

Preston Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101510
Local Authority	Brent
Inspection number	323471
Inspection dates	26–27 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Margaret Goodchild

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	724
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Linda Green
Headteacher	Mr John Redpath
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	College Road Wembley Middlesex HA9 8RJ
Telephone number	0208 904 3602
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Preston Park is very much larger than most primary schools. It serves an area with a large minority ethnic population. Its intake is both ethnically diverse and very mobile. Almost half the pupils are from Asian backgrounds, and around a quarter are of Black African or Caribbean heritage. A very high proportion of pupils, about three quarters, speak English as an additional language and some arrive in Years 1 to 6 with little or no English. Thirty-two children are from families seeking refuge or asylum. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportions with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or with a statement of special educational needs are broadly average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a part-time Nursery, with 60 children, and four Reception classes with a total of 100 children. Onsite childcare at an after school club known as 'Children Making a Change' is not managed by the governing body and was inspected separately.

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 where the headteacher provides visionary leadership and has an absolute commitment to making all aspects of provision as good as possible. The school has made good overall improvement since the last inspection and a number of areas of its work are already outstanding.

There is a strong sense of shared purpose among the staff and this has a very direct impact on pupils' feelings about school. Preston Park Primary is a happy and harmonious place, where the many different ethnic groups get on extremely well together. Pupils work and play in an atmosphere that is calm and dynamic, and they themselves are both excited and self-disciplined. Parents express a high level of satisfaction with the school's work, praising the way it turns out 'well-rounded individuals'. Pupils say the best thing about the school is, 'Our teachers - they are nice to us and we love them'.

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support and, as a result, pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils themselves make a major contribution to the school community by taking on many roles of responsibility. Behaviour is excellent and the school's exclusion rate, particularly of Afro-Caribbean boys, is among the lowest in the borough.

The outstanding curriculum reflects senior leaders' very high expectations. The school embraces a wide range of initiatives in its efforts to enable pupils to fulfil their potential, and it is particularly innovative in its use of information and communication technology (ICT). In the Nursery, staff use digital cameras and portable microphones to promote the communication and language development of children at early stages of learning English or who are reluctant speakers. In Years 3 to 6, all pupils have an electronic notebook which they use in school and at home to access the 'virtual learning environment'. This gives pupils computer access to a wide range of learning experiences, including competing challenges with pupils around the world.

Children join the school with attainment that is below, and in many cases well below, national expectations. They achieve well to reach average standards overall and in 2008, national test results in English and mathematics in Year 6 were above average. However, at the same time, there was a dip in standards at the end of Year 2 and the school is working to raise achievement at Key Stage 1. Teaching is good overall and there is a fair amount of outstanding teaching. There is also some satisfactory teaching, however, and in these lessons, work is not always matched closely to the learning needs of different groups of pupils. This generally means that the most able pupils are not challenged as much as they should be.

Leadership and management are good, and the headteacher is ably supported by other staff in key positions. Self-evaluation is good overall and senior leaders are well aware of what is working well and what needs to be improved. Areas of the school's work have improved from satisfactory to good and in some instances even to outstanding since the last inspection. The school is well placed to improve further. A comprehensive programme of monitoring has given rise to good improvements in teaching. However, self-evaluation needs to be even more rigorous to move this from a good to an outstanding school; there is not a clear, shared understanding among all staff about how to ensure work is matched to the next steps in learning for different groups of pupils.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children achieve well in response to good teaching. In the Nursery, teaching is outstanding and there are examples of children producing work of a very high standard. Their observational drawings of a bicycle show that they were able to concentrate and record an amazing amount of detail for their age. The promotion of early writing skills is also extremely good in the Nursery. In the Reception classes, there are examples of children making good progress in response to a wide range of learning activities but, here, the quality of teaching is more variable. Staff regularly observe and assess children's attainment, and the school has made a good start in involving parents as partners in their children's learning. Children are well cared for and their personal development is good. Provision is led and managed well. The newly appointed manager has clear ideas about how to strengthen collaboration with teachers in Year 1. She has identified, rightly, the need to work closely with staff to improve teaching in the Reception Year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement, particularly in Years 1 and 2, by ensuring that teachers match work to the learning needs of different groups of pupils and provide consistent challenge for the most able.
- Increase the rigour of self-evaluation in bringing about improvements in teaching and ensure all staff are clear about how to match tasks to the prior attainment of different groups of pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

National test results in Year 2 were average in 2007 and the school has already begun to address the dip in results in 2008. Test results in Year 6 were average in 2007 and improved significantly in 2008, when results were above those of schools nationally in English and mathematics. The school exceeded its targets in English and narrowly missed them in mathematics. Progress in lessons is good overall, with some of the best progress in the Nursery and in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are making good progress towards their challenging targets for 2009. There is no significant difference between the progress of different ethnic groups, and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to other pupils. Those who arrive with little or no English quickly begin to pick up the language and make good progress. The most able pupils achieve well in some, but not all, lessons. A wide range of additional activities, such as intensive support sessions and Saturday morning classes, promotes the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well. Pupils' involvement in the school's many clubs, special events and activities, such as writing for the school newspaper, also have a positive impact on their overall achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are friendly and courteous and behave exceptionally well, because they feel safe, valued and special. Relationships at every level are warm and harmonious, and younger pupils look up to and respect older ones. The wide cultural diversity of pupils is celebrated and valued. It

