

Preston Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111535
Local Authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	310622
Inspection dates	13–14 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Barbara Hudson

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Angus Watson
Headteacher	Mrs Shirley Winters
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2005
School address	Laurel Road Eaglescliffe Stockton-on-Tees TS16 0BE
Telephone number	01642 784735
Fax number	01642 789312

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school with a Nursery. It is situated in a socially diverse area. More girls than boys attend the school. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and most are competent in English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is around average. However, that of pupils with a statement of special educational need is higher than normal. The school has achieved many local and national awards which acknowledge the good standards in health, sport, basic skills and inclusion.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school successfully places an equal emphasis on pupils' academic and personal developments. Pupils enjoy school and their behaviour is exemplary. Their contribution to the school and the wider community is excellent. As a result, all pupils flourish in the excellent caring and inclusive atmosphere. Parents are very supportive of the school. They recognise the very good work that the school does in encouraging their children to do their very best.

Standards are above average and pupils achieve well, making good progress from Nursery to the end of Year 6. Children make a good start in school because of the good teaching in Nursery and Reception. Most children achieve and some exceed the expected learning goals for five year olds. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and standards at the end of Year 2 are above average. In Key Stage 2, all pupils make further good progress. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average and in writing and science they are very high. Throughout the school boys and girls, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress.

Good teaching helps pupils to achieve well. Teachers know their pupils and set work that is challenging. However, in some lessons pupils have to listen to the teacher for too long before getting on with their work. The teaching assistants very effectively help pupils to learn more productively. The curriculum, along with the extensive range of enrichment activities, is exemplary and contributes very well to the pupils' enjoyment. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and a very good understanding of how to keep healthy. The school provides outstanding levels of care and very effectively ensures pupils' health and safety.

Leadership and management are good. The excellent leadership by the headteacher and the very effective management teams and governors accurately identify what the school needs to do next to improve. As a result, staff are very well supported and guided to respond to relative weaknesses. A very good example of this is the sustained high standards in writing following the initial improvements three years ago. The analysis of the school's work focuses on processes rather than on pupils' learning and experiences. As a result, opportunities to evaluate the quality of the provision are sometimes missed. Financial management is very good. Governance is very good. The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection and this, along with the rigorous approach to school improvement, shows that its capacity for further improvement is exemplary.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The teaching and curriculum for the Nursery and Reception children are good and this helps them to enjoy school and make good progress. Assessment procedures are effective and accurate. They show that although there is a wide spread of ability, overall children enter nursery slightly below the national expectations and most leave Reception having reached or exceeded the expected learning goals for this age. Despite the limited accommodation the staff work very hard to create a welcoming, caring and effective learning environment, which they have successfully done. The care and support that the staff provides for the children is outstanding. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed and teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure good learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the pace of some lessons by reducing the amount of teacher talk.
- Ensure evaluations of the school's work focus closely on the impact on pupils' learning and experiences.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All pupils achieve well. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well and most attain standards at the end of Year 2 that are higher than the national average. In Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to achieve well and Year 6 standards are above the national average. Inspection evidence shows that progress and achievement continue to be good. Pupils' attainment and achievement in writing is a strength of the school and this reflects the good work that staff have put into improving these standards. During this academic year the staff have focussed on improving standards in mathematics and inspection evidence supports the school's view that this initiative has also been successful in accelerating progress in the subject.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils are confident, self-reliant young people. They have the personal qualities and basic skills to make the most of the next stage of their education and to be successful in later life. Attendance rates are above average and pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and secure and say the school is free from any form of bullying. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils get on well together and are sensitive to each other's feelings. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress in their personal development because of the exemplary care and support they receive. The older pupils readily take on responsibilities to help care for the younger children and they play a full part in the local community through charitable events. Their initiative is shown in recent fund raising activities which were initiated and organised by the pupils themselves. Members of the school council ensure pupils' views are heard. They have, for example, been instrumental in securing improved toilet facilities and have produced the design and colour schemes. Pupils know how to stay fit and well and eat healthily and take plenty of exercise. The school has gained Sports England Achievement Status for two years running and has also been credited with Stockton's Healthy School Gold Award.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. In the best lessons seen, teachers' planning builds on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding and learning activities are varied to take account of the mixed ages and abilities in each class. Expectations are high and good use is made of information and communication technology as a teaching and learning aid. Teaching assistants are effective in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and in working with teachers to provide more challenging work for the most able. Pupils are keen to learn and concentrate for extended periods of time. They have the ability to work independently and to

