

# Preston Primary School

Mill Lane, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 1HB

**Inspection dates** 16–17 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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' achievement has improved since the previous inspection. Their learning and progress in lessons are consistently good.
- Pupils reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a comprehensive understanding of the sounds that letters make. They use this well to help them make good progress in reading.
- Pupils make good progress in developing better writing skills. They learn to use a broad range of styles and vocabulary well.
- Teaching is well planned. Information about pupils' strengths and needs is used very effectively to match work to their abilities.
- Pupils are often given work which challenges them. This makes them try hard and develops their good levels of resourcefulness and resilience.
- Pupils are well supported in class. Teachers direct the work of other adults carefully so that they have good impact on pupils' progress.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and attend school regularly because they enjoy coming to school. They behave well in lessons, and are polite and well mannered to staff and other adults.
- The headteacher drives improvement at the school very effectively. Information from accurate checks on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching is used well to identify where improvements are needed.
- Training for teachers has contributed strongly to improving the quality of lessons. It is been appropriately focused on the most important areas needing development.
- The governing body knows the school well. It supports and challenges leaders effectively.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Marking of pupils' work does not have a consistently high-quality impact on improving pupils' learning. Pupils are not always shown clearly how to make their work better or given time to act on teachers' written feedback.
- Pupils do not consistently make an excellent contribution to decisions about what they learn in lessons. While there is a range of good practice in different classes, this is not yet routinely shared between teachers.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons, taught by five teachers. Some of the observations were made jointly with the headteacher.
- Pupils and school staff met with the inspector to discuss the school's work.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked carefully at a range of documents including the school's tracking of pupils' progress, safeguarding information, the school's checks on how well it is doing and its improvement plan as well as minutes of meetings held by the governing body.
- The inspector considered the views of 33 parents and carers provided through the online Parent View questionnaire. He also considered the views of 12 staff who had completed the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Jon Carter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Preston Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is slightly above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The main areas of need are in speech, language and communication, specific learning difficulties and autism spectrum disorder.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families, is below average. All pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The school's Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children in the Reception Year is in a mixed-age class which includes some pupils from Year 1.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the marking of pupils' work has a consistently high-quality impact on their learning and progress, by:
  - showing pupils clearly how to make their work better using examples or short tasks
  - providing time in lessons for pupils to read and respond to teachers' written feedback
  - checking routinely that pupils' responses show they have improved their work.
- Improve the consistency with which pupils contribute to decisions about what they learn in lessons, by providing opportunities for teachers to discuss and observe the range of good practice in different classes.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' attainment on entry to the school varies considerably from year to year due to the small number of pupils in each year group. Over the last three years, pupils have joined the school with levels of skills that range from below average to broadly average.
- Learning in lessons is typically good. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children gain a firm foundation in using the sounds that letters make (known as phonics) when they are reading. They use these skills confidently and accurately to read unfamiliar words.
- Pupils' good progress in reading continues well in other classes. Their skills improve quickly because they read frequently and from a range of different source materials. Older pupils read fluently and with expression, showing good understanding of the text.
- Pupils make good progress over time in a broad range of subjects. Over the past two years, there have been significant improvements in how quickly pupils develop better skills in writing and mathematics. The school has successfully narrowed the gap between the achievement of pupils at the school and all pupils nationally. Progress particularly accelerates in Year 5 and Year 6 so that by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment in writing and mathematics is, on average, nearly one year ahead of the expectation for their age.
- The school is effective in ensuring that all pupils have an equal opportunity to achieve well at school. For example, pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding now do nearly as well as other pupils in both reading and writing. This is because small-group learning activities specifically for these pupils have been effective in boosting their literacy skills. This group of pupils make quicker progress in mathematics than other pupils.
- The school's data show that boys learn and make progress more quickly than girls. However, this is because a very small number of girls with special educational needs make slower progress than they should. In lessons, boys and girls, including most pupils with special educational needs, usually make similarly good progress.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers assess pupils' learning and progress frequently. They make good use of links with other schools to regularly check the accuracy of their assessments. This enables them to have a comprehensive knowledge of what pupils know and can do.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils know what the next steps are in their learning because teachers set them clear targets. This helps pupils to take responsibility for part of their own learning. A particularly strong and effective example of how the school promotes this well was observed in Year 6, where pupils wrote their own personalised targets for improving their written work and referred to them while composing responses to poetry.
- Work in lessons is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Teachers often set challenging tasks which require pupils to concentrate fully and show resilience to achieve their objectives. In the most effective lessons, planning takes very good account of where pupils have shown that they need extra time or support to practise their skills and consolidate their understanding.
- Teaching ensures that learning proceeds at a brisk pace. Pupils' learning is often reviewed at key points in the lesson. This helps pupils to remain focused, alert and receptive to new ideas. In most classes, pupils have opportunities during lessons to contribute to decisions about what and how they will learn. However, this is not done consistently well across the school. Good practice, such as when Year 4 and Year 5 pupils decided on the 'success criteria' for their written English work, does not get shared enough between teachers through discussion and observation.
- Teachers direct the work of other adults effectively. This helps to ensure that pupils who learn more slowly or have special educational needs receive appropriate, well-planned support. Teachers and other adults check pupils' understanding thoroughly by asking well-structured questions and give good quality verbal feedback to help pupils correct mistakes or overcome

