

Priestthorpe Primary School

Mornington Road, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 4JS

Inspection dates

12–13 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school has made rapid improvement since its previous inspection. The vision and drive of the headteacher, supported by energetic and enthusiastic staff, have created a positive place for pupils to learn.
- Effective systems and procedures are consistent throughout the school. New teachers have received a high standard of professional guidance and this has resulted in good-quality teaching and improved pupils' achievement.
- Progress is strong across a range of subjects, but is slower in reading for older pupils.
- Teachers' checks on pupils' progress identify gaps in knowledge to plan lessons as well as catch-up sessions. These have been particularly helpful for disadvantaged pupils.
- The recently formed governing body has quickly got to grips with the school's strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning and recognises the improvements that have been made.
- Leadership has been strengthened by the addition of new leaders to promote further improvement, although some roles are in an early stage of development.
- Leaders have ambitious and realistic plans in place for further improvement. Action planning is developing to ensure that it is as effective as possible.
- The behaviour of the pupils is good. Pupils are polite, listen attentively and focus well when working. There are good relationships between adults and pupils.
- The school puts a high priority on pupils' welfare. Attendance has improved and is good. Pupils are proud of their school and say they feel safe – confident that staff will deal with their concerns.
- Good provision in the early years means that children's learning gets off to a flying start. From the beginning, the youngest children are confident and enjoy school; they are well prepared for Year 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils reach higher standards in reading, by:
 - providing pupils with good quality texts so they are more ambitious when choosing books and learn to appreciate a range of authors
 - developing pupils' comprehension skills so that they can read, understand and talk about a text in depth
 - giving pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their reading skills
 - teaching pupils library skills
 - training teachers to teach reading to older pupils.
- Strengthen leadership and management, by:
 - developing the skills and expertise of new leaders
 - writing school action plans which clearly set out how targets will be achieved and what resources are needed.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and her senior leaders have established a positive 'can do' attitude in pupils and school staff. Leaders have high expectations for the quality of teaching. They require classrooms to be well organised and there is a consistent approach to the school's policies and procedures. Along with good support for less experienced teachers, outcomes for pupils have improved.
- The leadership team has been strengthened with the appointment of new people in key roles who are leading the school forward in their different subjects. New leaders are enthusiastic and willing with good ideas to improve the quality of learning. However, some of them lack the experience in leading their subject to be fully effective.
- Pupils leave key stage 1 as competent readers but progress slows up for older pupils. The school has introduced several initiatives to improve the achievement of older readers, some of which are making a difference. The classrooms and school library are attractive places to be and enjoy a book. Parents and carers are invited into classrooms first thing to read with their children. While these changes have resulted in pupils' enjoyment of reading, the choice of books is limited and pupils tend to choose an 'easy read' rather than tackling a more challenging text. Pupils' understanding of how a library works is weak.
- Professional development to develop weaker teaching has been effective and teachers value the support they have received from school. The school's leadership is resourceful in using support from other schools as well as consultants to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This means the school has an accurate view of its own effectiveness and has been instrumental in improving outcomes for pupils.
- The school's development plan sets out a path to improvement with ambitious but realistic targets for pupils' achievement. Although plans identify things to do that should raise the quality of teaching it is not always clear how these actions are to be achieved or what resources are needed. This makes it difficult for leaders and governors to evaluate the effectiveness of changes so that they provide good value for money.
- The leadership team has monitored and evaluated teachers' performance. Performance management targets are clearly linked to pupils' progress and attainment. Support has been given where teaching is weaker and this has had a marked impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- There has been some turbulence in staffing since the school's previous inspection. The present staff bring renewed energy and enthusiasm which is reflected in the pupils' attitudes to learning. Senior leaders have introduced tight systems and structures to support new and less experienced teachers. These are consistently upheld throughout the school and provide the pupils with the security to learn and make good progress.
- The school curriculum is broad and pupils learn across a range of subjects. Previous, weaker teaching has not always meant that all subjects are taught in enough depth and some older pupils have gaps in knowledge, for example in geography. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy science but would like to do more experiments. The newly appointed science leader is already restructuring the teaching of science and

introducing a more practical approach to the subject so pupils can achieve well in this subject.

