

Prestwood Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110304
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	310253
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Malcolm Johnstone

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs D Hayman
Headteacher	Mr M Ackland
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2004
School address	Clare Road Prestwood Great Missenden HP16 0NR
Telephone number	01494 863687
Fax number	01494 863683

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is about the same size as most other primary schools. It serves a diverse population, taking pupils from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds. Most pupils are from White British families with a few from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. None of these pupils is at the early stages of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding education. Standards and pupils' achievements have improved year on year and standards are exceptionally high in reading, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Standards are high in writing but there is scope to bring them in line with the very high standards attained in these other subjects. Pupils make consistently good and often excellent progress. At the heart of this success are the excellent leadership and management at all levels and the outstanding teaching and learning. 'The school is innovative and dynamic; it has an excellent headteacher and a fantastic, caring staff' is a comment made by one parent that is echoed by many. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. There is a strong and commendable belief that these aspects of pupils' education are key factors in effective learning. As a result, there has been a sustained and successful focus on establishing very high standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning.

In the four years he has been at the school, the headteacher has transformed the school and is always looking to make further improvements. He has empowered the senior leaders who provide excellent leadership. All say how much more involved they are in planning the strategic direction of the school. The deputy headteacher and all senior leaders are excellent role models in their own teaching and commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils. Teachers have high aspirations for the pupils and the large majority of lessons motivate and challenge the pupils to provide high quality work.

The impact of school leadership is also clearly visible in the development of an outstanding curriculum where, for example, strengths in creative arts have led to excellent standards in art and music. Furthermore, the provision of an outstanding range of well-attended extra-curricular activities, including sport, adds a further important dimension to learning and enthusiasm for school. There is a strong focus on the 'Every Child Matters' agenda. This underpins the school's arrangements for the excellent care and guidance of the pupils. It is also central to all aspects of school improvement planning and forms the basis of governors' meetings.

Self-evaluation and the use of challenging targets to raise standards are excellent. They are based securely on analysis of a wide range of evidence from the tracking of pupils' progress and the rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. At all levels, there is no complacent acceptance of high academic standards. This and the school's record of continued improvement over the past four years means that the school has an excellent capacity to improve further.

Very good links with outside agencies support learning effectively. The large majority of parents are pleased with all aspects of the school's work. A few parents feel that the school does not take sufficient account of their views. There is no evidence from the inspection to support this concern.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend standards in writing to bring them in line with the very high standards in reading, mathematics and science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Attainment on entry in Year 3 is typically above average with a full range of ability present. The inspectors' analyses of the school's extensive tracking data, pupils' work and the quality of teaching and learning show all pupils, including those who have learning difficulties, to be making consistently good and often excellent progress. Standards are exceptionally high in mathematics, science and reading with some outstanding work in art and music. Pupils have high quality speaking and listening skills and talk confidently and knowledgeably about a wide range of topics. Standards are above average in writing and although the proportion of pupils exceeding the nationally expected level is above average it is not as high as in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils make good progress in developing their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes to work are key factors in the very high standards they attain.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They form excellent relationships with their teachers and one another. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, as evident through their very good attendance. They develop a mature and sensible attitude to all that they do and take their learning very seriously. This contributes strongly to their high academic achievements. Pupils are keen to contribute to class discussions and willingly co-operate in paired and group learning. They have a very good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. It develops very effectively through assemblies, well-planned religious education lessons and in studies of different cultures in subjects such as history, geography and art. Older pupils develop their social and personal skills extremely well through residential visits and by acting as 'young leaders' and sports and house captains. All pupils have the opportunity to contribute to school council decisions and to stand for election. Pupils are very aware of the wider world and contribute well to charities. They develop excellent skills and qualities that provide them with an outstanding preparation for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

