

PEARSON PLC  
Form 6-K  
January 20, 2009

**UNITED STATES  
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549**

**FORM 6-K**

**REPORT OF FOREIGN PRIVATE ISSUER  
PURSUANT TO RULE 13a-16 OR 15d-16 UNDER  
THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

For the month of January, 2009

**PEARSON plc**  
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

N/A

(Translation of registrant's name into English)

**80 Strand  
London, England WC2R 0RL  
44-20-7010-2000**  
(Address of principal executive office)

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant files or will file annual reports  
under cover of Form 20-F or Form 40-F:

Form 20-F  X

Form 40-F

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant by furnishing the information  
contained in this Form is also thereby furnishing the information to the

Yes

No X

This Report includes the following documents:

1. A press release from Pearson plc announcing Trading Statement

19 January 2009

#### **PEARSON TRADING UPDATE**

Pearson is today providing its regular January trading update ahead of announcing its preliminary results for 2008 on 2 March 2009.

We will report good growth and continued progress on our financial goals for 2008, despite the worsening macroeconomic environment. Trading conditions were more difficult in some of our markets in the fourth quarter, but all of our businesses achieved or exceeded our guidance for 2008. We also benefited from the strength of the US dollar against sterling\* and a lower tax rate.

As a result, we now expect to report headline earnings growth of around 20% for 2008 (against adjusted EPS of 46.7p in 2007), ahead of the consensus of market expectations (approximately 51p, according to Reuters and Bloomberg).

Marjorie Scardino, chief executive, said: "We are naturally cautious about the economic environment, but we take confidence from our performance in 2008. It provides evidence that our strategy for long-term, sustainable growth is working. Some of our markets will be tough this year and we are managing the company accordingly. But that strategy, our record of investment and our resilience will enable us to take full advantage of the opportunities this environment gives us to build our business and gain share."

Our education business finished the year ahead of our expectations, with good growth in our testing businesses and particular strength in US Higher Education and International Education. These have more than offset some weakness in the US School publishing market caused by pressure on state budgets. Penguin also performed well, in line with our expectations, in a slower holiday trading season for the overall books market. FT Publishing has produced good sales and profit growth despite the slowdown in the advertising market in the fourth quarter, and Interactive Data will report its Q4 performance and full-year results on 19 February 2009.

We expect our effective tax rate to be around the low end of our previous guidance of 27-29%.

Looking ahead to 2009, we are planning on the basis that the worldwide economic environment will be tough and that trading conditions will continue to be challenging in some of our markets. However, we expect the company to prove durable once again thanks to the strength and breadth of our education business, Penguin's consistent publishing performance and the FT Group's shift towards subscription and content revenues.

**ENDS**

**For more information:**

Luke Swanson/ Simon Mays-Smith/ Charles Goldsmith

+ 44 (0)20 7010 2310

*\* Pearson generates approximately 60% of its sales in US dollars and each 5c move in the average £:\$ exchange rate for the year as a whole increases or decreases our adjusted earnings by approximately 1p per share. The average £:\$ exchange rate for 2008 was £1: \$1.85, against £1: \$2.00 for 2007, and the closing rate at the year end was £1: \$1.44.*

**SIGNATURE**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

PEARSON plc

Date: 19 January, 2009

By: /s/ STEPHEN JONES

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Stephen Jones  
Deputy Secretary