- Lessons, assemblies and visits promote effective reflection on faith, culture and personal choices. Pupils show respect for people from all backgrounds and faiths and have a good understanding of British values. They have a thorough understanding of the importance of rules. They are well informed about the democratic process and can relate that to the procedures in school such as voting for the 'VIPs' or members of the school council. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school has created a safe culture to protect its pupils and so pupils feel protected. All staff have a comprehensive induction in safeguarding and this is emphasised throughout the school's work as well as in lessons. As a result, pupils feel safe in school and nearly all parents agree.
- Leaders have used the pupil premium funding to provide extra teaching and welfare support for disadvantaged pupils, some of whom also have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Mini teaching sessions before the introduction of a new mathematics topic, for example, gives pupils confidence and helps those who need to catch up. Both disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have an individual learning passport which sets out what they need to do to make progress and the provision that the school will make. This focused support helps these pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- The primary schools sports funding has been used effectively to pay for specialist coaches with a high level of expertise. As a result, teachers and staff who supervise at lunchtime have improved their skills to deliver good-quality physical education (PE) lessons and provide structured physical play during breaktimes. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities so that pupils can participate in more sports and represent the school in competitions.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is good.
- The recently formed governing body has brought about a sharper focus in holding the senior leaders to account and challenging the headteacher.
- Governors have grasped a good understanding about the quality of teaching across the school and are committed to ensuring that staff they appoint provide value for money.
- Governors understand that the progress pupils make should be the main driver when awarding pay increases for teachers and the headteacher. They are fully prepared to challenge underperformance where teaching has not been good and have rejected pay increase requests that are not warranted.
- Governors can talk about how well different groups of pupils are doing across the school and where improvements need to be made. Governors are well informed about when the progress of pupils is not as good as it should be, so the school can eradicate any barriers that stop these pupils from learning.
- Governors are aware that disadvantaged pupils have not always achieved as well as other pupils and can explain the support and resources that are now in place for this group and which are starting to make an impact.
- Governors are fully conversant with their statutory duties for safeguarding; the school's systems for safeguarding pupils are effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and safeguarding is a high priority in the school. The school works closely with external agencies and parents where appropriate so that pupils are well supported and feel safe.
- Pupils' attendance is good and the school follows up absences to make sure that no pupil is away from school unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Teachers and pupils are aware of the school's procedures for safeguarding. Training for staff is up to date and they are aware of their obligations in preventing radicalisation and extremism. The school is keen to give pupils the opportunity to go on school trips and plans these with detailed risk assessments so that pupils are safe at all times.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have benefited from some good-quality training to improve their teaching, which is now good. Pupils concentrate in lessons because they understand the expectations for behaviour and conduct. When pupils are working in a group or in pairs, their discussion is meaningful and focused on their work so they gain understanding and knowledge from each other as well as the teacher.
- Teachers use information technology which engages the pupils' interests and motivates them to learn. In a geography lesson, pupils were excited by their research of 'wild weather', using the internet as well as atlases to gain information. They were able to explain in some detail the nature of weather such as tornados and hurricanes.
- The teaching of mathematics is a particular strength because it is clearly structured so pupils learn step by step. Young pupils are able to tackle simple mathematical problems and apply their basic number skills at an early age. Older pupils are able to record their mathematical reasoning and show some mastery of the subject as well as tackle an open-ended problem which demands some creative thinking.
- The teaching of reading in key stage 2 is not as strong. Pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to improve their reading skills once they can decode the words. Teachers have not paid enough attention in providing suitable texts which challenge readers so that pupils can discuss a book in depth and develop an opinion about an author's style.
- The progress that pupils are making is checked frequently and any gaps in their understanding are planned into lessons. Teachers' marking in books provides good feedback and points to improve. In mathematics, this has been effective in getting pupils to explain their mathematical reasoning and accelerating progress in this subject.
- The high expectations for presentation, handwriting and accurate spelling feature in teachers' marking across a range of subjects. Pupils' books show that they are able to write across a range of subjects to the same high standard as they do in English. This has contributed to some good outcomes in phonics for the younger pupils as well as pupils' ability to use spelling, grammar and punctuation in key stage 2.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school's website offers parents good support and links to guide them in keeping their children safe when using the internet.
- School events such as 'stay and play' sessions or 'knit and natter' have been held to reach out to those parents who find it difficult to support their children in school. There is a strong commitment by the school to ensure the well-being of the most vulnerable pupils and their families so these pupils can achieve well.
- Funding is used to provide opportunities for extra-curricular clubs and trips for pupils who would otherwise not get the chance to participate in out-of-school activities; this is having a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. During a family assembly, a young pupil described procedures to exit the school safely in an emergency. Pupils are very well informed about safety when using the internet and how to deal with bullying if it occurs.
- Pupils were clear that people had a right to make different life choices and hold different views. They understand that people have a different culture or religion and that these should be respected. They are well prepared to develop into good citizens in a tolerant and diverse Britain.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good, they have a positive attitude to their learning and this is reflected in their good attendance and their focus during lessons. They are well mannered and courteous. They listen well to the adults and their peers, and show respect for the views of others.
- The school is a calm and ordered place to work and play. Lunchtimes in family groups mean that pupils of mixed ages enjoy a meal together in a quieter environment and older pupils take responsibility for younger pupils.
- Pupils are confident in the school's systems to sort out any problems they have. Pupils have good relationships with each other and with the adults. They have a good understanding of bullying, including any related to gender or race. They are knowledgeable about the use of language which could be hurtful to others and explained 'zip it' to the inspection team – something they had learned to stop spreading unpleasant rumours.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In Year 1, pupils achieve well in phonics when compared to others nationally. By the end of key stage 1, pupils are achieving in line with or better than the national average. In lessons, pupils enjoy learning their sounds and they make rapid progress.
- At the end of key stage 2, standards are broadly the same as the national average in mathematics and writing. Pupils' attainment in reading is lower and they make slower progress when measured from their starting points in key stage 1. However, recent improvements in the teaching of reading are now making a difference. Standards of

