

Priory Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	103831
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	376974
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2012
Lead inspector	Helen Morrison

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	559
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rhoda Pearson
Headteacher	Liz Riley
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2009
School address	Limes Road Priory Estate Dudley DY1 4AQ
Telephone number	01384 816845
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Email address	info@priory.dudley.sch.uk

Registered childcare provision	EY334020 Priory Daycare
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	37
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	17 June 2009

Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	2–3 July 2012
Inspection number	376974



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Introduction

Inspection team

Helen Morrison Additional Inspector

Edgar Hastings Additional Inspector

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This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 28 lessons taught by 19 teachers, spending over 13 hours directly observing pupils' learning in class. They heard pupils read and looked at their work in books and on display. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and looked at: curriculum planning; data on pupils' achievement, including their current progress; evidence relating to the care and protection of pupils; plans for improvement and records of the school's monitoring of its performance. They also analysed 89 inspection questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers, together with 150 from pupils and 47 from staff.

Information about the school

Priory is larger than the average sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A relatively small number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups but very few are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than in most primary schools as is the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

Since the last inspection there have been several changes of staff. The current headteacher, formerly the deputy headteacher, was appointed in April 2011. Since January 2012, the school's leadership has received substantial support from a National Leader of Education, her National Support School and an associate headteacher. The current headteacher was absent during the inspection.

The school does not meet the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Priory Daycare is the registered childcare available on the school site. It is managed by the school's governing body. The governing body also manages the school's breakfast and after school care.

There is a children's centre, managed by the governing body, on the school site. This was inspected separately at the same time as the school.

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	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	4
Leadership and management	4

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- This is not a satisfactory school because pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make too little progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and leaders have been ineffective in improving the quality of teaching. Learning is often interrupted by pupils' poor behaviour.
- Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Although children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress, pupils in Years 1 to 6 make inadequate progress. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has declined sharply this year and is well below average.
- Teaching is inadequate because not enough is expected of pupils. They have too few opportunities to use their reading, writing and mathematics skills in other subjects and lessons are often dull and repetitive. Marking does not help pupils to improve their work. Support staff spend too much time checking behaviour rather than helping pupils learn. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is inadequate because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to be creative or learn about different cultures.
- Behaviour and safety are inadequate. The majority of pupils usually behave satisfactorily, but at playtimes they often become boisterous because there is too little play equipment to occupy them. On occasions some staff do not follow the correct procedures for reporting poor behaviour, so pupils have not all received the support they need. Attendance figures are below average.

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- Leadership and management are inadequate. Senior leaders are not skilled in monitoring pupils' progress and do not manage teachers' performance well enough to eradicate inadequate teaching. The governing body is ineffective in challenging the work of senior leaders and staff. The school is heavily dependent on external support. Good provision for childcare is made in Priory Daycare.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and accelerate the progress made by all pupils in order to raise attainment in all year groups by:
 - ensuring that there is a systematic approach to teaching skills in reading, writing and mathematics, and by providing regular opportunities for pupils to use and apply these skills across the curriculum
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and ensuring that lesson activities are engaging and well-matched to the needs of pupils
 - ensuring that marking tells pupils what they need to do to improve and that pupils are given sufficient opportunities to respond to the advice given
 - using support staff effectively to help pupils learn.
- Improve pupils' behaviour and safety by:
 - ensuring that information about pupils' disabilities and special educational needs is reviewed and shared appropriately so that their needs are planned for and met
 - improving attendance
 - ensuring that actions taken to improve the conduct of pupils who frequently misbehave are sufficiently rigorous to significantly reduce instances of poor behaviour
 - providing a range of play equipment and constructive activities at breaks and lunchtimes
 - promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by giving them more opportunities to enjoy, explore and learn about different cultures and the arts.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management in order to secure rapid improvement by:
 - putting into place, with immediate effect, suitable arrangements to ensure that all staff use the correct procedures to prioritise and record cases where safeguarding concerns are identified
 - sharpening the monitoring and evaluation skills of all leaders and managers
 - ensuring that the governing body holds leaders to account

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- regularly and rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching and using this information to hold teachers to account for the progress and attainment of pupils
- analysing and prioritising what needs to improve and ensuring prompt and effective action is taken to bring about improvement.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Overall, all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are making insufficient progress and are underachieving. Children start in the Nursery class with skills that are well below age-related expectations. They make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In the Reception class children use their knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics) to write individual words, but they are not always encouraged to make sentences of their own, nor are they consistently expected to form letters correctly. When working in small groups with an adult children often make good progress, although some activities do not extend children's learning as well as they should.

