

East Preston Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125828
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315319
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Linda Kelsey HMI

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	266
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miriam Nicholls
Headteacher	Andrew Dale
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2004
School address	Lashmar Road East Preston Littlehampton BN16 1EZ
Telephone number	01903 785672
Fax number	01903 850748

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

This average-sized junior school caters for mainly White British pupils, with few from minority ethnic groups. During the inspection, Year 6 were away on an Isle of Wight residential trip. The number of pupils who have English as an additional language is low, as is the number eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also low. The authority currently cares for four children. Tests taken at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that pupils start school with attainment above average in most year groups. The school has Healthy Schools Status, and has been awarded Investors in Health and achieved the Sports Activemark for the last three years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It also has some outstanding features such as the pupils' personal development and well-being, curriculum provision, and the care, guidance and support of pupils. Teaching, which is at least good across the school, is also outstanding in some lessons and has improved since the time of the last inspection. This is because of the good leadership, which has had an increased focus on improving assessment and the putting in place of an exciting and relevant curriculum, meeting the needs of all pupils. As one parent said, 'The school's motto "enjoyment and excellence" sums up the positive, caring and fun school it is'.

Standards have risen since the last inspection and are now above average. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), and across a range of other subjects such as music, art and physical education (PE). However, there are some inconsistencies in teaching and learning across year groups and subjects, when teachers do not plan quite as well for the more able pupils who find the work too easy. The school is working hard to improve all teaching to the level of the best and to improve the number of pupils who achieve the highest standards.

Personal development and well-being are outstanding because of the outstanding care, guidance and support pupils get. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and personal development is also outstanding. They are developing a good understanding of people around the world, although, because of where they live, they have limited opportunities to meet and talk to people from other cultures in Britain. Pupils know well how to stay fit and healthy. Many take part in after-school sports activities and the school is working hard to improve the diet of all pupils, particularly at lunchtime. Pupils do not always make the healthiest of choices with their lunch boxes. Good attention is given to teaching pupils about being safe, and understanding the part they play in being good citizens within the community. This excellent provision enables pupils to grow in self-esteem and to play a full part in all that the school has to offer.

The improvements in teaching have been achieved because of the good leadership and management at all levels. The school has effectively analysed where it has strengths and weaknesses and has set itself challenging tasks to improve. In some lessons, pupils do chatter and fidget and their attention wavers when not monitored at all times. Teachers are quick to recognise this and the 'mini' plenary times introduced in most classes help focus the pupils back on the task in hand and enable them to resume work at a better pace. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and these pupils make equally good progress.

The headteacher, with the full support of his staff, has an excellent vision for the school. He has developed an accurate picture of strengths and areas for development through the good self-evaluation process. The school uses its finances exceptionally well. This ensures that the expenditure is appropriately directed by, for example, improving the learning environment and enhancing the curriculum in art, cooking and ICT. The school gives outstanding value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the work of the most able pupils, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Give more opportunities for pupils to prepare for living in a multicultural society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Traditionally, progress at the school from the infant school had been satisfactory, but this has improved over the last two years and now trends over time are showing a continual improvement in standards. Standards were above average in 2007 and were particularly good in mathematics because of the sharper focus on this area. As a result, targets were met or exceeded by almost all children. This year, the school expects pupils to do even better with standards again above average.

Pupils are making good progress because of improved teaching. Where teaching is the best is where the best progress is made, particularly at the top end of the school. Pupils' work in English and mathematics shows some high quality writing and problem solving. Skills are also good in ICT, design and technology, PE, music and art, where some outstanding work was seen around the school and in lessons. Pupils produced a newspaper for a competition (News day) and were highly commended for this.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' attitudes to learning and relationships are outstanding. The above average attendance rates reflect their wanting to be at school. Pupils really enjoy lessons because, as one said, 'Teachers are very helpful, as are the teaching assistants.' They settle to work quickly and concentrate well. The behaviour of the great majority of pupils is at least good. In some lessons, a minority are lively and slow to settle but the teachers are skilled in maintaining their interest.

Pupils have a strong sense of care for others and know right from wrong. The different responsibilities taken up by pupils around the school and the school council lead to pupils gaining a very good understanding of how a community should co-operate. Their respect for themselves and others highlights their spiritual awareness.