reading in key stage 2 are now nearer to where they should be.

- Pupils of all abilities are now making good progress in writing and by the time they reach key stage 2 they are able to write confidently for different audiences. Pupils' good progress in mathematics is evident in their books and most-able pupils are now mastering the subject in greater depth.
- In other subjects such as science, pupils show a good understanding of scientific facts but are less experienced in designing and carrying out an experiment to investigate a line of enquiry.
- Pupils say they enjoy a range of subjects such as history, PE, and information and communication technology. Their enjoyment is reflected in their good progress in these subjects. Previous weaker teaching means that some older pupils have come through the school with a patchy knowledge of some subjects, such as geography. Pupils' sketch books show some inconsistency in standards but they have produced some high-quality art work with a visiting artist and pupils are rightly proud of these achievements.
- While the attainment of disadvantaged pupils has been broadly the same as the national average in writing and mathematics, like their peers in school, they make slower progress in reading. The school's improvements in the teaching of reading including daily reading sessions and the teaching of comprehension skills are now starting to make a difference and speed up progress for all pupils, including the disadvantaged.
- Extra guidance in groups with a clear plan for improvement in their individual learning passports, as well as good support in lessons by skilled teaching assistants, means that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Observations during the inspection showed this group of pupils to be well integrated and confident in lessons.
- The most able pupils achieve well and this is because work is pitched at the right level and teachers have high expectations. In mathematics, pupils are often challenged by open-ended questions which require considerable thought and application of their mathematical skills. In reading, they choose more advanced books but the choice is often limited to short texts which mean there is not enough scope for them to read a range of authors or discuss a text in depth.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision, which combines the school Nursery and the Reception class, gets the children off to a good start where they happily learn and play together. Parents are welcomed in the morning and children settle well because they are attracted to the rich variety of activities. The unit offers a safe and stimulating place to work and learn.
- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge broadly typical of their age. The quality of teaching and high expectations result in children making good progress where most children achieve a good level of development for their age when they leave the Reception class. They are well equipped for key stage 1.
- The reading areas are attractive places to share a book. Even the very youngest children enjoy reading in the 'reading den' and their interest is encouraged by observing the older children developing good reading habits. The teaching of phonics is

