

Priestley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126254
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	360029
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Joyce Cox

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	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jayne Funnell
Headteacher	Andrew Marsh-Ballard
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed five teachers and visited eight lessons. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils, and looked at the school development plan, assessment information, teachers' planning, pupils' work and safeguarding procedures. They analysed 51 parental questionnaires and 47 questionnaires from pupils in Years 3 to 6.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether all groups of pupils are making at least satisfactory progress throughout the school, with particular focus on pupils' achievement in writing and the achievement of boys in Years 1 and 2, more-able pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The extent and impact of senior leaders' and the governing body's involvement in whole school improvement.
- How successfully staff use assessment information to meet the various ages and learning needs of all pupils in mixed-aged classes.

Information about the school

This is a small five-class primary school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The main areas of need are speech, language and communication, and moderate learning and behaviour difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school where pupils are exceptionally well cared for and are happy, work hard and achieve well. The school has come a long way since its previous inspection and now produces good outcomes for all its pupils. The headteacher, governing body, staff and pupils are steadily and successfully enhancing the school's reputation in the local area. One parent, speaking for many, commented, 'I have seen the transformation the school has undergone over the last few years. Changes have been made that are sustainable and it is evident that this is having a very positive impact.'

Reception children have a happy and successful start to their school life. Teaching throughout the school is nearly always good. Lessons move at a brisk pace and engage pupils in interesting and practical activities. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, they are not always used effectively to support the needs of other pupils, especially in lesson introductions. Precise analysis of assessment information points teachers towards those pupils who need extra support. The headteacher and the two assistant headteachers have taken much of the lead on improvements but increasingly, through good professional development, other staff play their part. From a below average point on entry to the school, all groups of pupils achieve well and attainment is broadly average at the end of Year 6. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen significantly since the last inspection, clearly showing the good progress pupils make during their time at the school. Pupils' attainment in writing is the slightly weaker element. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well due to good support. The very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language quickly become bilingual and progress well in their learning.

Behaviour is good and pupils say they enjoy school very much now because 'it has improved so much over the last two years'. Their good attitudes to learning and the quality of work and presentation in their exercise books are impressive. Positive relationships, good classroom management and careful planning for mixed-age classes ensure that work is normally matched to the needs of individuals and groups. However, in a few instances all pupils receive the same work which means that the needs of lower attaining younger pupils or more-able older ones are not always met. The opportunities and activities on offer continue to be improved and enriched through an exciting curriculum with numerous interesting projects and visits. Pupils make a good contribution to school and local community life. The relatively weaker area of community cohesion is pupils' knowledge and understanding of being part of a wider global community. The headteacher, working closely with his two assistant headteachers and with the active support of all staff and the governing body, is embedding high ambition. Self-evaluation is realistic and clearly demonstrates the high expectations that are being set for future developments and pupils' achievements. This has ensured that the school has correctly identified the key areas for improvement. Attainment is rising and the considerable

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improvements to teaching and curriculum planning mean that the school demonstrates a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and achievement in writing further by:
 - ensuring that planned activities are always focused sharply on meeting the learning needs and abilities of all pupils.
- Review the use and deployment of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning even more effectively.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

All groups of pupils try hard in lessons and are proud when they have done a good piece of work. They work very well together in groups and they enjoy discussing their learning and explaining what they have done. Many pupils are enthralled by new stories. For instance, infant pupils have recently been inspired by the text 'Foggy, Foggy Forest' clearly demonstrating this when they read the story together with enthusiasm and 'kung foo' punctuation! Learning in lessons during the inspection was predominately good. Pupils were normally eager to answer questions and settled down to work quickly and persevered well with challenging tasks. Despite some variations, attainment in English, mathematics and science is improving by the end of Year 6. A range of interesting strategies to improve attainment in writing is starting to pay dividends, particularly for boys who were clearly as engaged and enthused to write as girls during the inspection.

The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons, assemblies and break times. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident they can always ask for help and support if they need it. They enjoy keeping fit and healthy and many join in with clubs and activities, such as tae kwon do and tennis before school and 'Huff and Puff' at break times. Staff work very hard with the pupils who have specific and sometimes quite complex difficulties and barriers to their learning. These pupils, often among the most vulnerable in the school due to their circumstances, learn successfully and make equally good progress. An older pupil when asked what she particularly liked about the school commented, 'Pupils with special needs get dealt with properly in this school because the staff care about everybody.' Pupils' attendance has improved and the proportion of pupils who have tended to miss a lot of school in the past has reduced significantly.

Pupils contribute well to school life because they cheerfully volunteer and work successfully as a team. House captains oversee younger children during various inter-house events and school councillors express views regarding healthy eating and happy playtimes. Older pupils volunteer for numerous responsibilities, such as setting out playground equipment, overseeing recycling bins and paired reading with younger pupils. Despite some variations, attainment in English, mathematics and science is improving by the end of Year 6. A range of interesting strategies to improve attainment in writing is starting to pay dividends, particularly for boys who were clearly as engaged and enthused to write as girls during the inspection.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers' planning is very detailed and lessons are conducted at a swift pace. Pupils are clear about what they are learning and how well they have tackled and achieved tasks. Next steps in learning are clearly stated through high quality marking of pupils' work. The way teaching assistants are used varies and, on some occasions, they do not have a marked impact on pupils' learning. Staff manage pupils' behaviour sensitively and skilfully and create an encouraging and supportive atmosphere in lessons so that pupils are confident to have a go at answering questions and attempting new challenges. Whereas most teachers plan lessons to cater for pupils' different ages and abilities, there are occasions when this does not happen and pupils with different needs receive the same activities to do.

