

Priestley Primary School

Prince Charles Drive, Calne, Wiltshire SN11 8TG

Inspection dates 28–29 November 2013

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' attainment is well above national levels in Year 6, with an increasing number working at above-average Levels 5 and 6 in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good. In lessons pupils are interested and actively involved in purposeful activities within a calm and respectful environment.
- Pupils make good progress from low starting points in Reception.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium make progress that is equally good as that of other pupils.
- Marking is thorough and helps pupils understand how well they are doing and how to improve.
- Behaviour of the pupils is good. Pupils behave well in and out of lessons and say they enjoy coming to Priestley and feel safe at all times.
- Strong and determined leadership from the headteacher, leadership team and the governing body has ensured that good standards of teaching have been maintained over a sustained period.
- Teachers successfully plan for classes of mixed ability and provide a broad and interesting range of topics and activities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although they are improving, the levels of attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are below the national average.
- Pupils' attendance has been below the national average in recent years.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 11 lessons and one whole-school assembly. This included four joint lesson observations with the headteacher. All staff were observed teaching.
- The inspector heard pupils from Years 2 and 3 read individually and observed the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they represent).
- Meetings were held with the assistant headteacher, the deputy headteacher, senior members of staff, subject leaders, a group of pupils, the special educational needs coordinator and the Chair of the Governing Body.
- A telephone call was made to the local authority representative.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence which included the school's improvement plan, the school's data for tracking the progress and attainment of individual pupils and specific groups, the school's checks on how well it is doing, curriculum and lesson plans, and governing body documentation.
- The inspector also examined the work in a wide range of pupils' books.
- Informal discussions with parents took place at the beginning of the school day and the 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered. Responses from 15 staff questionnaires were also reviewed.
- During the inspection, pupils' behaviour was observed, both inside and outside the classroom, and the school's safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- The inspector also took the opportunity to observe pupils at break, at lunchtime and throughout the school day.
- The school operates a family breakfast club which was observed as part of the inspection.

Inspection team

Mark Anderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Information about this school

- Priestley is smaller than the average-sized primary school, although numbers have increased significantly this year. The school is situated near to the centre of Calne.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The pupils are taught in seven classes, one for each year group.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, children with a parent in the armed services and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported through school action is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or through statements of special educational needs is significantly above the national average.
- 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?

