

# Princecroft Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126259
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	293502
<b>Inspection date</b>	2 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Diane Wilkinson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	118
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paula Slow
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carole Godfrey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2002
<b>School address</b>	Princecroft Lane Warminster BA12 8NT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01985 212704
<b>Fax number</b>	01985 219938

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Princecroft is a small primary school in which some classes have more than one year group. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language. The area close to the school is comparatively disadvantaged. Attainment on entry is below expectations. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average, significantly so in some year groups. The school has considerable links with overseas schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Princecroft is a satisfactory and improving school with strengths in some aspects of its work. Over the past few years lengthy staff absences have limited the school's ability to improve its provision which has been a concern of parents. However, since the arrival of the new headteacher last September there has been clear direction for improvement and the school is successfully addressing weaknesses in its provision and pupils' achievement. Self-evaluation is accurate allowing the school to identify exactly what needs to be done, and staff and governors are committed to moving the school forward. In particular teaching in Reception and Years 1 and 2 has improved and has raised the rate of progress for pupils in these year groups. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in Years 3 to 6 where pupils are set challenging work and practical activities which help them to do well. These strengths are not yet fully developed in Reception and Years 1 and 2.

Achievement, including for those pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities or who speak English as an additional language, is satisfactory overall. Children enter Reception with levels of skills and knowledge below those expected for their age, especially in important literacy skills. Provision and standards in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory although standards on entry to Year 1 remain below expectations. Standards at the end of Year 2 had been falling. They are now rising again due to improved teaching although they remain below average. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and reach average standards by the time they leave.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good, partly as the result of the effective programme of work which helps them understand the importance of getting on well with each other. As a result behaviour is good as are relationships throughout the school. Pupils are developing a good understanding of different cultures through the productive links with schools overseas. One parent typically wrote, 'Children are encouraged to explore how their behaviour may affect others and how they can help others, for example their fund raising for a school in Africa.' Pupils like their teachers and enjoy school although attendance is below average mainly due to a small number of poor attenders. The curriculum is satisfactory and improving. Based on a practical approach to help pupils learn easily, it is already helping to bring about good progress in the older classes. Enrichment activities, particularly the effective links with other schools and the good range of after school clubs, encourage pupils' enjoyment of school. Care, support and guidance are good so that pupils feel safe and happy in a secure and supportive environment. The relatively new systems for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress are already beginning to improve achievement. In particular the quality of marking is especially good. The school recognises that pupils need to take on more responsibility for their own learning, particularly in checking their individual targets.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. A number of subject leaders are new to their role, but where they have been in post for some time their work is effective as seen in the improved provision in English. While governors support is satisfactory overall, they are committed and fully involved in school life. In particular they have offered good support to the headteacher during the absence of senior managers.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Allow pupils to take more responsibility for their learning. In particular by regularly using their improvement targets to check how well they are doing.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that all teachers set challenging work and provide pupils with practical activities which engage their interest and help them to learn.
- Introduce further measures to encourage pupils to attend regularly.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children entering Reception have skill levels below those normally found and they are well below average in early language and literacy skills. Very few children entering the school are higher attainers. Improved provision has led to progress being satisfactory overall and good in reading. However, standards are still below expectations on entry to Year 1, especially in writing and mathematics. Although standards in reading, writing and mathematics remain below average in Years 1 and 2, improved progress, which is now satisfactory, means they are rising and more pupils are reaching average levels. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is good, especially in English, due to effective teaching. By the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are average. However, pupils' knowledge of scientific concepts is better than their investigation skills.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Moral and social development are good as the result of the effective personal, social and health education programme. Pupils behave well, get on well with each other and the school is a happy and harmonious place to be. Pupils report that bullying is rare and is always dealt with appropriately by staff. They feel safe and secure in school and recognise how to keep safe, for example when playing on playground apparatus. Cultural development, enhanced by the Vibrant Schools' project and links with schools overseas, is good. Periods for reflection in assemblies encourage satisfactory spiritual development.