misunderstandings.

- When marking pupils' work, teachers provide helpful written comments. These clearly identify how the work could be made better. However, teachers do not consistently provide pupils with examples of how they might do this. Pupils are not always given time in lessons to read and respond to teachers' written feedback. Teachers do not consistently follow up their marking to check that it has helped pupils to improve their knowledge and understanding.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils attend school regularly and on time. They enjoy coming to school. They say they feel safe at school and parents, carers and staff strongly agree.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. In lessons and around the school, pupils' behaviour towards staff and other adults is often exemplary. This typically allows lessons to proceed without disruption. However, pupils do not always treat each other with the same degree of courtesy and respect. In a few lessons, the behaviour of younger pupils is not managed effectively enough to ensure that they remain on task and focus well on learning throughout every lesson.
- Pupils have an understanding of bullying and discrimination which is good for their age and level of development. The school effectively fosters good relations between pupils to help ensure that any incidences of bullying are extremely rare and dealt with immediately.
- There have been no racist incidents in recent years. Pupils are clear that where unkind words occasionally pass between individuals, they are never based on someone's personal characteristics. Good modelling by staff and effective personal and social education ensure that the school is effective in tackling discrimination.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher has used her checks on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching to plan and implement improvements well. School leaders' plans for continued development are robust and based on an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The small staff team understands the importance of, and is committed to, on-going improvement at the school.
- Training for teachers and other staff has been well focused on improvement priorities. It has been instrumental, for example, in improving pupils' learning and progress in writing. Teachers have diligently put their new learning into practice so that pupils now regularly produce good quality extended writing in a range of subjects. Improvements in mathematics have been secured through better quality assessment as a result of working collaboratively with staff at other schools.
- Recent focus on addressing the underachievement of some pupils has led to improved involvement of parents and carers. Staff have, for example, held structured conversations with parents and carers about the difficulties their children experience in school. As a result, many of these pupils have become more confident and their engagement in lessons has improved.
- The range of subjects and topics that pupils study is well matched to their interests and preferences. Teachers make good use of the rural environment around the school to motivate and enthuse pupils.
- Provision for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, the school participates in many sporting events that improve pupils' opportunities to mix socially with those from a more diverse range of backgrounds. Their understanding of different cultures is enhanced through links with a school in Kenya.
- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare meet current requirements.
- The local authority has provided appropriate levels of support to the school as it has developed.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a thorough understanding of the school's main strengths and areas for development. Governors are fully aware of the quality of teaching in different classes and for different subjects. They maintain their skills and ensure that new governors understand their roles and responsibilities by attending appropriate training courses. Governors appropriately challenge school leaders about the school's performance based on their rigorous and careful examination of school data and the information obtained through their own visits to the school. The governing body has ensured that decisions about teachers' salary progression have been appropriate and based rigorously upon their performance in the classroom and in leadership roles.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118401
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	405766

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	120
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Claire Collighan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Penelope Day
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24–25 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01227 722235
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