Standards have been low in Key Stage 1 for the last five years and work in pupils' books indicates they have not improved. Attainment has fallen in Key Stage 2 this year to well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Spelling and handwriting are weak across the school. Most parents and carers believe that their children make good progress but inspection evidence does not support this view. For example, the school's analysis of its own assessment data reveals that less than a third of pupils make the expected progress in mathematics, and just two-thirds make expected progress in English as they move through Key Stage 2. New initiatives introduced by the National Leader of Education, such as the use of 'learning ladders', are helping teachers to have a better understanding of how much more pupils can achieve.

Progress in reading is inconsistent. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 use their knowledge of the sounds of individual letters to work out words accurately, although some are less confident in identifying words with irregular spelling. More able pupils in Year 6 read satisfactorily though they say they do not enjoy reading. Some older pupils find it difficult to tackle unfamiliar words because they do not have enough knowledge of how to blend the sounds that letters make.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is inadequate. Too much teaching, particularly of reading, writing and mathematics, is uninspiring and teachers' expectations are too low. In some lessons teachers talk for too long and pupils are not involved enough in exciting and engaging tasks. As a result, pupils underachieve and do not reach the levels of which

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they are capable. Although most parents and carers say their children are taught well, inspection evidence does not support this view.

In some lessons, support is too focused on managing behaviour and teaching assistants do not help pupils enough. As a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are not supported sufficiently and do not always make as much progress as they should.

In too many lessons the pace of learning is slow and pupils spend too much time practising what they already know. For example, in one Year 4 lesson pupils spent time highlighting rhyming words in a poem, which they could do with ease. Some pupils told inspectors that work is often too easy. The curriculum is not planned to build progressively on what pupils already know, understand and can do. There are missed opportunities for pupils to practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills within the different subjects they are learning. Teachers' marking does not give clear enough guidance about what pupils need to do to improve.

In most lessons pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not promoted effectively. However, in the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of all pupils and provide opportunities for them to listen to each other and to work in groups and pairs. Teachers plan exciting activities which are matched carefully to pupils' needs and capture their interest and imagination. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, skilful modelling of what was expected ensured that pupils were enthused. They wrote expressively about their feelings on arriving in a strange country by accurately using connectives to extend their sentences.

In the registered daycare, skilled staff ensure that children are fully engaged in a range of activities which involves them in making plans for themes to explore, such as going on a journey. As a result provision is consistently good.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most pupils are polite and courteous to visitors. However pupils, staff, parents and carers raised concerns about the amount of misbehaviour around the school and in lessons. Play areas are not used well and there is insufficient play equipment to occupy pupils in Years 1 to 6. Pupils and staff say that disputes often escalate and are not effectively dealt with. Some pupils felt that poor behaviour was rewarded with time in the 'rainbow room' which they perceive to be a treat. More than half of the pupils said behaviour was not good in lessons. This view is supported by observations during the inspection where learning was often disrupted because poor behaviour was not adequately managed. The school's behaviour records show that behaviour seen during the inspection is typical of that found every day.

Attendance is below average and too many pupils are late for school each day. Actions taken to improve attendance and punctuality are not effective.

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Pupils have a satisfactory understanding about how to be safe and look after themselves, particularly with regard to road safety and when using the internet. They have a satisfactory understanding of different types of bullying, such as persistent name-calling which relates to gender, race, disability or special educational needs, and cyber-bullying. Around three-quarters of pupils say that any instances of bullying are dealt with well and, despite concerns about behaviour, they feel safe in school.

