

Preston Church of England School, Tasburgh

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121061
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	313858
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Julie Winyard HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David T Hughes
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Payne
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2003
School address	Henry Preston Road Tasburgh Norwich Norfolk NR15 1NU
Telephone number	01508 470454
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Age group	5-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Preston Church of England School, Tasburgh is a smaller than average primary school situated in a village south of Norwich. The school has well below average numbers of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and pupils who find learning difficult. However, there are above average numbers with a Statement of Special Educational Need. There are no pupils whose first language is not English. The school has the following awards: Healthy Schools and Activemark. There have been considerable changes in management since 2006 when the previous headteacher retired. Governors were not able to recruit at first and the assistant headteacher was acting head until a substantive headteacher was appointed from September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Preston is a good and improving school with some outstanding features and this is endorsed by the majority of parents. As one parent says, 'I am very proud of our school and what it stands for.' The new headteacher has already had a considerable impact on the good leadership and management of the school because she has enabled staff to focus on the important issues that will improve the school further. The governors provide an excellent balance of support and challenge to the school. The school's self-evaluation is good and governors have clear roles and responsibilities within this. The school improvement and development plan is also good. It is a substantial document and whilst the governor's section explains procedures very well, the school section needs further development. This is because evaluation does not focus tightly enough on the impact of actions the school has taken to make improvements to pupils' learning. In addition, key issues that the headteacher and her staff have identified for improvement are not always included in the document.

Standards across the school are above average. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Progress is also good from when pupils enter the school until the end of Year 2. Standards remain above average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, progress last year was only satisfactory. The school has carefully analysed the reasons for this and inspection evidence supports their conclusion that in the past teacher assessment was not always accurate. This is an area for development. The school's new and rigorous tracking system indicates that pupils are making good progress this year. The school provides good support for pupils who find learning difficult and who have statements of special educational need and they make good progress.

The school provides a good curriculum and teaching throughout the school is good and often outstanding. However, expectations for pupils' presentation of their work, including the quality of their handwriting, are not yet high enough and this is an area for improvement. Pupils receive an outstanding level of pastoral care, support and academic guidance. They have an excellent understanding of their learning targets and know exactly how to improve their work.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are also outstanding. This is because of the excellent commitment the staff and governors have to ensuring pupils are safe, healthy, enjoy their learning as well as achieving high standards, make a positive contribution to the school and local community and are well prepared for their future lives. Behaviour throughout the school is excellent because of the strong moral code and pupils' good social development. The strong Christian ethos of the school and sheer enjoyment of learning contribute to pupils' excellent spiritual development. Pupils also have excellent understanding of other cultures through the many opportunities provided across the curriculum. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has a good capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Pupils enter the school with above average ability in most areas of learning. However, their speaking and listening and social skills are less well developed. The school has identified this and ensures that these learning needs are met quickly. Reception pupils rapidly settle into good learning habits so that by the end of the Foundation Stage, most pupils have achieved the Early Learning Goals and some have exceeded these. The teacher plans interesting active learning

experiences and is very well supported by a full-time teaching assistant. A good balance of teacher and pupil-initiated activities are planned for both Reception and Year 1 pupils in the class. Both age groups benefit from the good teaching of phonics and pupils make good progress with reading, writing and spelling. They also have a good understanding of number skills. There is very good liaison between the teachers in classes 1 and 2 and this benefits pupils as they move on to the next class. Activities are well matched to pupils' abilities, are exciting, and stimulate pupils' thinking. For example, pupils are fascinated to watch caterpillars pupate. 'They have to grow big enough first then they go into a chrysalis then they come out a butterfly.' Pupils work in a safe and secure environment.

The Foundation Stage is very well led by an experienced teacher. She ensures support staff are well trained and involved in planning the curriculum. All staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning. The secure outside area is not large enough to enable pupils to have sufficiently challenging physical development activities. Its size also restricts opportunities to develop the curriculum outside the classroom.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the accuracy of teacher assessment through in school moderation of pupils' work.
- Improve pupils' presentation of their work, including handwriting, across the school.
- Ensure school development planning fully reflects ongoing improvements identified by the school and evaluation focuses on the impact of actions taken.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The good progress pupils make during the Foundation Stage continues through Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is still above average. However, last year some pupils did not make the expected progress in writing or science. The school's recently implemented, rigorous tracking system shows that pupils' progress has improved this year and that all pupils are on track to make or exceed the expected level of progress.

