

Prees CofE Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	123494
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	314611
Inspection dates	21–22 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin Cole

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Hopwood
Headteacher	Graham Tharby
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2003
School address	Cross End Prees Whitchurch SY13 2ER
Telephone number	01948 840209
Fax number	01948 841453

Age group	3–11
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Amended Report Addendum

Report amended due to administration error

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school recruits pupils from a wide rural area. There is a broad mix of pupils in terms of both background and attainment on starting school, and this varies from year to year. Parents' circumstances and pupils' starting attainment are broadly average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is typical of schools nationally. Nearly all pupils are White British. A small number of children are from Traveller communities.

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 with a particular strength in the successful promotion of pupils' good personal development and sense of well-being. Pupils clearly enjoy school and their attendance is good. They behave well and get on well with adults and each other. Pupils are successfully encouraged to take notice of the good guidance they receive on staying healthy. Many participate keenly in the range of after-school opportunities for sport, which are a strength of the curriculum. Satisfactory arrangements for pupils' welfare help them to feel safe and secure at school.

Right from the Nursery through to Year 6, good attitudes and relationships make for a calm and happy atmosphere around the school. This provides a good basis for learning and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Good Foundation Stage arrangements for the youngest children lead to good progress. In Years 1–6, the great majority of pupils make at least satisfactory progress, but a few who find learning more difficult and some more able pupils make less progress than they might.

Pupils' progress reflects the satisfactory quality of the teaching and curriculum. These are clearly successful in promoting good attitudes to school and learning. Lessons are organised well and engage pupils' interest. The great majority of pupils are helped to achieve as well as they should. However, sometimes the help given to those in difficulty or the challenges presented to the more able do not fully meet their needs. Though improving, assessment of the next steps each pupil needs to take, or the help they require, is not precise enough to help teachers plan lessons that are as effective as they might be. Guidance for pupils on how to improve their work is developing but not sufficiently, nor is it consistently established. Individually, pupils are sometimes unclear about the next steps they need to take.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Their strength lies in the creation of a good ethos within the school community and in helping pupils with their personal development. The school has a good awareness of its performance and of where it needs to move forward. However, attempts to improve teaching and raise standards are not supported with sufficiently focused checks to see whether new approaches are consistently and successfully implemented. The school has made satisfactory improvement since its previous inspection and has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Following a trend of improvement over recent years, children are now achieving well in the Nursery and Reception years. Good progress is resulting in attainment above the national expectation by the end of Reception. This is the result of the well-led and well-managed teaching, which is good, and a lively, well-planned curriculum. Teachers and support staff are caring, encouraging and supportive. They create a warm and stimulating environment with good relationships and activities that are purposeful and fun. The adults exploit every opportunity to stimulate children's knowledge and skills through their incidental dialogue with them. A confident manner and smiling faces reflects children's enjoyment. They join in keenly where activities are clearly focused and led by adults and in well-designed opportunities to learn by themselves through play and exploration. Progress in personal and social development

is particularly good. The children are given much effective encouragement to grow in independence.

Children's progress is thoroughly checked and observations are well used to match activities to individual children's needs. Each child is encouraged to aim at child-friendly targets, which are shared with parents so they can support the children's efforts. The accommodation has improved since the previous inspection but the outdoor accommodation is rather limited and under-exploited.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the tasks, challenges and support given to individual pupils match their abilities and needs more precisely.
- Help every pupil to understand exactly how they can improve their day-to-day work.
- Improve checks to ensure that the implementation of school improvements is consistent.

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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The good progress and standards of Foundation Stage pupils are a relatively recent improvement. This good basis has not, therefore, influenced the standards achieved by the older pupils; their standards are broadly average. The school's national test results vary considerably from year to year, reflecting changing profiles of ability amongst year-groups. Test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in recent years have been generally average, but sometimes below, as in the case of the Year 6 pupils who left the school in 2007. However, these pupils had started out with very low attainment and a significant number of them had experienced learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particularly in literacy. Their Year 6 results represented at least satisfactory progress from their earlier levels of attainment. Progress in mathematics was good. Throughout Years 1–6, the great majority of current pupils achieve as well as they should, but a small minority do less well. This minority tends to be pupils who find difficulty in aspects of the work and those who are more able.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Foundation Stage children are soon happy and confident learners who enjoy school. Pupils throughout the school are keen to join in school activities and are vocal in their pride and appreciation of their school – 'It's brilliant!' Good relationships reflect pupils' good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils have a good awareness of their own and others' beliefs. They respect those different from themselves, although their appreciation of the cultural diversity of their society and the wider world is rather limited. Pupils know well how to be safe and healthy. They feel safe from bullying, know who to approach if anxious and are confident about staff help. Pupils exercise enthusiastically and are very proud of their 'walking bus' – 'It's the biggest in Shropshire!'

