



Preston Park Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101510
LEA Brent LEA
Inspection number 276528
Inspection dates 9 November 2005 to 10 November 2005
Reporting inspector Jane Wotherspoon HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	College Road
School category	Community		Wembley
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Middlesex HA9 8RJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0208 9043602
Number on roll	669	Fax number	0208 9048745
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Jackie Hammond
Date of previous inspection	20 October 2003	Headteacher	Mr John Redpath

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four inspectors.

Description of the school

Preston Park is very much larger than most primary schools. It serves an area with a large minority ethnic population that is very mixed. Almost half the pupils are of Asian background, and a quarter is Black African or Caribbean. A high proportion, around two-thirds, speaks English as their second language. Ninety pupils are from families seeking asylum. The proportion of pupils having free school meals is broadly average, as is the proportion with special educational needs. Many three-year-olds start school with skills and knowledge lower than expected for their age; the proportion has been rising in recent years. An increasing number of pupils join the school part way through their education. There have been significant staff changes over the last two years. Ten teachers, including seven new to teaching, joined the school at the start of this term.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Preston Park is a satisfactory and improving school that gives satisfactory value for money. The school's own judgement of its effectiveness as 'good' reflects accurately the progress it has made since the last inspection, when it was judged to have serious weaknesses. Under the strong steer from the headteacher the school has the potential to become good but has not reached that level yet. This is because there are still some inconsistencies to iron out. Since the last inspection the school has tackled many areas for improvement and knows what still needs to be done. Systems for monitoring what it does, and for evaluating the impact of its work using performance data, now need to be sharper in order to refine those areas for development. The youngest pupils make a good start in the Foundation Stage. The quality of provision has improved since the last inspection and is consistently good. Provision in the rest of the school is satisfactory and pupils achieve soundly. Teaching is satisfactory with much that is good. The challenge now is to raise all teaching to a consistently good level to enable all pupils to achieve well. Many good features in the curriculum have a positive impact on pupils' personal development. Relationships are strong. The school is successful in promoting a harmonious community where pupils from all backgrounds are valued and their cultural diversity is celebrated.

What the school should do to improve further

* Bring more rigour to the existing systems for monitoring what is working well and what needs to be improved, ensuring that subject leaders and year group leaders are involved in the process* Analyse performance data more effectively to pinpoint precisely where groups of pupils could make better progress* Ensure that all teachers plan consistently to meet the wide range of learning needs in each class

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make good progress in nursery and reception and are on course to achieve expectations by the end of reception, except in language skills because many are still at an early stage of learning English. They achieve as well as other pupils once they have begun to master English. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and standards are broadly average. Reading is stronger than writing. The school is aware that boys are not doing as well as girls at this age and provides additional support. This includes small-group work and using male role-models to participate in activities with boys. Standards in mathematics are average but have been higher in previous years. Standards are above average by Year 6 with a good number of pupils working at higher levels of attainment. Achievement is satisfactory overall, but better in English and science than in mathematics. Here, data from tests show that, despite the good standards, more able pupils could be achieving even better. Some of this underachievement is a remnant of past weaknesses in teaching. However, there remains scope to increase the challenge for more able pupils in some mathematics lessons.

Some pupils, who join the school when they are older, come directly from abroad, speak little English and have had minimal schooling. Generally, these pupils make considerable progress in the time that they are in the school. Pupils with special needs have good support from teaching assistants in lessons and make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good. Attendance has improved and pupils are happy to come to school. The warm, welcoming and safe atmosphere helps pupils to feel valued and successfully supports their emotional development. Behaviour is good in lessons, and pupils say that their teachers 'want them to be the best'. Pupils have good attitudes to all aspects of school life and enjoy their learning. They feel safe. Pupils say the school is a racially harmonious community with little bullying or discrimination, but a minority of older boys do not behave as they should. Inspectors agree. Pupils follow a healthy lifestyle, through lunchtime sports activities and opportunities for healthy eating monitored by the School Nutrition Action Group. A healthy tuckshop run by the pupils helps them to develop financial awareness for the future. Pupils express their views through the school council, and make a significant contribution to the wider community, for example, by funding-raising for the recent earthquake in India and Pakistan. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. They have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and reflect on moral issues in assemblies. Extra time allocated to physical education and the good range of additional curricular activities, events and visits support social development. Cultural development is outstanding with a wide range of activities and resources to help pupils value their racially diverse community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and have improved since the last inspection. Despite many good features, teaching is not yet consistently good across all classes and year groups. In the best lessons, thoughtful planning leads to good teaching that is matched to the wide range of learners' needs. Teachers engage pupils' interests and promote their personal development as well as their skills and subject knowledge. Informative marking and feedback helps pupils to know how they can improve. However, in some lessons there is too little difference in the work given to different groups of pupils. In particular, more able pupils could be challenged further. There is a lack of variety in teaching approaches in mathematics with too much reliance on working from text books without adapting the tasks well enough for pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils sometimes spend too long practising what they already know. Adults and pupils enjoy excellent relationships. Staff make the best of the old accommodation and have developed an effective learning environment. Displays of their individual

