

Preston Primary School

Laurel Road, Eaglescliffe, Stockton-on-Tees, County Durham TS16 0BE

Inspection dates

4–5 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is above average, Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. Pupils enjoy learning. They mix and work well together.
- Teachers use questions skilfully to make pupils think carefully about what they are learning.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, at break and as they move around school. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents agree.
- The acting headteacher, senior staff and governing body have worked well together during this period of change to ensure continuity in the pupils' education.
- Staff, including teaching assistants, work well together as a team. They are enthusiastic and work hard to make their lessons and classrooms as interesting as possible.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1, are reaching standards that are above those expected because teachers do not consistently use assessment information to ensure that activities match pupils' needs.
- Middle managers and subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in carefully checking pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders do not regularly follow up the impact of any changes made.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their writing skills in other subjects.
- In some classes too many worksheets are being used.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the acting headteacher. Teachers' planning and a range of books were scrutinised.
- Meetings took place with senior leaders, teachers and groups of pupils, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and the school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including records relating to pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- They took into account 32 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and results of the school's own parent questionnaire. Results from a questionnaire from staff were also considered.

Inspection team

Christine Millett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Chris Young

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than most primary schools.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those with parents in the armed forces is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection there have been a number of changes in staffing.
- The headteacher has been on sick leave since September. The deputy headteacher has been appointed acting headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase rates of progress, particularly in Key Stage 1 so pupils reach higher standards by:
 - ensuring that teachers make use of assessments to plan activities suited to all pupils' differing needs and sharing good examples of this across the school
 - involving middle managers and subject leaders in checking pupil performance
 - making sure that senior leaders regularly check the impact of actions taken
 - creating more opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills as part of work in other subjects
 - reducing the number of worksheets used.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start the Nursery class with skills that are typical of those expected for their age, except in communication and language and literacy. These are lower.
- Children make expected levels of progress in reading and writing during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the time they start Year 1, pupils' skills in reading and writing are broadly average for their age. However, progress in other areas has been more rapid.
- Pupils are grouped according to their ability for the teaching of letters and their sounds. This has improved pupils' rates of progress. The results of the Year 1 national tests to assess pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds that help them read unfamiliar words were above those found nationally.
- In recent years standards by the end of Year 2 have been below average, particularly in reading and writing. However, the results of national tests in 2012 showed an improvement in standards in reading and mathematics to bring them broadly in line with those expected. Progress in writing has not been as strong.
- Progress in Key Stage 2 accelerates rapidly. By the end of Year 6 standards are well above those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The number of pupils reaching the higher standards in all three areas is also above that found nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive good levels of help and make good progress. Work is carefully planned to match their individual ability levels. Teaching assistants receive training to give extra help where it is needed. This ensures that these pupils have equal opportunities for success.
- Those pupils supported by the pupil premium benefit from focused help which ensures that their progress is good.
- Reading is encouraged throughout the school through visiting authors and attractive displays such as that showing pupils reading in unusual places. Reading materials are attractive and of good quality. Pupils are well supported in their reading at home and in school. These factors help pupils achieve well in reading.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching overall is good and teachers expect the best from pupils.
- In recent years teaching in some classes has not been as strong as that in other parts of the school so pupils have not made as much progress. This is because information from tests and assessments has not always been used effectively to identify gaps in learning and plan work accordingly.
- All staff work well together as a team and are willing to share ideas and support each other. Some teachers use data well when planning lessons but not all do this.
- In the best lessons teachers plan interesting and challenging tasks for pupils that match their needs well, enabling them to make good progress.
- Pupils' enthusiasm is fired by the good use of technology and teachers' subject knowledge. In a Year 1 lesson on writing instructions, pupils were immediately engaged by the skilful use of a video clip, created by the teacher, of a puppet demonstrating how to make a jelly. As a result pupils produced work of a high quality.
- Pupils enjoy practical tasks and in the best lessons these help pupils to learn at a faster rate.
- Progress in writing has been slower because opportunities for writing in other subjects have been limited and too many worksheets are being used.
- Teaching assistants have a positive effect upon pupils' learning. They are used well to support individuals or small groups.
- Work is marked regularly. Teachers' comments tell pupils how to improve their work, particularly

in English. However, time is not always allowed for pupils to follow up the improvements teachers suggest.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage classes, teachers plan an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-chosen activities in a vibrant, stimulating setting. Learning takes place indoors and outdoors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school is a calm and orderly place where pupils behave well and are ready to learn.
- Behaviour is managed consistently across the school and pupils have a clear understanding of how they should behave. Pupils, parents and staff confirm that behaviour is good across the school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. For example, older pupils receive drugs awareness training and all know about being safe when using the internet. Residential visits allow pupils to enjoy a wide range of outdoor activities under close supervision.
- Citizenship days and the 'Rights Respecting School' project encourage respect and tolerance amongst pupils. This also supports equality of opportunity for all.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. They know that adults will help them solve any problems they may have but feel sufficiently confident to try to sort things out for themselves first.
- Pupils get on well together in class and work together happily in pairs or groups. They willingly take on responsibilities in class and through activities such as the school council or as table leaders at lunchtime.
- Attendance is average and pupils arrive on time. Routines are in place to check attendance and the importance of good attendance is emphasised strongly.

The leadership and management are good

- A strong team of leaders and managers, led effectively by the acting headteacher, have worked well together to ensure that the school continues to run smoothly during the absence of the substantive headteacher.
- Leaders make checks on teaching and the quality of learning, and provide support where it is needed. They set targets for teachers to improve their performance that are linked to pupils' achievement. This informs staff development and training.
- The school's system for checking the progress of pupils provides detailed information but this is not used effectively by teachers or middle leaders to bring about improvements in pupil progress, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in writing throughout the school.
- The school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance are accurate. Governors and senior staff know the school well and are clear about its strengths and areas for improvement. The school has the ability to carry on making improvements.
- The school works closely with its school improvement adviser and local schools. The sharing of skills and expertise has been useful to the school.
- The local authority recognises the strengths of the school and has offered 'light touch' support. This is being increased during the absence of the headteacher to ensure that support is available to the new leadership team.
- The wide range of topics taught has been developed to make connections between different subjects and include first hand experiences such as visits or visitors. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through lessons, visits and assemblies. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Parents are welcomed into the school and are kept informed through newsletters and the

school's website.

- The school uses pupil premium funding wisely by judging what extra help is needed by particular pupils in order to widen the range of opportunities offered.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body, which has some relatively new members and a new Chair, is knowledgeable about the work of the school, and regularly challenges the school's leaders by asking relevant questions about the school's performance. They take a full part in decisions regarding teachers' status and pay. They receive reports from the senior leaders, for example about pupils' progress and the use of the pupil premium. Governors have been able to access training to help them in their role. They fully understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school compared to all schools nationally. All statutory policies relating to the safeguarding of pupils are in place and are effective.
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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

Unique reference number	111535
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	403155

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	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kerry Stockley
Headteacher	Shirley Winters
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2008
Telephone number	01642 784735
Fax number	01642 789312
Email address	prestonontees.school@stockton.gov.uk

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