

Inspection of Preston Primary School

Back Lane, Preston, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 7UJ

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Preston Primary School. They embody the school's values of love, learn, aspire. They, and their parents, appreciate that the school is a close-knit family through which everyone supports each other. For example, older pupils value the chance they have to buddy children in Reception.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They work incredibly hard throughout the school day. They approach lessons with enthusiasm and are eager to learn. This helps them to reach the high expectations the school has of them. Pupils show high levels of respect and kindness towards adults and each other. This creates an atmosphere where pupils feel happy and safe.

A wide range of activities increases pupils' confidence and helps them to learn about the world around them. Opportunities to learn from people from different faiths teaches pupils about the world in which they live. Pupils benefit from the chances the school plans for them to learn about different careers. This helps to give them aspirations for their futures. A range of clubs, such as coding, dodgeball and drama, helps to develop pupils' talents and interests. Carefully chosen trips, linked to the curriculum, such as the geography walk around Preston village, help to make the curriculum experiences memorable for pupils.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has designed a curriculum that is ambitious for what pupils will achieve. Leaders have thought carefully about how to place this knowledge into a logical order. This helps pupils to build on their knowledge over time. For example, in mathematics, pupils learn about algebra in Year 5. This helps to prepare them for the more challenging mathematical problems the school expects them to solve in Year 6.

Teachers skilfully pose questions to check how well pupils have learned this curriculum. This helps them to identify any gaps in knowledge pupils have. They then use this information to adjust their teaching and close these gaps. This helps pupils to access new learning. The school encourages pupils to reflect on their learning. This helps them to become independent, resilient learners.

The school values inclusivity highly. Staff know the needs of their pupils well. They pay particular attention to adapting activities and resources so that all pupils can access the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) enjoy school and achieve well.

The school teaches early readers effectively, which begins in Reception. Pupils learn how to blend sounds together to read new words. Books are carefully matched to sounds, so pupils blend words with increasing confidence. Pupils who require support are quickly identified. Well-trained staff help these pupils to become more accurate and fluent readers. Pupils enjoy reading. In key stage 2, pupils encounter a

diverse range of texts in English lessons. However, as pupils move through the school, they do not have sufficient opportunities to read a variety of rich and inspiring books. This means some pupils do not read enough ambitious texts that stimulate their interests or deepen their reading knowledge.

Children in Reception learn well across the early years curriculum. Staff use resources well to help children secure their knowledge. For example, they use props to help them learn to count. Staff use precise questions to broaden children's vocabulary. Staff build effective working relationships with parents so that children become confident and independent in preparation for key stage 1.

Pupils love coming to school and attend regularly. They behave incredibly well during lessons and on the playground. Staff are consistent in how they teach pupils how to behave. As a result, any instances of poor behaviour are extremely rare.

The school has planned its personal, social and health education curriculum with care. Pupils develop a secure knowledge of healthy relationships at an age-appropriate level. They know how to keep themselves safe online.

The school constantly seeks to find ways of developing the education and experiences of its pupils. The Pupil Parliament has an important voice in how the school is run by, for instance, developing the school's code of conduct and rewards system.

Staff work together to identify what is working well and what can be improved. They receive high-quality training, which helps them to become better teachers, teaching assistants and leaders. This also helps them to manage their own workload and well-being.

Governors regularly visit the school to check on how well leaders' plans are being delivered. They check that pupils are safe.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils in key stage 2 do not have sufficient opportunities to read a broad and ambitious range of texts outside the English curriculum. This means some pupils do not routinely read texts that stimulate their interests or deepen their knowledge of reading. The school should ensure that pupils have access to a wide range of rich and ambitious texts and books.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	117403
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10255019
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-chairs of governing body	Jo Wilde and Gillan Ide
Headteacher	Jacomina Luitingh
Website	www.prestonjmi.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 February 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Preston Primary School is a small rural primary school with a Reception class and three mixed-age classes: Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6.
- This is a Church of England school and part of the Diocese of St. Albans. The most recent inspection of its religious character under section 48 of the Education Act took place on 17 October 2017.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects and visited a range of lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of leaders, including the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the local authority and the diocese, as well as members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school. They met with groups of pupils to discuss behaviour in the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector considered the 33 responses and 26 free-text responses received during the inspection to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also considered the nine responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 22 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Steve Woodley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lynda Walker

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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