

Priestley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126254
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	298589
Inspection date	3 October 2007
Reporting inspector	David Curtis

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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jayne Funnell
Headteacher	Andrew Marsh-Ballard
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2000
School address	Prince Charles Drive Calne SN11 8TG
Telephone number	01249 812608
Fax number	01249 815573

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small five-class primary school. Two new teachers were appointed in September 2007. The vast majority of pupils are White British. Children begin school with standards that are below expectations. The school is recovering from a significant budget deficit, which has limited its scope for spending. The school was given a Notice to Improve at its previous inspection. It received an interim monitoring visit from one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) in February 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, which is improving rapidly. Following a year of staffing turmoil, the school is now stable and is well placed to move forward. The headteacher, supported by his colleagues, is determined to secure the progress made over the last year and to increase the pace of improvement. All recognise that the key to future success is the need to ensure consistency across the whole school, especially in teaching and learning. Significant improvements to the governing body mean that it is effective in supporting the school and it too is determined to raise standards and pupils' achievement.

Despite the difficulties of the previous year, there have been successes. Standards have improved and are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement across the school is now satisfactory. The strengths in the Foundation Stage, where provision was already good, have been maintained, although the additional needs of some boys are not always fully met and the outdoor play area is rather barren and uninspiring for young children. Teaching and learning have improved. There is no inadequate teaching and an increasing proportion is good. The school has a much greater knowledge of pupils' progress and gaps in previous learning. It is using this information successfully to set challenging targets for pupils. Importantly, pupils know their individual targets and really value these. As one said, 'Having targets makes you feel better and want to keep on improving'.

Pupils say that teaching is much better. They particularly like the way teachers use the 'smartboards' as a way of making learning much more interesting and enjoyable. Equally, they see the much improved behaviour is making lessons more fun because their learning is not interrupted by teachers dealing with disruptive pupils. Teachers' planning is much improved, particularly in meeting the needs of pupils of all abilities. Whilst teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, they are not always used effectively to support the needs of other pupils, especially in lesson introductions. The teaching of guided reading is inconsistent, and this results in some pupils making insufficient progress in lessons and over time in reading. The school's own data shows that pupils last year made less progress in reading than in writing.

Pupils enjoy school and relationships are good. They have a good understanding of the need to eat healthily and to keep fit. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay safe in school. The improving standards and achievement mean that preparation for their future economic well-being is satisfactory rather than inadequate, as it was a year ago. Pupils appreciate and value the good range of after-school clubs and the fact that they go on more educational visits.

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

As a result of good teaching and provision, children settle happily and quickly into the day-to-day life of the school. Their overall progress is good because they enjoy learning and teaching that is mainly matched well to their needs. In personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy, the progress of boys is satisfactory rather than good because they do not consistently receive sufficient additional support to meet their particular needs. Resources and indoor provision are deployed imaginatively to encourage

children to choose activities for themselves. However, outdoor provision is less good and does not give children enough exciting and imaginative choices in developing outdoor play. Leadership and management are good, with a clear focus on giving children the best possible start to school life.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the teaching of guided reading to ensure that pupils make good progress in these sessions.
- Review the use and deployment of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning more effectively.
- Improve the provision for boys and for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage.

A small proportion of 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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This represents good improvement over a year ago, when both were inadequate. The school is setting more realistic and challenging targets for pupils based on much greater accuracy in identifying gaps in previous learning. As a result, linked to improved teaching, pupils often make good progress in lessons and make the expected gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. The school identified that progress in reading was not as good as in writing.

Children's good progress in the Foundation Stage means that most meet the goals expected of them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They enjoy celebrating their own successes as well as those of their peers. In particular, pupils say that the opportunity to gain house points has made them want to work harder in lessons and act responsibly around the school. The majority of pupils come to school regularly, but despite the school's best efforts, a minority still have poor attendance. Pupils' involvement in the community is satisfactory. The school council makes a good contribution to the life of the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils say that they enjoy lessons much more because teachers make them interesting and enjoyable. Teachers share the purpose of each lesson with pupils and give them a clear understanding of what they are expected to achieve. As a result, pupils settle quickly and work sensibly and independently. Teachers show good subject knowledge and ask challenging questions. The pace of learning in most lessons is good. In lesson introductions, teaching assistants are not always deployed as effectively as they might be. Consequently, there are missed opportunities for supporting groups of pupils who need additional help in understanding

new learning. Their support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. In guided reading sessions, teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils are engaged in activities to improve their reading skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Improvements in standards and achievement have resulted from the successful focus on ensuring that activities in literacy and numeracy lessons meet the needs of all pupils. The school is aware that the next stage is to improve curricular planning further, so that pupils use their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills consistently in other subjects, especially science. The school provides a good range of after-school clubs, which promote pupils' health and fitness. It is improving its use of visits and visitors to support and enhance pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school complies with all statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils and child protection. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Their individual education plans are detailed and have clear targets for improvement. Parents feel that their children are safe and secure in school.

Pupils value the targets they are set, and in particular knowing the National Curriculum levels at which they work and their next steps. As one pupil in Year 6 said, 'It is pretty darn good that everyone is now working at least at Level 3'. Pupils' ownership of targets is not quite fully embedded across the school. This is a good example of where the school knows that greater consistency is required. As many pupils now talk about these targets at home, a number of parents expressed a wish for some 'training' on the use of targets so that they can fully support their children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, supported effectively by his colleagues and the local authority, managed successfully to bring about green shoots of recovery during a period of significant upheaval. The management team now has a firm grasp of the next steps through effective monitoring of teaching and learning, and is determined to ensure that this becomes a good school. Priorities are clearly identified in the good school improvement plan and are linked closely to raising standards. The governing body is working effectively and its role is much improved, having put in place a secure scheme of delegation and clarity of roles and responsibilities. It understands its important roles as a critical friend and in holding the school to account for the standards it achieves.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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

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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	2
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

4 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Priestley Primary School, Calne, SN11 8TG

Thank you very much for the very warm welcome we received when we visited your school. In particular, I would like to thank the school council and pupils from Year 6 who gave up part of their lunchtime to speak with us. As you know, your school was given a Notice to Improve just over a year ago. I am pleased to tell you that we judge your school to be satisfactory and improving rapidly. You have played an important part in your school becoming so much better – well done!

These are the key things that have improved:

- You make satisfactory and often good progress in lessons and your work is now of the standard expected for your age.
- Your behaviour is much improved and you enjoy learning much more.
- You told us that teaching is much better and how much you like the 'smartboards'.
- You feel safe and are well cared for by all adults in your school.
- The people who lead and manage your school are determined to build on the good progress to make it even better.

There are a few things that we think your school needs to concentrate on over the next year in order to carry on improving. These are:

- To improve guided reading lessons so that all of you make good progress in your reading.
- To make sure that teaching assistants are used to help you learn more effectively.
- To make sure that children in Reception have a more interesting and exciting outdoor play area.

You can help by continuing to work hard and keep on getting those house points which you are proud to achieve.

Yours faithfully

David Curtis Lead inspector

Annex B



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Lead inspector