

Priestmead Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102195
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	372958
Inspection dates	15–16 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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	683
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair	Keith Savage
Headteacher	Brian Robertson
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 24 teachers in 30 lessons, and held meetings with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body, and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan and those of the subject departments, minutes of governing body meetings, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, they carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work, listened to pupils reading and analysed 279 questionnaires received from parents and carers. The Rainbow Resource unit for pupils with special educational needs who are on the autistic spectrum was also inspected.

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

- Inspectors analysed how well pupils with special educational needs in the unit are integrated into the mainstream school.
- The progress made by more-able pupils in reading at Key Stage 1.
- Inspectors investigated how well children in Reception use the new outdoor area to enhance learning in all areas.
- How well groups of pupils make progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2.

Information about the school

Priestmead Primary School and Nursery is a very large primary school situated in Kenton, Harrow. The overwhelming majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the predominant group is Indian. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average and a small minority of pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English. The percentage of pupils supported at school with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average, but the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in a Nursery unit and three Reception classes. A Rainbow Resource base was opened in spring 2011 to accommodate up to 12 pupils on the autistic spectrum. There are five Key Stage 1 pupils currently attending the centre. The Priestmead First School and Priestmead Middle School amalgamated to form Priestmead Primary School in January 2010.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Priestmead is an outstanding school where pupils of all abilities consistently achieve extremely well. Pupils and their parents and carers greatly appreciate the high quality care and enjoyable learning opportunities. One parent summed up the school by saying, 'Priestmead is a wonderful school in many ways; children look forward to school every day.' Pupils were unanimous in their positive comments and could not fault the school in any way. One pupil confidently reflected the views of his colleagues when he said, 'I know a lot because I learn a great deal in lessons; our teachers do a really good job.'

These are the key strengths of the school.

- All groups of pupils make excellent progress and consequently standards in English, mathematics and science are well above those expected by the end of Key Stage 2 because the quality of teaching and learning is good or better.
- The quality of singing and music is superb and is recognised locally and nationally. The school choir was invited to sing at Prince Charles' birthday party and world music festivals.
- Relationships are extremely strong, the school ethos is very warm and welcoming, and pupils make excellent gains in their personal development.
- Excellent attendance contributes significantly to pupils' achievement.
- The Rainbow Centre for children with autism is an outstanding resource centre, which enables vulnerable pupils to become more independent and to make excellent progress in all areas of their development.
- The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Parents and carers particularly appreciate the smooth induction into school life because all staff are friendly and approachable.
- Care, guidance and support are extremely strong, so pupils behave superbly well and are mature, sensible and enthusiastic learners. A pupil commented, 'The school is very good at helping children who get a bit behind with their work.'
- The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils extremely well and consequently they develop an excellent attitude to their learning. Music, art, physical education (PE) and information and communication technology (ICT) are strengths.
- The headteacher and governing body lead the school exceptionally well and have a very clear vision for its future improvement. They have steered the

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school extremely well through the amalgamation process.

- Excellent links with parents and carers, the local community and external agencies contribute very effectively to the provision.
- Community cohesion is excellent at school, community, national and international levels.

The key areas to develop are as follows.

- Although children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults sometimes miss opportunities to challenge and extend children's mathematical learning in the outdoor environment.
- Children make rapid gains in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 learning to speak and listen but teaching children to link sounds and letters (phonics) sometimes lacks pace.

There is an excellent commitment from all staff to provide each pupil with the very best possible education. Equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination are pursued determinedly. There is also a continual drive for improvement. The very effective systems for evaluating the strengths and further areas for development of the school are playing their part in sustaining high standards over time and adapting to changes within the school. The school's excellent organisation and strong, shared vision demonstrate its outstanding capacity to continue moving forward.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teachers consistently use the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage to fully challenge and extend children in all areas of learning.
- Ensure the teaching of phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 is sufficiently challenging for all groups of children.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

From starting points that are much lower than the expected levels for their age, all groups of pupils make excellent progress by the time they leave in Year 6. This was seen in English, mathematics and science, but also in subjects such as music, art, PE and ICT. Most pupils are consistently challenged to aim high. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress compared to their peers nationally. They develop confidence in all aspects of their work because they are encouraged and try their best at all times. Pupils with autism are extremely well integrated into lessons in mainstream classes because the amount of time spent on integration is skilfully increased. The school's tracking and the inspection evidence

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indicate that all pupils are on course to reach or exceed their challenging targets. These outcomes are contributing extremely well to pupils' future economic well-being.