A key feature of the good curriculum is the stunning learning environment. Eye catching artwork and interesting and interactive displays in all subjects convey teachers' high expectations. Pupils' work is valued and celebrated. Reading and writing progress ladders in all classrooms mean they can constantly see how well they are learning. A wide range of visits, visitors and clubs considerably enrich pupils' learning experiences. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have opportunities to enjoy active residential visits. Pupils have enjoyed 'Mathletics' with Bath Rugby Club. Topic work often starts with inspirational experiences. For example, pupils in Years 3 to 6 visited the London Eye and the National Gallery to

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inspire their current learning about landmarks while younger pupils enjoyed visiting the nearby Avebury stone circles.

The quality of care and guidance across the school is highly effective. Through strong links with other agencies, pupils, parents and carers receive targeted and helpful support. There are many examples of this having a very positive impact on pupils' welfare and achievement, including those who are encountering particularly challenging and anxious times in their lives. The school works closely with the local authority's family learning team and recently cooperated on a family literacy course which ultimately lead to several parents and carers achieving nationally recognised qualifications as well as having regular opportunities for them to work alongside their children.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and staff have been clear-sighted about what have needed to be the main priorities and strategies in guiding the school forward. There is close attention to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination enabling all pupils to achieve well, whatever their circumstances or difficulties by breaking down any barriers that might hinder their learning. Staff work together well as an effective and ambitious team and are all committed to school improvement and in ensuring all their pupils have a good primary education.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is led and managed effectively and consequently achievement for these pupils is good. Subject leaders play a clear role in monitoring and improving pupils' attainment. The system for tracking pupils' academic progress is effective so that any pupil who is not making enough progress is identified quickly and support is put in place.

The headteacher and staff have worked hard to build partnerships and trust with parents and carers, and to improve the school's reputation in the local area. There is a sensitive approach to encouraging those who may feel reticent about coming into school and involving them in their child's education. The Chair and vice chair of the Governing Body provide strong leadership and good challenge to the school. Newer members are rapidly becoming trained and increasingly involved. There are good policies, strategies and procedures to ensure the welfare of all pupils. Safeguarding policies and risk assessments are of good quality and constantly reviewed to ensure pupils' safety. The school effectively promotes community cohesion and has developed partnerships with diverse communities nationally and is looking to develop more global links.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Many children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills that are below those of other four-year-olds especially in terms of their personal and social development and in their early reading and writing skills. Effective leadership, good teaching and tender care ensure that most children make good progress although few attain the expected levels for their age on entry to Year 1. Staff make learning fun and enjoyable, and help children to gradually learn to work and play together well. For instance, during the inspection, children who had only been in school for a very short time were clearly loving many new experiences.

Staff work hard to ensure boys are totally engaged and involved. Role-play areas, such as a 'Bob the Builder' construction area, are popular. However, on some occasions, when boys are left to play without sufficient adult interaction their play becomes boisterous and noisy and lacks purpose. There is a good mix of carefully planned adult-led and child-selected learning. Improvements have been made to the outdoor area which is now partially covered and provides outdoor learning opportunities in all weathers. However children's outdoor experiences do not encompass all the areas of learning. An exciting wild area is currently being constructed in the school grounds which is intended to provide chances for children to explore and investigate.

Reception staff work well as a team and have good knowledge and understanding of the personal and learning needs of young children. They place a good emphasis on working and playing together and in developing trusting relationships. Consequently, children feel secure and are happy to approach staff for assistance and support. There is a happy atmosphere and children are settled well into class routines. A good partnership is established with parents and carers who appreciate the patience and kindness of the staff.

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As one comments, 'My child has settled in so much better than I had ever dared hope. This is because of the care and support he has received.'

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Over half of the 90 families at the school responded to the Ofsted questionnaire which is an above average number. The vast majority of parents and carers feel that their children are kept safe, that teaching is good and that the school helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle. Twelve per cent of the parents and carers who completed the questionnaire felt that the school does not inform them about their child's progress and 10% felt that the school does not help them to support their child's learning. Inspectors looked closely at this. Inspection evidence showed that the school provides a sufficient amount of information about pupils' progress and that it helps parents and carers to support their children's learning. A small number of parents and carers raised other concerns which were summarised and raised with the school without identifying any individual.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Priestley Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 136 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	47	23	45	2	4	2	4
The school keeps my child safe	26	51	23	45	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	37	25	49	6	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	41	21	41	5	10	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	24	47	24	47	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	45	21	41	5	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	55	20	39	0	0	2	4
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	37	24	47	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	39	24	47	4	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	37	27	53	3	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	33	25	49	4	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	43	21	41	2	4	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	49	21	41	3	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Priestley Primary School, Calne, Wiltshire SN11 8TG

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed coming into lessons and talking with you about school life. We have judged your school to be giving you a good education.

These are some of the things we found out.

- You are taught well and your lessons are usually fun and interesting.
- You enjoy school, feel safe and most of you behave well at all times.
- Your headteacher and assistant headteachers are good leaders.
- You are exceptionally well cared for in school. Everyone has your best interests at heart and wants you to be safe and happy, and to do as well as you can.
- You are helped to keep fit and eat healthily.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you work hard for them.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and governing body to do the following things to help the school improve further.

- Make sure that, especially in literacy lessons, teachers give you work that is just right for you and not too easy or too hard.
- Make sure teaching assistants are used to help you learn well at all times.

You can help by always working hard, attending school regularly and continuing to behave well.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joyce Cox

Lead inspector

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