targets for improvement set clear expectations of pupils and examples of their work celebrate their achievements.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy a range of activities that enrich the curriculum, such as visiting theatre groups, after school clubs and visits. The Ghana project is especially popular with pupils. Teachers are beginning to plan exciting units of work that link together a number of subjects into a theme, but this practice is inconsistent. In particular, computers could be used more in other subjects especially now that there are more resources and pupils' computer skills are improving. The absence of a central library restricts opportunities for research and independent learning, particularly for the more able and older pupils. Work in personal, social and health education helps pupils to understand their rights and responsibilities within the community, and the quadrangle provides a quiet place where pupils can reflect, and enjoy watching the animals. Inspectors agree with the school that enrichment activities are good but the curriculum overall is satisfactory. This is because curriculum planning does not always meet the needs of individuals or groups of learners and challenge more able pupils. However, since the last inspection, improvements in the Foundation Stage curriculum have enabled pupils to achieve well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All pupils are well supported, especially those who are vulnerable or at risk. Staff are highly committed to identifying and addressing issues quickly and sensitively. This is particularly evident in the way in which new pupils to the school are supported and in the pastoral support programmes for pupils with particular difficulties. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and reviewed regularly. Staff work very well in partnership with parents. An outstanding feature is the commitment to termly meetings between the parents, pupil, class teacher and headteacher where targets are set for literacy, mathematics and behaviour. However, some pupils say they are not sure how to achieve their targets. Links with external agencies work well to ensure that identified pupils are cared for and given guidance to help them make progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and promotes a harmonious learning environment. The leadership team has a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development. An appropriate focus on standards and achievement has led to improvement in outcomes for pupils. The school has undertaken a broad range of actions to improve the quality of care and education since the last inspection. More effective use of data is required to identify specifically where pupils could be doing

better and to sharpen the focus of areas for improvement. The school has made good progress in raising levels of attendance through a rigorous and systematic approach. That kind of rigour is needed to ensure that all actions have the greatest impact. The management team has been restructured to mirror the school's priorities. Middle managers, some of whom are new to their responsibilities, are beginning to take on a greater monitoring role. This shift in responsibility and accountability is appropriate to drive forward further improvements. Support for new staff is good and morale is high. Systems for school self-evaluation are satisfactory and beginning to take account of the views of parents and pupils. Governance is sound. The governors are supportive of the school and are developing their role in holding the school accountable.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, we have just finished inspecting your school and I am writing to tell you what we think. We were very pleased to see all the good things that you were doing in class and at other times. You made us very welcome and we very much enjoyed talking to you. A special 'thank you' to those of you who came to tell us what you think of the school.

We could see that you enjoy being at Preston Park Primary and you work hard. Your behaviour in class is good and you play well together. You take care of each other and are especially kind to those children who are new to your school. The fundraising you do and the help you give to children in need across the world is helping you to think of others and to become good citizens. We were pleased to see that you know how to keep yourselves safe, that you choose healthy food at lunchtime and join in lots of physical activities. Mr Redpath and all of the staff are working very hard to make sure that you have lots of opportunities to learn different things throughout the school day and after school. We think the Ghana project is a wonderful chance for some of you to make links with children in another country and to produce a play for younger children in the school. The adults in the school look after you well. The meetings that you have with your parents and teachers are a really good idea.

Some of you told us that the school is getting better and we agree. We have asked Mr Redpath and the staff to look more closely at what you are learning, how fast you are learning and how you might be able to learn even more. We have asked the teachers to give some of you harder work because we think you can manage it.

Best wishes

Jane Wotherspoon HMI, Lead inspector