collaborate in group activities. They say they learn best when they are actively involved in tasks which challenge them to find out things for themselves and think creatively. This was seen in work done in design technology where pupils researched period furniture at Bowes museum and then designed and created similar model items in school. Excellent use was made of earlier learning and pupils were learning through creative activities. However, there are instances when the pace of lessons slows because too much time is given to teacher explanations before pupils get down to learning for themselves.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Pupils are benefiting from an excellent curriculum. Good provision is made for the development of pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and using information technology. An outstanding personal, social, health and citizenship education programme is a major reason why pupils are so well prepared for the future. A wide range of learning opportunities ensures pupils have a broad understanding of the world around them and helps them to appreciate the diversity of society. Outstanding provision is made to enrich the curriculum through clubs and sporting activities which are frequently organised by an excellent Parent Teacher Association. Educational visits away from school and visiting speakers do much for pupils' cultural and creative development. Excellent links with other schools and with Preston Hall museum are exploited to the full. The highest attaining pupils, for example, work with the local secondary school's mathematics department to learn how to apply their numeracy skills in other subjects. The school itself is a stimulating environment where teachers and assistants have created colourful, interesting and informative displays to augment the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This aspect of provision is excellent. This is a school committed to equality of opportunity for every pupil and where the most vulnerable are fully involved and supported in all activities and so progress well. The care and support afforded to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent and accounts for their outstanding personal development. Very good use is made of outside agencies to ensure they reach their full potential. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are well established and risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis, particularly in the planning of visits out of school. Pupils' academic progress is assessed regularly and rigorously, any early signs of underachievement quickly spotted and appropriate measures taken to put it right. The school's caring and supportive ethos gives pupils the confidence to talk openly about any worries, knowing that they will be listened to and helped.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The good leadership and management have a very positive impact on the pupils' academic achievements and personal development. The headteacher provides very strong leadership that is motivating the whole staff team to make the school even better. Under her guidance the newly appointed senior management team has quickly become very effective. The subject leaders are taking a more rigorous approach to evaluating work in their subjects and this has led to an improvement in standards and the skills that pupils achieve.

The excellent communications between all the staff, the governors, parents and pupils enables this school to have a very good overview of its strengths and weaknesses. Weaknesses are quickly identified and rigorously worked upon until the desired improvement is achieved. However, the school's written evaluations of improvements focus too much on what has been done rather than the impact on the pupils' learning and experiences. Governance is very good, financial management is secure and the school offers good value for money. There is a shared commitment by governors and staff to set challenging targets and to provide the best for each pupil. As one governor said, 'Everyone has ambition for every individual child'. Parents are very well informed and very supportive of the school. They appreciate the good levels of education, their children's outstanding personal development and the care they receive. As one parent wrote in the questionnaire, 'I wouldn't have changed our choice of school for the world' and this theme is echoed throughout the vast majority of parents' comments.

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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?	2
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	2
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	2
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	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

15 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Preston Primary School, Stockton-on-Tees, TS16 0BE

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We found everyone very helpful and we very much appreciate the honest way in which you talked to us about your school. You all helped us to understand how your school works. We are pleased to tell you that we agree with you that Preston Primary is a good school.

We were particularly impressed with your excellent behaviour, the hard work you do in lessons and the good progress that you make with your work. We were delighted to see the exemplary care and guidance that all the staff provides for every child and how this helps you to make excellent progress in your personal development. We were very impressed with the way you are sensitive to each others feelings. The lessons the teachers provide for you are good. You told us that you very much enjoy the excellent range of lessons, after school clubs, visits and visitors that are provided for you. Your parents wrote and told us that they found the school a very caring place and this was very evident. They also said that the adults in the school give you a good education and encourage you to do your very best. We agree with your parents.

The staff and governors are working hard to make your school an even better place. We have asked your teachers to reduce the time you have to listen in lessons and give you more time to get on with your work. We have also asked the headteacher to evaluate how improvements that happen in the school make things even better for the pupils.

With very best wishes for your future.

On behalf of the inspection team

Barbara Hudson

Lead inspector