- Raise pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, particularly in writing, by:
 - developing pupils' skills in writing longer and more effective sentences by ensuring that they are provided with frequent opportunities to improve their literary skills and to complete longer pieces of writing successfully, including when working in other subject areas.
- Improve the rates of attendance by:
 - developing and sharing with parents a robust and detailed policy concerning the authorisation of non-medical absence which incorporates appropriate sanctions.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Over the last three years progress and attainment throughout Key Stage 2 has been good, and often outstanding. Pupils leave Year 6 with levels of attainment in English and mathematics well above the national average. An above-average proportion of pupils achieve the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics.
- The great majority of children join Priestley with skills and knowledge well below the levels typical for their age, notably in their language and communication skills. They make good progress in Reception and Years 1 and 2 and start to 'catch up' from very low starting points.
- The proportion of pupils making good progress during Key Stage 2 is well above the national average.
- In recent years pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been below the national average in reading and writing but above in mathematics. Development in writing in Key Stage 1 is not yet strong enough. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop extended writing skills, as many tasks require only short written answers.
- However, the school's progress data provides evidence of improved progress in both reading and writing in Key Stage 1 during the second half of last year and the current academic year. This is confirmed by lesson observations, scrutiny of work and hearing pupils read.
- Pupils' progress is carefully checked throughout the school and the staff have accurate and detailed knowledge of how individual pupils and different groups are doing.
- A below-average proportion of Year 1 pupils reached the required standard in the most recent phonics screening check. The school has addressed this issue and has made significant improvements to the teaching of reading and phonics, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- The accurate pupil tracking data used by the school to monitor performance shows that all pupils at the school are making good progress. This is especially the case for those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding and for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, many of whom are making accelerated progress from their individual starting points. This is secured by well-focused support and interventions delivered by teachers and teaching assistants, ensuring equality of opportunity. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make progress in line with that of their peers.
- The more able pupils make at least good progress in a variety of well-focused activities which provide demanding work that engages their interest. This level of challenge was seen in a Year 6 history lesson when pupils were analysing the discrimination levelled against the Jewish people in Nazi Germany.
- Almost all of the pupils take great pride in both the content and presentation of their work in all subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching enables pupils with a wide range of abilities to make good progress and learn successfully. Teachers make sure that most lessons are lively, interesting and interactive. There is a genuine enthusiasm for learning which was highly evident at the end of a Year 5 mathematics lesson when pupils wanted to continue with their work on fractions and did not want to go out to break!
- The great majority of teaching observed during the inspection was good, and teachers make sure they use a range of different teaching strategies to maintain pupils' focus on their learning and instil a sense of urgency so that little time is wasted.
- Staff manage behaviour in the classroom extremely effectively. Pupils are attentive and the transition from one activity to another is calm and well supervised.
- In the best lessons, teachers' strong subject knowledge enables them to ask searching questions which demand extended answers from pupils and so make them think.
- Lessons in Key Stage 1 do not always provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills. Expectations of the quality and quantity of written work are not always high enough, therefore the level of writing is not as high as in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Practical activities are carefully planned to cover all areas of learning, both indoors and outdoors. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and those children choose for themselves. During the inspection children were observed totally absorbed in creating very individual 'winter' paintings, often using a very 'hands-on' approach!
- The staff show a determination to continue to improve their classroom practice and are willing to take on new ideas, systems and methods. For example, a new mathematics curriculum has been embraced with much enthusiasm by adults and pupils alike and has brought mathematics to life. All the teachers work well together as colleagues and are always supportive of each other. There are now more teaching assistants and their contribution to the pupils' learning has significantly improved since the previous inspection.
- In a few lessons some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve, which can inhibit the pupils' progress.
- The quality of marking is consistently good and there are many examples where pupils are successfully following up on the guidance offered by their teachers.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are a genuine strength at Priestley. There is a strong commitment to developing every pupil's self-esteem and confidence.
- Almost every parent who completed Parent View or spoke to the inspector felt that their children were taught well.
- The staff are willing to go the extra mile. This was demonstrated during the recent residential trip for Years 5 and 6 when staff enthusiastically joined in with their pupils' 'high wire' experiences!
- The high quality of the classroom displays, which include a great deal of the pupils' work, reflects the pride and priority the school places on developing its stimulating learning environment.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and friendly and the vast majority of pupils are keen to learn and do their best in the classroom. No disruptive behaviour was observed during the inspection and pupils work very well together in pairs and small groups.
- The school prides itself on providing a welcoming, family atmosphere which is child-friendly and nurturing. Priestley places a strong emphasis on being an inclusive school and this is exemplified by the whole-school trips to destinations such as the recent visit to the Fleet Air Arm Museum.
- Pupils enjoy good relationships with each other and with their teachers, and say that the adults are easy to talk to and are interested in what they have to say.