The pupils have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle and many participate in the wide range of sporting activities. The positive attitudes to work and their literacy and numeracy skills prepare them particularly well for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Planning is thorough and teachers make good use of assessment information to adapt medium-term planning to meet the needs of most pupils, although in some lessons, especially in writing and mathematics, the most able pupils could be given more difficult work. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and have a good range of expertise to assist learners. Teachers are good at asking challenging questions, which indicates strong subject knowledge across a wide range of subjects. Challenging work is given to pupils, such as problem solving. Plenary sessions at the end or midway through the lesson are useful strategies to test pupils' understanding of what they have learnt.

Teachers make good use of resources, such as interactive whiteboards and computers, both in class and in the dedicated ICT room, and ICT skills are developing very well through relevant activities based on curriculum topics. Teachers make use of a varied range of teaching strategies

including individual, group work, 'hot seating' and cross questioning where pupils have opportunities to explain their learning. When all these strategies are in place and well used, teaching is outstanding, as pupils make rapid progress in a lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and meets the pupils' needs and interests. The programmes of work for literacy, numeracy and ICT successfully enable pupils to develop their basic skills. These are further developed with the cross-curricular links to other subjects. The curriculum is enriched with an excellent range of extra-curricular activities after school and at lunchtimes, which are well attended. There are frequent visits out and visitors to the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding level of care and support for all its pupils. Pupils feel very safe and are prepared to go to any adult in the school, knowing they will help them if they have a problem. The arrangements for ensuring their health, safety and welfare are good with risk assessments in place for various activities around the school. Child protection procedures and safeguarding arrangements are secure.

The assessment system provides teachers with a very good understanding of pupils' progress. It enables them to provide the right academic guidance to pupils and give them appropriate targets in literacy and numeracy. Together with the informative marking of pupils' work in these and other subjects, pupils know what to do to improve. Excellent pastoral support is provided by all staff and, where necessary, the learning mentor and outside agencies.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

There is a clear focus on raising standards in the school improvement plan but criteria to measure success are missing. The headteacher provides an excellent sense of direction for the school and facilitates the professional development of the teachers and support staff well. He has enabled senior staff to take a role in the management and the accurate evaluation of the school, although there is a need to extend the responsibilities to all co-coordinators in analysing and evaluating their own subject areas. All members of staff feel valued and keen to respond to the needs of the pupils.

Good links exist with parents and outside agencies to support and include all pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Governance is good. Through links with individual classes and monitoring visits, governors are well informed and offer a balance of strong support and challenge. Finance is extremely well managed. The school is managing a running programme of repair and decoration, which is having a positive impact on the learning environment for pupils. All members of staff are very effectively deployed, including teaching assistants. The good leadership and management and the progress made since the last inspection show that the school has a good capacity to improve.

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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 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	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	2
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?	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	1
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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of East Preston Junior School, Littlehampton BN16 1EZ

Thank you so much for making us all so welcome in your school. Many of you went to a lot of trouble to come and talk to me and my colleagues during the two days we spent at the school. We are sorry that we missed Year 6, who were on the Isle of Wight residential trip, but we did hear a lot about you and your teachers and we managed to look at your work books.

Many of you told us about how happy you are at school and your extremely good attendance indicates that you really enjoy coming to school. You are right about your school because it is good. Your parents, too, were very supportive of all the school is doing for you in helping you to achieve good standards in your work. You have a right to be pleased with yourselves because you work hard and your attitude to school is so positive. Many of you behave very well, although a few are a little talkative in some lessons. Perhaps you can suggest ways in which you can help here? We noticed that some of you find some of the work a little too easy so we have suggested to the headteacher that he makes sure that some of you are given harder work to do.

All teachers work very hard at your school to make sure that the work you do is interesting. You have some excellent examples of art, craft and ICT work around the school of which you are rightly proud. Although we know you study about other cultures and religions of the world, we know you do not have many opportunities to meet other children and adults from different backgrounds so we have suggested to the school that they find some more ways of doing this. This will make sure that when you are grown up you have a better understanding of how people from different places in the world live their lives in Britain.

I wish you all the best of luck for your future.

Linda Kelsey HMI