Pupils really enjoy learning because lessons are well planned and excellent relationships contribute to an exciting climate for learning. Writing is very good throughout the school and in subjects other than English. Pupils enjoy writing because they learn to take a pride in the quality of what they write and how they do it. Handwriting is neat and work is well presented. They learn to use description well and consequently writing is lively and interesting. Year 2 pupils use words such as 'livid', 'surprised' and 'transformed'. They made good progress recording a conversation between characters from their reading book: one pupil wrote, 'Why is she in the village? I am very cross because the child did not do what he was supposed to do!' Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in learning to read and more-able pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite books. Year 6 pupils skilfully write their arguments for and against children walking to school in preparation for their class debate. Their work demonstrates good health and excellent environmental awareness: one pupil wrote, 'Additionally we will be more healthy and fit because we will be getting our daily exercise. Moreover the school environment will become much better, as there will be less cars and, as a result less pollution in the atmosphere.'

Pupils make excellent progress in mathematics. In a lively mental oral mathematics lesson there was a buzz of enthusiasm as Year 6 pupils were challenged to estimate the number of grapes in a large bowl. Pupils demonstrated outstanding mathematical awareness suggesting how they could calculate the average, mean, mode and median of the bowl of grapes. There was plenty of evidence of pupils using investigative work in mathematics. Year 6 pupils showed their working formulas clearly when working out seating arrangements for King Arthur and his knights.

Excellent challenge resulted in Year 4 pupils singing a dynamic song in Arabic and English. High-quality music notation was seen in pupils' written compositions. Pupils composed music in a range of genres from blues to jazz style. Year 4 pupils showed excellent knowledge of the pentatonic scale.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school, and say they feel extremely safe because relationships are excellent and they can discuss with adults any problems they might have. They talk knowledgeably about maintaining a healthy lifestyle and there is an excellent range of clubs and activities that are well attended. Pupils make an excellent contribution to their school and local community. They celebrate their cultural diversity extremely well singing joyfully in different languages such as Gujarati, Arabic and Urdu. Pupils regularly raise money for charities. They reflect maturely on issues facing the world today. Their knowledge and awareness of other cultures, ethnicities and religions are extremely good.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The majority of lessons observed during the inspection were good or outstanding. Teachers use assessment information well to plan work that matches the needs of all pupils. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are challenged extremely well. Teaching assistants support pupils with additional needs very successfully so they make the same excellent progress as others. Teachers use questions effectively to check pupils' knowledge and understanding and give good oral feedback to pupils on how to improve their work. Pupils know well what they need to do to get to the next level in English and mathematics.

The pupils enjoy the curriculum immensely and this contributes to their growing enthusiasm for learning. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are used extremely well in other subjects. The strong personal and social education programme assists pupils' personal development. There is an exceptional range of after-school clubs and activities; these are popular and well attended. Victorian and Asian weeks, visits to Royal Albert Hall and The Young Shakespeare Theatre all provide the pupils with memorable experiences. Pupils are very aware of the importance of looking after the world and its resources. New initiatives in information technology are contributing to innovative curriculum design.

Pupils feel and say that the care, guidance and support are excellent. Support for vulnerable pupils who need additional help is highly effective and the school works extremely well with external support agencies in this respect. Pupils' needs are

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

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central to the work of the school and all adults very effectively help children and their parents and carers to get the best from learning through excellent communications. Many parents commented on the excellent transition arrangements for children entering the school in the Nursery and Reception and the excellent transition arrangements when moving on to other schools. Work with parents and outside agencies is exemplary.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is an excellent role model who inspires staff and pupils and leads the school with competence and compassion. He is also a talented musician who enthuses staff and pupils, and makes a very strong contribution in support of music staff towards the high standards in singing and music. The headteacher is extremely well supported by senior staff and middle managers who are very experienced practitioners. The high standards in academic and personal development are a result of very effective leadership and skilful management. Drive and ambition to develop the school still further are extremely strong. There is very strong, enthusiastic commitment from staff to provide each pupil with the best possible education. Leaders have a very thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Pupils’ work is monitored rigorously; any pupils who need additional help are supported extremely well.

The governing body supports staff and challenges the school extremely well. This rigorous approach has steered the school very smoothly and efficiently through the amalgamation and ensures school improvement initiatives are successful. Areas for further development are clearly identified in the school improvement plan. Senior leaders track progress extremely thoroughly and quickly identify any concerns such as the slight dip in Key Stage 2 mathematics and the standards the more able reach in Key Stage 1. Interventions and strategies put in place last year ensured an upward trend at Key Stage 1 and current monitoring data show all pupils are on track in mathematics.