Pupils enjoy school and work hard when required to do so although many younger pupils find concentration difficult. Despite the school's efforts attendance remains below average and it recognises the need to find different ways to address this. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise. They like the school's own healthy lunches although many still bring crisps for their packed lunches. Pupils' contribution to school life is satisfactory and the school council has helped develop a new behaviour policy. However pupils are keen for their views to be taken into account in other ways. Pupils' preparation for their future life is satisfactory.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

In the past, weaker aspects of teaching have slowed the rate of learning in Reception and Years 1 and 2. In particular the expectations of these pupils were not high enough and activities did not always motivate those pupils who found concentration difficult. Over the past year effective

support, which has included expertise from the local authority, has improved the quality of teaching in these year groups. It is now satisfactory and continues to improve. Throughout the school very good quality marking shows pupils how to do better. Effective behaviour management has improved the progress of the high number of pupils who find it difficult to concentrate. Reception children now have more opportunities for independent activities although on these occasions staff do not always make it clear that children need to do their very best. The good teaching in Years 3 to 6 is characterised by high expectations of what pupils can do and practical activities which help them understand easily. These features are increasingly being seen in other year groups although they are not yet consistent.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The school is developing a skills based approach which is enhancing progress although the effects of this have yet to be seen in the younger classes. Provision for personal, social and health education is effectively supporting this aspect of pupils' development. A good range of visits and visitors enhances pupils' learning and encourages their good attitudes to school. There is improving involvement with the local community and pupils enjoy visiting a local senior citizens' home. An effective range of after school clubs helps to broaden pupils' experiences and also promotes their well-being through participation in sport.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Rigorous safety checks, together with effective staff vetting arrangements and child protection procedures, ensure pupils are safe, protected and not at risk from adults. As a result they feel secure and happy in school and parents are confident in the school's good attention to their children's welfare. Vulnerable pupils and those with specific learning needs receive good support. Guidance for pupils' personal development is good. An especially good feature is the weekly personal improvement target which is used as a basis for the assembly theme. New systems to support and monitor pupils' academic progress have recently been introduced. Currently they are satisfactorily supporting progress. The marking of pupils' work gives them very good advice on how to improve. However, the school recognises pupils are not involved enough in checking on how well they are doing and identifying what they need to do next, particularly with regard to their individual improvement targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher's vision and determined focus on raising standards is helping to establish a clear direction for improvement. She is providing rigour to academic monitoring and data interpretation which has allowed the school to gain an accurate picture of how well its provision is supporting pupils' progress. As a result areas of weakness are now being successfully addressed although improvement strategies have not been in place long enough to see their full effect. Nevertheless this gives confidence that the school is securely placed to improve further. The school enjoys productive partnerships with other schools and agencies which enhance pupils' education and welfare.

Difficulties in providing a stable staff have inhibited development. In particular they have meant that new subject leaders are still developing their role in helping to monitor the school's work. This is a priority area for development. Where subject leadership is good, as in English, improvement has been more effective as is evident in the average standards Year 6 pupils reach in this subject despite their well below average starting points. While governors support is satisfactory overall they have provided good support during periods of staff change and absence. They are knowledgeable about the school's work and are improving the part they play in monitoring its effectiveness.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Princecroft Primary School, Warminster, BA12 8NT

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly and helpful. We particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their time to speak with us. You and your parents think your school is a safe and happy place to be and we agree. The school has had many different teachers recently which has made it very difficult for staff to improve things for you. However, the school is giving you a satisfactory standard of education and some things are good.

- This is what we thought was good about the school:
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress and standards are average because of the good teaching. Progress in other year groups is improving.
- You like your teachers, enjoy school and most of you work hard although some younger pupils find it difficult to concentrate in lessons.
- Behaviour is good and you get on well with each other.
- Staff take good care of you and support you well in your personal development which is good.
- Teachers help you to improve by marking your work very well.
- What we have asked your school to do now:
- Help you to keep a better check on how well you are doing and recognise how you can do even better. You can help by regularly checking your improvement targets when you have finished your work and finding out what more you need to do to improve.
- Make sure that all teachers give you activities that help you to concentrate, work hard and make good progress. You can help by always doing your best.
- Encourage all pupils to attend regularly. You can help by making sure you do.

Thank you again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

D Wilkinson Lead inspector