effective and children join in enthusiastically with the actions and songs to learn their sounds.

- Children have good relationships with adults as well as with each other; routines and expectations are established from the start. Children's behaviour is good in the classroom and in the outside area. They take responsibility for their own safety – making sure that they have their crash helmets on when they ride the bikes. They take great delight in helping each other and taking turns. At snacktime, children confidently help themselves and eat appropriately without the need for adult supervision.
- They are able to choose their own activities and equipment – selecting and managing simple tools to dissect and scoop out the insides of a pumpkin. They are able to sustain concentration for considerable time because they are so engrossed in their play; for example, making a trap to catch the big bad wolf – following the maps they had drawn earlier. Children show imagination in their play; for example, pretending to have skis on their feet which they made from the building blocks.
- Children communicate well with each other and the adults around them. They patiently went through instructions with the lead inspector, explaining how the 'mobile phones worked' and showing perseverance until she managed to connect with each of the children and speak to them in turn.
- The basic skills of mathematics and language are well planned within the classroom as well as in the outdoor areas. Numbers and labels signpost activities. Pupils enjoyed practising their mathematical skills as they counted spider legs – working out that two lots of four legs made a total of eight. They wrote their own name labels for a display of their 'marvellous models'.
- The leadership in the early years has improved the quality of learning for these young children. Adults make frequent checks on what the children can do and what they need to learn next. This is particularly evident in the activities which are provided for them to choose and practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills. Challenges are provided for children to solve problems, act out in various role play areas, or construct something using a range of equipment.
- Teaching is good and the needs of individual children, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are well met. Adults use questioning well to stimulate interest and model good language and clear speech.
- Relationships with parents are good and they make some contributions to their child's learning profile. The home-school activities provide a good way for parents to work with their children on a specific task. The results such as a drawing or model are displayed, photographed and put into a book for children to read and enjoy.
- The welfare and safety of the youngest children are given a high priority in the early years. Staff are skilled and responsive to children's individual needs. Good links with external agencies and specialists support children with specific needs so they are motivated learners, able to participate fully in school life. Transition arrangements are good; staff make home visits prior to children starting. All health and safety requirements are met; the unit is a safe place for children.

School details

Unique reference number	107257
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10019715

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Clark
Headteacher	Christina Gunning
Telephone number	01274 564879
Website	www.priestthorpe.eschools.co.uk
Email address	office@priestthorpe.bradford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 October 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Priestthorpe is an average-sized primary school.
- Nearly half of the teachers are new in post since the school's previous inspection.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school has a part-time nursery which opens in the mornings.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited lessons in all classrooms, some with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors observed small groups of pupils being taught.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' work, heard pupils read and spoke to pupils about their enjoyment of school and their opinions of behaviour and safety.
- The inspectors held discussions with staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- A wide range of school documents were taken into account as part of the evidence, including: the school's self-evaluation; its school development plan; behaviour and attendance records; governing body documents; and documents relating to the monitoring of teachers' performance.
- The views of 52 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account, as well as discussions with parents.

Inspection team

Karen Heath, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lesley Bowyer

Ofsted Inspector

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