In all year groups, there is a consistent emphasis on self-discipline and the development of a mature work ethic. As a result, pupils remain focused on their work and make rapid progress. They persevere when work is difficult and respond very well to challenge. Relationships between teachers and pupils are exceptionally strong and give pupils the confidence to try out new ideas. There is highly effective sharing of learning intentions with pupils. Teachers reinforce these visually using a range of resources including interactive white boards. They make accurate assessments of the pupils' progress. They use information from assessments successfully to inform subsequent learning and this ensures that work matches pupils' needs effectively. There is excellent use of success criteria to help pupils provide high quality work. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are highly skilled at explaining new learning in ways that are

relevant and meaningful. The teachers recognise the need to challenge the more able writers even more by adding greater sophistication to their writing. This reflects their high expectations. Classroom assistants provide highly effective support for pupils, particularly those who have learning difficulties. This helps them make excellent progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils extremely well. Planning is thorough and detailed and ensures outstanding continuity of learning across all subjects. There is a strong focus on enrichment, and specialist teachers in music, French, art, sports and ICT make an outstanding contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are used very well to support learning in other subjects; for example, in an art lesson digital cameras and computers were used with great success to help produce models of the human body in motion. Pupils participate in an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities, including inter-school sports competitions, music, and drama events. A very good range of visits and themed events such as 'creativity week' further enhances the curriculum and adds to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Work in personal, social and health education helps pupils to develop an excellent understanding of their rights and responsibilities within the community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Child protection procedures are rigorous and effective. Provision for pupils who have learning difficulties is excellent and helps them to make rapid progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. All adults who work in school have an outstanding commitment to the care, guidance and support of all pupils. The vast majority of parents praise the school in this regard and pupils say that there is always someone to listen and help if they ever have a problem. As one parent wrote, 'The school has a happy friendly environment, with lots of positive encouragement.' There are whole school agreed systems to modify any inappropriate behaviour, which pupils say are fair and reasonable. Academic support and guidance is excellent. Pupils have their own academic and personal targets and are encouraged to assess their own learning against these. Marking is consistently good and often excellent. This is because it gives the pupils a clear understanding of how they might improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher, with excellent support from staff and governors has brought improvements in all key aspects of the school's work since the previous inspection. In a climate of mutual respect and shared vision, he has empowered senior leaders and subject coordinators to develop their role and take control and responsibility for ensuring improvement. This has been highly successful in raising standards and expectations of what all pupils can achieve. There is excellent use of data analysis and tracking of pupils' progress to identify trends and areas for improvement. Incisive monitoring of teaching and learning and a strong focus on continuing professional development has brought marked improvements in the quality of teaching. The management of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties is excellent. Recent staff training is enabling teachers and classroom support assistants to meet the needs of the pupils with more severe

learning difficulties more effectively. It is enabling them to make excellent progress. Governance is outstanding. Governors provide a highly effective balance of support and challenge because they are well informed and fully involved in school improvement planning.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

27 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Prestwood Junior School, Great Missenden, HP16 0NR

I am writing to let you know what we found on our recent visit. Your school provides you with an outstanding education. We really enjoyed talking to you about all the exciting things that happen. We would also like to thank the school council for sharing their opinions about the school with us. You say that you like school and that your lessons are enjoyable and interesting. We agree with you because we too enjoyed being in the lessons. Your headteacher and all the staff work very hard and successfully to provide you with an interesting and exciting curriculum including many clubs and other activities outside your normal lessons.

You do exceptionally well in most subjects and always try your best. The standard of your work is much higher than in most schools. You should be very proud of this. Most of your lessons are excellent and enable you to make rapid progress. This is also down to your excellent behaviour and the way in which you concentrate and try to do your best. All the adults in school take very good care of you. You tell us that they are always there if you should have any worries or need any help. You also tell us that the older pupils who act as 'young leaders' help you at playtimes by organising games and helping to sort out any problems.

Even in outstanding schools, there is always something that can be improved. Your writing is good but we think it can be even better. Your teachers know this and are working to help you improve even more. With your help, we know you can succeed.

Good luck in the future

Mr M Johnstone

Lead Inspector