons, because teachers do not always question them enough, or opportunities are missed for pupils to assess their own work or that of their classmates. Marking is used effectively across the school with valuable dialogues about work often happening between staff and pupils.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils is outstanding**

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and their learning. They are ambitious for their progress and are willing to support and help the school and others in their endeavours. These are extremely important factors in the success of pupils' academic and personal development. For example, pupils recently helped the school enhance its local area, building planters, putting in plants and generally improving things for everyone.
- Very firm relationships are forged between pupils and, since staff are all excellent role models, the school is a warm and harmonious place. Play and lunchtimes are occasions for letting off steam and for organised activities. Behaviour at these times is outstanding. The excellent support for pupils who may be vulnerable helps them to do extremely well and be involved in all activities.
- Behaviour in lessons is almost always outstanding because pupils are fully challenged throughout. Parents and carers report very few worries about behaviour and neither they nor the pupils report concerns about bullying of any kind, because it is so rare. This, and the absence of racist behaviour, means that pupils feel very safe in school. Their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is testament to such a positive environment.
- Exclusions are very rare and are extremely low in comparison with other schools nationally. Attendance is above average and the school has worked consistently over the years to ensure this is the case.
- There is a sensible and consistent attitude exhibited across the school towards staying safe, including on the internet. While the school site is relatively difficult for everyone to move around, pupils show genuine maturity and thoughtfulness when doing so.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The highly capable headteacher leads a team of managers and staff who share the same ambitious goals for the pupils. The very careful monitoring of teaching and learning is key to driving improvements for all pupils so there are equal opportunities for everyone and no discrimination. Regular checks on progress ensure everyone understands what needs to be done to help support pupils' already outstanding achievement.
- Teachers understand that they are held responsible for the successes of their pupils and the regular checks and highly effective performance management of all staff lead to opportunities for teachers' professional development.
- The local authority effectively supports and challenges the school to do better. The school's own self-evaluation is highly robust and its strategic planning is perceptive. The rise in the achievement of pupils has been as a result of this and of the determination of staff and leaders to build success.
- The outstanding curriculum is very broad and provides for rich and interesting activities through the year. It supports pupils' awareness of safety and their well-being by

encouraging debate, discussion and ambition. The core skills of English and mathematics are developed in dedicated lessons where their importance is emphasised. They are put to good use, along with the communication skills of speaking and listening, in wide-ranging topics. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development increases as they explore how history has shaped them and how others live.

- There is a very broad range of activities that support school learning; there are trips to local enterprises and historical sites, such as the SS Great Britain. Pupils take part in many sporting and arts activities, making links with neighbouring schools in competitions and challenges.
- Parents and carers are very close partners with the school. They actively support the school community by lending their expertise and help, and are, in turn, supported by the school. There are highly appreciated workshops for parents and carers to support their children's education, through help with homework and reading, for example. Parents' and carers' involvement enhances an expanding and exciting curriculum. This makes Ashton Gate a true community school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is exceptionally well informed about the school. It supports the school in all its activities, both inside and outside the classroom. Members visit regularly, sometimes observing lessons, but always staying in very close touch with leaders and staff.
  - Members of the governing body hold the school rigorously to account. They carry out their own monitoring and use this to evaluate how well all aspects are doing. They clearly understand how well pupils are progressing, making it their business to quiz the school about any concerns, should they arise. They help the headteacher to drive improvement and share her high ambitions for Ashton Gate.
  - Members of the governing body are well informed about safeguarding and ensure that the school fully meets its requirements.
  - The governing body ensures that pupils have equal chances to succeed; governors' thoroughness helps deliver excellent chances for all groups of pupils, leading to the outstanding achievement that pupils enjoy.
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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>	108912
<b>Local authority</b>	Bristol
<b>Inspection number</b>	403074

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>	453
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lloyd Fletcher
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Willson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 April–1 May 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 9030236
<b>Fax number</b>	0117 9030236
<b>Email address</b>	ashtongatep@bristol.gov.uk

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