



Preston CofE VC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123819
LEA Somerset
Inspection number 281567
Inspection dates 8 February 2006 to 9 February 2006
Reporting inspector Peter Griffiths HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Toose
School category	Voluntary controlled		Abbey Manor Park
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Yeovil, Somerset BA21 3SN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01935 474538
Number on roll	416	Fax number	01935 433549
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs L Eveleigh
Date of previous inspection	29 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr Robert M Steele

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Preston C of E VC Primary is a large school that serves its neighbouring estates of private housing. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals is well below the national average. Few pupils are from minority ethnic groups reflecting the make up of the neighbourhood.

Although there is some variation from year to year, most pupils start school with average standards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Preston Primary is a good school, though its own management team judge it to be satisfactory.

Standards and achievement are improving. The stimulating approach to early learning ensures that pupils in reception make good progress with most exceeding the early learning goals. Following a period of staff changes, pupils throughout the school are now making good progress and, with the exception of boys writing, standards are improving.

Teaching is good. Lesson planning is good resulting in teaching that fully engages the pupils. While pupils with learning difficulties are given outstanding support, the provision for higher attaining pupils is not as consistent.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher knows what needs to be done to continue improvements and is well placed to do so. The school provides good value for money.

The schools' monitoring and evaluation practices are outstanding. Classroom observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and the review of planning ensure the identification and sharing of strengths. Appropriate strategies are in place to address any issues for development.

This is a school where every child matters and this is reflected in its outstanding pastoral care and guidance for the pupils who are well cared for and feel safe. They enjoy coming to school and many take part in the wide range of lunch time and after school activities.

The school is very well summed up by a pupil, who when asked what they liked best about the school, replied, "That's hard!... (slight pause)...I think I have to say...everything!"

What the school should do to improve further

Develop the good practice that is in place in some years •so that boys in particular have more opportunities to improve the quality of their writing •to ensure that higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils of reception age make good progress because of consistently good teaching and a stimulating and appropriate approach to early learning. By the end of the year most pupils are exceeding the early learning goals in all areas of learning. Standards in Year 2 are lower due to lower attainment on entry but these pupils also continue to make good progress.

By the time they leave school, the standards reached by pupils match those expected for their age. Following a period of staff changes, pupils are now making good progress and standards are improving. This is particularly evident in written and oral communication and mathematics in Years 5 and 6. However, the quality of boys writing is not consistent across the school. The practical approach to science with a regular review of pupils' progress is proving effective at raising standards by Year 6.

The school has an inclusive ethos and the arrangements for those pupils with learning difficulties are outstanding and they achieve well. Though practice is not consistent in all years, there is some good provision for those pupils who are high attaining.

Though the introduction of rigorous assessment procedures and target setting is relatively new, pupils understand their own achievements and they know what they can do to improve. The consistent implementation of these procedures is an important contributory factor in the raising of standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The good PSHE programme enables pupils to reflect upon, understand and respond to the programme's central human values of truth, love, peace, self respect and non violence.

Pupils have a good understanding of a healthy life style including the importance of eating healthily. The school encourages healthy snacks in the tuck shop which the pupils help to run. All pupils are wholeheartedly enthusiastic towards sport. Swimming for all junior aged pupils is well organised and receives very good parental support.

Pupils participate in a wide range of community and charity events. Money raised to buy a donkey and five goats to help the developing world shows their genuine concern for others. Pupils know that their views are valued. The newly formed school council is enabling them to make a real contribution to improving the school.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. Their behaviour is very good and they show excellent attitudes towards each other and all aspects of school life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of both teaching and learning is good and, as a result, pupils show very positive attitudes to their work and make good progress. Lesson planning is extremely thorough. Teachers of parallel classes make very good use of their subject knowledge and expertise by jointly planning lessons. The resources to be used by pupils are suitably differentiated to meet their needs. All teachers make particularly good use of ICT.

The effective use of teaching assistants to work with pupils is a significant factor in enabling them to learn as well as they do. The teachers' lesson plans ensure that the assistants are well briefed to provide support where it is most needed. Pupils with learning difficulties are given outstanding support. Individual education plans are extremely well written and suitably detailed so that all staff know how to help pupils make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and suitably balanced providing a wide range of activities which are effective in promoting learning and making it fun. The school is in the process of developing cross curricular links in all subjects: currently, ICT and literacy are widely used in other subjects.

Grouping pupils by ability in mathematics and English is effective and is under constant review to ensure it achieves its key objective of raising standards. Such groups have been particularly effective in helping Year 5 and 6 pupils to develop their extended writing and mathematical skills. Supported by the rigorous use of target setting, pupils have been able to achieve at higher levels in these aspects of their learning.

A particular strength of the school is the extensive range of extra-curricular activities offered to pupils. The school boasts its own orchestra which also plays for parents and the community. The provision in sports and the swimming programme is particularly effective. Such extra-curricular activities add enjoyment and interest to many pupils' learning.

The outstanding PSHE programme helps the pupils to grow in confidence and to understand how they can make a useful contribution to their community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are outstanding. Excellent relationships exist throughout the school. Every child really does matter and staff awareness of pupils' pastoral needs is exceptional. As a result, all pupils feel very secure and well cared for and they know who to go to if they need help. Statutory requirements regarding child protection, health and safety, drug awareness and sex and relationships education are fully met.

Recent improvements in the use of assessment and target setting are helping teachers to plan the correct next steps in learning so that all pupils know how to improve their work and make good progress.

The over-whelming majority of the parents are very happy with the school and all it offers. This was clearly expressed by the parent who said, 'My child enjoys school. I am very pleased with all aspects of the school. There is a friendly, caring atmosphere and any concerns I have raised have always been dealt with immediately'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. Standards and achievement are improving. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in all aspects of the school's work. The views of pupils, parents, staff and governors have helped to shape Preston Primary as a challenging yet caring school. The headteacher and management team provide high profile, sensitive and determined leadership that is reflected in a set of plans designed to move the school forward and to lead to further improvements.

The school's monitoring and evaluation practices are outstanding. The headteacher has introduced very good procedures for monitoring as part of the performance management process. In addition, all coordinators conduct annual reviews for their subjects. As well as observing lessons, they scrutinise pupils' work and progress and look at teachers' planning. They provide feedback to individual teachers and a summary report is prepared for the headteacher and governors. This outstanding practice results in the staff sharing and celebrating success and in support and training being provided to address any issues for development.

The school has a team of well-qualified staff. The headteacher was very effective in leading the school through a period of uncertainty when a number of teachers were on long term sick leave.

Like the staff, the governors have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors are hard working and committed to the school and are focussed on achieving excellence. They provide a very good balance of challenge and support and act productively as critical friends.

The quality of the accommodation is good though a number of classes are taught in temporary buildings. Resources, including those for ICT, are good and are well used. The school provides good value for money.

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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?	2	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	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	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	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly when we visited your school. We thought you would like to know what we liked about your school and how we thought it could get even better.

What we liked about your school: •Your parents and carers are right in thinking that you go to a good school. •The standard of your work continues to improve. •Your teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to make sure that you all get the right sort of help you need to help you learn. •You show positive attitudes to your work and make good progress in lessons. •You enjoy coming to school. •You all behave very well around the school. You play nicely with your friends and speak very politely to your teachers and visitors. •You enjoy taking part in the wide range of lunch time and after school activities. •You are well cared for and feel safe. •Your headteacher runs the school well.

What we have asked your school to do now to make it even better:

•give boys more opportunities to improve the quality of their writing; •ensure that those of you with particularly high abilities are sufficiently challenged.