The school's data and evidence from annual reviews shows that pupils with statements of special educational need made good progress in 2007 from very low starting points. Currently pupils who find learning difficult and who have statements of special educational need continue to make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

As one parent says, 'The children are always eager to learn and participate in their lessons. My children have never wanted not to come to school, long may it continue.' High levels of attendance and pupils' enjoyment of their education fully supports this comment. In every lesson, there are gasps of amazement as pupils express their excitement about learning. Behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school and pupils have extremely positive attitudes to everything they do. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary with quiet moments for reflection as well as the sheer joy of learning, for example, about how Egyptian mummies were made! The quality of singing during a recent opera project is just one example of pupils' outstanding response to the many cultural opportunities the school gives.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy life and can explain very clearly why some foods are better for them and why exercise is important. Pupils know their views are valued by the school and the school council are thrilled with recent improvements to the playground that they helped to organise. Fund raising for a defibrillator for the village is top of their agenda now and pupils feel a great pride in being able to make such a positive contribution to their local community. Because of pupils' good literacy and numeracy skills, they are well prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching across the school is good and often outstanding. In every lesson teachers explain clearly what the learning is about and their high and appropriate expectations for what pupils will achieve by the end of the session. Pupils respond very well to this. They listen well and work hard throughout the lessons. Excellent opportunities for speaking and listening are given and pupils can explain their thinking by giving reasons for their ideas. Work is very carefully matched to pupils' learning needs and assessment is good in lessons. In the best lessons pupils assess their own work and give positive and developmental feedback to each other. For example, in a poetry lesson one pupil said 'I like the way she uses her voice because she had good expression.'

Pupils' enthusiasm for learning is outstanding and a strength of the school. There are often whispered cries of 'Yes!' when the teacher talks about the learning activities. Pupils really enjoy learning Spanish. They sing number songs with great determination and can answer questions posed in Spanish with excellent pronunciation. Teaching assistants are very well deployed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum with some good opportunities for enrichment and extra curricular learning. The annual residential visit for Year 6 is well supported and there are many visitors, for example a local artist, whose specialist skills enable pupils to achieve very good results. After school clubs are also well supported. There is good provision for literacy numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). One pupil said, 'I like writing because our teacher makes writing really fun!' The development of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) has had a very good impact on pupils' learning. One pupil found out some fascinating facts about the Rainforest using one of the websites the teacher had set up and was very excited about seeing these on the class page.

The school has begun to make more links between subjects and the recent Water project proved very popular with pupils and led to good learning outcomes. The good matching of activities to pupils' learning needs means all pupils are able to make the most of the curriculum the school offers.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Very high quality pastoral care enables all pupils to thrive extremely well. Teachers and support staff are exceptionally committed to making every pupil feel special. Staff have great expertise

in supporting pupils with a range of learning difficulties and medical conditions. Arrangements for safeguarding are excellent and the school building is completely secure. Pupils say they feel safe at school. Academic guidance in lessons is exemplary. All pupils know and understand their learning targets. Teachers make time during lessons for pupils to improve their work and give excellent guidance on how to do this. Pupils say they know exactly what to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership at all levels is good and governance is outstanding. The chair of governors has a very clear understanding of what needs to be done and manages the process exceptionally well in very close partnership with the headteacher and the staff. Governors' regular visits are evaluative and always reported back to the full governing body. The good leadership of the headteacher enables the staff to work closely as a team. Together they have identified areas for improvement, for example speaking and listening, and have very rapidly made changes that have raised standards across the school. The new tracking system is robust and rigorous. Teachers can quickly identify any pupil who is falling behind and implement appropriate interventions to ensure their learning improves.

The school has very good partnerships with parents and with external agencies that provide additional support for pupils who find learning difficult and those with statements of special educational need. There are good transition arrangements including teachers from the local high school coming to teach mathematics and science to Year 6 pupils alongside their classteacher.

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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	2

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	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	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?	2
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	2
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	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

22 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Preston Church of England School, Tasburgh, Norfolk, NR15 1NU

Thank you all very much for making me feel so welcome in your school this week. I had a lovely time talking with you and your teachers and finding out that your school is a good school with some outstanding features. Your behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school and you work and play together really well. I was very impressed with how well you know your learning targets and with how kind and thoughtful you are even when discussing each other's work. You are very good at helping each other to get better at your work. Your teachers are very good at helping you to understand how well you are doing in lessons and I have asked them to spend more time looking at your work together so they know exactly what levels you have reached.

You have an excellent group of governors who know your school very well and who work very hard with Mrs Payne and the teachers to make it even better.

I really like the way your teachers get you to think for yourselves during lessons and was impressed with how well you listen and how hard you work. You always produce a lot during the lesson but you do not always present your work well enough and your handwriting could be neater. I have asked the school to work on this with you.

Your headteacher and teachers are very good at finding out what needs to be improved in your school and in making the improvement but they do not always write this down so I have asked them to make sure they do this.

I would like to say a very special thank you to the school council for giving up their lunch break to talk to me, and to the pupil who took such excellent notes of the meeting. I would like to wish you all every success in your future lives.

With very best wishes

Julie Winyard

Her Majesty's Inspector