- Pupils understand different types of bullying, such as those connected to different cultures and races, name calling and cyber bullying, but think it rarely happens at Priestley. During the inspection a local community police officer was visiting Reception to explain how to keep safe in a variety of situations.
- The school environment and premises have been steadily improved in recent times and are spacious and secure. The introduction of the 'wildlife area' has been a particularly valuable addition to the facilities.
- The school's behavioural policies are understood by all pupils and applied consistently. The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Everyone at Priestley is given an equal opportunity to succeed. The school's behaviour records confirm that incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with effectively.
- Parents feel that their children are kept safe and are happy at school. This was confirmed by all parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) or who spoke to the inspector.
- Older pupils are keen to take on positions of responsibility, such as peer mediators and first aid monitors, and play an active role in the life of the school. Pupils' views and opinions are voiced effectively through the school council.
- Pupils from all year groups get on well together and the older pupils look out for their younger peers. Staff voiced a positive opinion regarding pupils' conduct and general attitudes.
- Rates of attendance have been below the national average in recent years. However, the school has put robust policies into place to ensure improved attendance which have already begun to have an impact. There is scope to work more closely with parents.
- The older pupils have spacious playground areas for break time but the playground for the younger pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 is sometimes rather crowded. This has been the result of the increase in numbers and the school is putting arrangements in place to address this issue.
- The family breakfast club is well attended and provides the opportunity for parents and pupils to begin the school day together.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and board of governors provide strong leadership and are ambitious for the school's further development and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
- The school's checks on how well it is doing are accurate, reflective and forward-looking. This reflection and transparency is summed up by one of the school's maxim's, 'Mistakes help us to learn.'
- Teachers and all parents who spoke to the inspector or completed the online questionnaire think that senior leaders provide effective leadership and management across all areas of the school. In recent years, the local authority has, rightly, recognised that Priestley has only required 'light-touch' support.
- The school improvement plan has realistic goals, and targets the improvement of academic standards, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- The school's leadership is rightly aware of the need to raise attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. Strategies and new staffing arrangements are already in place to achieve this goal. The need to improve attendance is also one of the school's priorities and this school year has seen a far more robust approach which has seen a reduced pattern of absence. The school acknowledges that the leadership needs to share with parents a detailed attendance policy.
- Effective improvements in whole-school and year-group planning have recently been put in place to coordinate and link the curriculum more closely across all year groups and further accelerate the progress of all pupils.
- In recent years the school has grown, both in terms of its reputation and in numbers of pupils on roll, and this is evidence of the capacity for further improvement at Priestley. For the first time in a number of years the school has seven separate year-group classes and a real sense of urgency to continue to improve is established.
- Performance management and staff appraisal systems ensure that teachers are accountable for their pupils' progress. Information gathered from lesson observations and the analysis of progress data are used to decide teachers' performance targets, salaries and promotion.
- The school's leaders identify and swiftly respond to any concerns regarding child welfare. Safeguarding arrangements comply with statutory requirements.
- The curriculum provides many opportunities for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and understanding. For example, a Year 2 lesson that was observed really empowered all the pupils to think and reflect on a wide range of positive and negative feelings.
- Data on pupils' attainment and progress is accurately examined and recorded. Half-termly meetings are scheduled to discuss individual pupils' progress and target any pupils not achieving expected progress, and to promptly provide appropriate support.
- The most recent school parental questionnaire was extremely positive regarding all aspects of the school's performance. This was supported by opinions expressed by the parents who were spoken to during the inspection or who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The school offers many after-school and lunchtime clubs to extend the pupils' range of experiences. These are well attended and include cooking, lacrosse, Tae Kwon-Do, Forest School, tag rugby and French.
- There are many opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's education and the Parents' Association is very active and involved in the life of the school.
- The additional primary school sports funding has been well targeted to extend the pupils' sports opportunities and to further their understanding of how to stay healthy and the importance of doing so. Pupils say that they really enjoy all their outdoor games, activities and learning at Priestley.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors visit the school regularly and they have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and how Priestley's performance compares with that of other schools. They have been effective in both challenging and supporting the headteacher and senior staff. They

understand the systems for performance management and the links between performance and progression up the salary scale. They ensure that all statutory requirements, including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils, are met. They carefully monitor the school's finances, including how the pupil premium is allocated and its impact on pupil achievement. Governors undertake regular training to keep up to date with local and national initiatives and to develop their skills. They play a strategic role in realising the long-term ambitions of Priestley.

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	126254
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	433888

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Richardson
Headteacher	Andrew Marsh-Ballard
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 November 2010
Telephone number	01249 812608
Fax number	01249 815573
Email address	head@priestley.wilts.sch.uk

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