The school promotes equalities expertly, as reflected in the profile of excellent achievement across different groups. All safeguarding procedures and checks on adults are excellent. Child protection, risk assessment and safeguarding procedures are rigorous and all arrangements to ensure that children are safeguarded from harm

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are highly effective. Closed-circuit television cameras contribute to site safety extremely well. Excellent partnership links with parents and carers, local schools and various support agencies contribute to the school’s excellent provision. The school deploys its resources extremely well, particularly to improve provision for pupils who need extra support or challenge. The cultural diversity of the school is highly valued and the promotion of community cohesion is superb; consequently pupils develop an excellent understanding of community at all levels.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle extremely well into the Nursery and Reception classes because links with parents, carers and the local community are excellent. A significant number of children enter Nursery with no pre-school experience and speaking little or no English. Children make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes in all areas of learning and standards are broadly average when children enter Year 1.

Relationships are extremely strong and consequently children make excellent progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Behaviour is excellent. Children make good progress in their speaking and communication skills because teachers encourage them to respond to individual questions and to talk about their ideas. Personal aspects of care and welfare are exemplary and this contributes to a very positive start. Staff provide interesting activities and children have good opportunities to learn through activities led by adults and those they choose for themselves. Good teaching, excellent links with parents and carers and extremely well-planned induction arrangements contribute successfully to children’s enjoyment of school. Opportunities for using the outdoor area to enhance all areas of learning are developing well, considering the reception outdoor area was only opened this

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term. Adults however, occasionally miss opportunities to challenge children in the outdoor activities especially in their counting and number and shape recognition. Nursery children make good progress learning to match sounds to the appropriate musical instrument. Adults challenge them well to compare and talk about the sounds. The teacher adjusted her voice well to the quiet and the loud sounds and this helped the children link the instruments to the sound. Children in Reception learn to cooperate well, especially in the role play areas. They talked excitedly in the dark room about nocturnal animals staying awake all night. Constant dialogue ensures children’s speaking and listening skills are at the forefront of their learning. Adults however, occasionally miss opportunities to link sounds and letters.

Provision for children new to this country and children with special educational needs is excellent and they make very good progress because of the quality of support they receive. The provision is well led and managed.

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

There was a good response from parents and carers to the questionnaire. Most parents are extremely happy with the school. They feel it is very welcoming and friendly. The overwhelming majority say that their children enjoy attending and most regard the school as extremely caring and supportive. They identify a number of strengths including the strong leadership of the headteacher and the commitment and dedication of the staff. The few criticisms were mainly to do with how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour, how the school helps parents support their child’s learning and how the school takes account of suggestions and concerns. Inspection judged that the school is very effective in helping parents to support their child’s learning and considering parents’ concerns. During the inspection any unacceptable behaviour was dealt with extremely well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Priestmead Primary and Nursery 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 279 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 683 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	159	57	112	40	5	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	147	53	115	41	9	3	2	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	93	33	161	58	19	7	6	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	81	29	168	60	18	6	5	2
The teaching is good at this school	93	33	167	60	10	4	5	2
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	80	29	217	78	21	8	5	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	77	28	174	62	20	7	0	0
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)	76	27	160	57	19	7	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	70	25	175	63	21	8	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	74	27	155	56	30	11	10	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	65	23	173	62	20	7	7	3
The school is led and managed effectively	108	39	149	53	10	4	7	3
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	112	40	152	54	7	3	5	2

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.

19 November 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Priestmead Primary and Nursery School, Harrow HA3 85Z

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. We will remember your excellent singing in assembly and how extremely polite, well behaved and considerate you all were. You and your parents and carers told us that Priestmead is an excellent school, and we agree. These are the things we found that your school does particularly well.

- You get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and make excellent progress through the school. You reach standards by the end of Year 6 that are much better than most pupils of your age achieve, because teaching is good.
- You all enjoy learning very much and your attendance is extremely high.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you are extremely sensible. You know how to keep safe and can talk very knowledgeably about keeping yourselves fit and healthy.
- You really enjoy and benefit from the many fun activities, clubs, visits and visitors.
- Your school cares for you extremely well and teaches you a lot about how to care for others.
- Your singing is superb and you all make excellent progress in learning to read music, play musical instruments and create your own music.
- You have excellent links with people from all sorts of communities both in the United Kingdom and abroad.
- Your headteacher and governors lead the school extremely well. All the staff work very effectively together as a team to make sure that Priestmead is a very safe and secure, fun place to learn.

There is one thing I have identified for staff and governors to improve.

- Although you make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 1 teachers sometimes miss opportunities to challenge children in their mathematical learning and in linking sounds and letters.

Thank you for a very enjoyable and memorable visit to your school and best wishes for your future. You can all help by continuing to work really hard.

Yours sincerely

Marion Wallace
Lead inspector

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