The quality of pastoral care for pupils and families whose circumstances may make them vulnerable is inadequate because staff do not always pass on information or follow correct procedures. As a result the needs of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are not met. This includes a small group of pupils who are sent home every day. The reasons for this are not adequately recorded by the school.

Pupils who attend the breakfast and after school clubs enjoy stimulating activities and their needs are well met.

Leadership and management

Declining levels of attainment, significant underachievement by pupils and weak teaching have stemmed from inadequate leadership and management, including ineffective performance management. Monitoring of lessons is not used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of teaching. Professional development is not targeted to meet individual staff needs and, as a result, the quality of teaching has deteriorated. Teachers are not held accountable for the progress their pupils make and the governing body is too reliant on information provided by the headteacher to hold the senior leaders sufficiently to account.

Current self-evaluation evidence, devised with support from the National Leader of Education and associate headteacher, is accurate and realistic. Similarly the Raising Attainment Plan recognises the wide range of weaknesses that need to be addressed. However, the school is overly reliant on substantial external support because the headteacher and senior leaders lack the skills to support school improvement. As a result, the school's capacity to improve is inadequate.

The curriculum is inadequate because it does not meet the needs of all pupils, particularly in Key Stages 1 and 2; there is not enough focus on pupils using their reading, writing and mathematics skills in all subjects. Additionally, the curriculum does not promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well enough. Pupils lack opportunities to learn about different cultures and there are few opportunities for them to enjoy the arts. The school's promotion of equal opportunities is inadequate because too few pupils are achieving well enough.

Although the single central record of checks made on those working with children meets requirements, safeguarding arrangements are inadequate because some staff do not always follow the correct procedures for reporting concerns about individual pupils.

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Leaders of Priory Daycare have a good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are strong links with other professionals who work in the children's centre, which ensures there is good support for children and their families.

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The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

Priory Daycare offers childcare for up to 40 children from birth to the age of five. Leaders provide a welcoming and stimulating environment in a well-resourced facility where children enjoy learning. Children are well cared for and make good progress from very low starting points in their development of skills, knowledge and understanding. Resources are well organised to allow children to follow their own interests while promoting their basic skills. The outdoor area allows children to be active and to explore the good range of play equipment that is set out imaginatively. Each child’s progress is recorded carefully and used to plan future activities to build on what each child has achieved. This information is made available each day to parents and carers. They are encouraged to share in their children’s play and they are kept informed about events through regular newsletters. Their views are sought effectively through questionnaires, a suggestion box and an open-door policy.

Children’s welfare is promoted well and there is good hygiene provision. Safeguarding requirements are effective and systems to ensure that children are safe and secure are robust. The staff work effectively as a team and provide good support for children, including disabled children and those who have special educational needs. Partnership work with the school and effective transition arrangements ensure that children moving to the Nursery class are well prepared.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006

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 for the registered provision	2

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



4 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Priory Primary School, Dudley, DY1 4AQ

Thank you for welcoming inspectors to your school. We enjoyed talking with you, sharing your lessons and reading your questionnaires. We found that Priory Primary School is not giving you a good enough education because there are a number of things that need to be improved. We have decided that your school needs extra help and we call this 'special measures'. Other inspectors will visit you regularly to check on the progress that the school is making.

Although children in Nursery and Reception make satisfactory progress, we want you all to be able to reach higher standards in English and mathematics. We have asked the teachers to make sure that your lessons are interesting and that their marking tells you how to improve your work. We want those of you who find work difficult to have better support so that you make faster progress.

We agree with you that behaviour is not as good as it should be. We have asked the governors, headteacher and staff to take action to deal effectively with those who misbehave. We also want you to be given equipment to play with at breaks and lunchtimes. The governors and headteacher need to check more carefully how the school is doing and how you are all progressing in your work. We have also asked them to take action quickly where they find that the school is not improving quickly enough.

All of you can play a part in helping the school to improve. You can do this by attending regularly, arriving on time, behaving well, working as hard as you can, and talking with teachers about your work, especially if it is too hard or too easy.

Yours sincerely

Helen Morrison
Lead inspector

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