Pupils join the school council, 'Eco-team' and groups discussing health and safety matters. They are enthusiastic and responsible in these activities. Pupils feel listened to and are confident they are making a difference to the school.

Growing confidence and independence are a good preparation for pupils' further education and adult life, but their development of literacy and numeracy skills is only a satisfactory preparation for future working life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

While of satisfactory quality overall, the teaching and learning have particular strengths that contribute well to pupils' good personal development. Teachers manage pupils well. They make learning enjoyable through stimulating activities, giving plenty of encouragement and making harmonious relationships. Lessons are often fun as teachers employ a good sense of humour and give visual impact to their teaching through lively use of interactive whiteboards, which pupils also enjoy using. Lessons are purposeful and brisk, with pupils behaving and concentrating well. The content of lessons is thoughtfully planned and meets most pupils' needs well, particularly when teaching assistants are able to extend the help provided for those finding difficulty. However, there is some inconsistency in matching the teaching to the needs of some pupils. In Years 1–6, a few pupils experiencing difficulty occasionally need more intensive help than is provided. Also, a few more able pupils sometimes need more challenging tasks than those provided if they are to make all the progress they could. Assessment of pupils' progress, though improved, does not identify precisely enough the next steps in learning these pupils need to take or the help or challenges they require.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets national requirements and in addition offers French in Years 3–6. Planning takes good account of national guidance. Schemes of work that provide for pupils' personal and social needs, including their health and safety, are good, but not enough is done to broaden pupils' cultural awareness. Programmes of work meet the needs and reflect the interests of pupils, except for those few pupils who need more support or greater challenge. A typical range of educational visits and visitors adds interest and enjoyment to the curriculum. After-school opportunities for sport, including competitive matches and tournaments, are a real strength. Opportunities to pursue other interests after lessons are more limited and irregular.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

School staff are caring and approachable and formal procedures to promote pupils' welfare are sound. All required checks on welfare and safeguarding provisions are made, although the recording of some is not sufficiently systematic. Guidance on personal and social matters is good and is reflected in pupils' good relationships and behaviour. Support for pupils with particular learning or personal difficulties makes appropriate use of external advice and expertise. Academic guidance has been improving, with targets being set for pupils and more helpful marking of their work. However, these new approaches are not fully or consistently implemented and individual pupils are sometimes unsure how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The senior leadership of the school promotes a positive sense of purpose, teamwork and commitment to meeting pupils' needs. The staff are hard working. This has a good impact on the social aspects of the life of the school and personal aspects of pupils' development. However, the promotion of pupils' academic achievement through the teaching and curriculum, though satisfactory, is less successful than it might be. Senior staff, supported by governors, are committed to school improvement and keep a comprehensive check on the school's performance by observing lessons, examining pupils' work and progress and through a variety of other means. However, these processes do not always focus sufficiently, or with enough precision, on the most important areas in the school's appropriate and well-intentioned programme of improvement. This accounts for some of the inconsistency in the assessment of pupils, the planning of lessons to meet the needs of all and the academic guidance given to pupils.

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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	3

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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 Prees C of E Primary School, Whitchurch SY13 2ER

- The inspectors who visited your school recently would like to thank all of you for your very friendly welcome. We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you. It was good to find that you enjoy going to school. You told us that you feel safe and happy there. Also, we could see that you get on well with each other and with the adults. You have a sensible attitude to school. You work hard and you behave well. All of this is helping you to learn and most of you achieve the standard of work that you should. We saw that the teachers and the other adults look after you and help you as they should. The teachers give you the right sort of lessons and teach you all the subjects that you should learn. It was good to see how many opportunities you have for exercise and sport after school. We were glad to see that you join in lots of physical exercise to keep you healthy. We have said in the report that your school is giving you a satisfactory education. The adults in charge of the school are doing what they should to care for you and help you learn. They are trying to improve the school. However, we have suggested three ways that the school could give you still more help.
- We found that some of you need more help when learning is difficult and some others could do harder work. We have asked the school to do something about this.
- We have asked the teachers to make sure you always understand how you can improve your work.
- We think the school should keep a better check to make sure that the improvements it makes are working properly.

We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

M H Cole Lead inspector

Annex B

23 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Prees C of E Primary School, Whitchurch SY13 2ER

The inspectors who visited your school recently would like to thank all of you for your very friendly welcome. We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you.

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We saw that the teachers and the other adults look after you and help you as they should. The teachers give you the right sort of lessons and teach you all the subjects that you should learn. It was good to see how many opportunities you have for exercise and sport after school. We were glad to see that you join in lots of physical exercise to keep you healthy.

We have said in the report that your school is giving you a satisfactory education. The adults in charge of the school are doing what they should to care for you and help you learn. They are trying to improve the school. However, we have suggested three ways that the school could give you still more help.

- We found that some of you need more help when learning is difficult and some others could do harder work. We have asked the school to do something about this.
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We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

M H Cole
Lead inspector