enriches the life and work of the school so that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils' enjoyment of learning is outstanding and attendance is good. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of healthy living: a group of pupils monitor what food is served at lunchtimes and give advice to their peers about healthy choices. Pupils are aware of the need to keep themselves safe and they help each other to do so. They have very close links with the wider community. The school council is highly active and pupils thrive on responsibility. The majority play some important role in the school. Many of these roles involve real financial planning and decision-making which, combined with the good progress they make in basic skills, helps to prepare pupils well for the future. By the time they leave, they are well adjusted, confident and ready for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have good subject knowledge and their enthusiasm spills over to pupils. Attractive and informative displays in classrooms stimulate pupils' learning, and teachers use interactive whiteboards well. They expect pupils to work hard, and use skilful methods to keep them on task. Behaviour is excellent and teachers work with pupils in a shared partnership that goes beyond the bounds of the classroom: teachers are often seen during breaks counselling pupils or talking to them in the playground. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language are supported well by teaching assistants. High-quality sessions are provided for pupils when they first arrive in the school with little or no English. However, in the lessons that are only satisfactory, teachers do not always understand how to match tasks to the wide range of ability within their class. In these lessons, pupils are kept too long on the carpet, more able pupils are not set to work quickly enough and activities do not always extend their thinking sufficiently.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding and contains much that is inspirational. One display says 'We have the whole world in this school', and this is reflected in the breadth and effectiveness of the curriculum, which has an excellent impact on pupils' personal development and is helping to raise standards. The school promotes literacy and numeracy skills well and ICT skills exceptionally well. The rich curriculum embraces a wide variety of additional activities, including tennis, cooking and other languages. Pupils learn French, Spanish and Latin in Years 3 to 6. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is exceptionally good: they join with others from local schools for a day each week for enrichment lessons. Vulnerable pupils are given a confidence boost through attending specially arranged sessions at the Wembley Learning Zone. Helping to look after the school's goats, rabbits and chickens has a calming influence on pupils who have experienced past difficulties. Music is a strong feature of the school, and the choir and orchestra perform to a high standard. Pupils participate in a wide range of physical activities and all classes benefit from teaching by specialist sports coaches. Through its extended services, the school enables pupils to take part in a range of activities after school, and special events, visiting speakers and educational visits, including a trip to France, all enrich pupils' learning exceptionally well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils settle quickly and happily into the school, irrespective of the time of year they arrive. There are excellent systems to ensure that those who arrive unable to speak English quickly get the help they need, so that they soon feel part of the school and make good progress. Robust systems are in place for assessing risks and ensuring pupils are kept safe. There are very good systems to challenge persistent absence and lateness, which have brought about improvements in attendance. All the staff are committed to the care and welfare of pupils, who place enormous trust in them and know to whom they can turn if they have a problem. There are excellent systems for supporting pupils with emotional and behavioural needs and these include well-trained pupil mentors. Pupils who need particular support for their behaviour benefit from an outstanding tracking system that helps the school to plan extra help for them. Assessment is good. Thorough academic tracking provides teachers with the information they need to set realistic individual targets in English and mathematics. Pupils know their targets, treat them seriously and strive to meet them. Marking generally shows pupils what they have done well and how they can improve. Pupils' attainment is regularly checked and parents and their children meet termly with the class teacher and the headteacher to discuss progress and future targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides outstanding direction to the school's work, and the leadership and management of the curriculum and pastoral care are exceptional. The school is highly inclusive and its promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. The involvement of the school in the community, and of members of the local community in the school, contributes to the rich religious and cultural tapestry that makes up Preston Park Primary. Elderly residents attend an annual remembrance celebration, groups of Somali and Polish parents provide links with their communities and the school has strong global links. It contributes to schemes for street children in Africa and South America and was part of a BBC World Class initiative with a school in Ghana. Strong links with local secondary schools are used to very good effect. Information from tracking pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection. It is used well at whole-school level to set challenging targets, and is used very well to refine the curriculum. Its use is rather more variable at the level of individual teachers. There has been good improvement in subject and year group leadership since the last inspection. However, the school has identified that improving leadership skills is important in raising standards further and this is particularly the case in relation to matching work in class to the needs of different groups. Governors provide good support and challenge to the school's work.

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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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

12 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Preston Park Primary School, Middlesex, HA9 8RJ

Thank you for making us feel welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our time with you so much that we felt sad when it was time to leave. You told us that you love school and it was wonderful to see your smiling faces as you arrived in the morning and to listen to the inspiring singing in assembly.

You know that you go to a lovely school and many of your parents wrote to say that they are very pleased with its work. We agree with the many good things you and your parents told us, because Preston Park Primary is a good school and it does some things extremely well.

These are some of the best things we found out about your school.

- It is a very happy place to be, where people get on well together.
- You are excited about all the interesting things to do and there is always a lot going on.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you try hard with your work so that you make good progress.
- The staff care for you extremely well and you know that there is always someone to help if you are worried.
- Many of you take on responsibilities, as head boy and head girl and their deputies, prefects, peer mentors, members of the school council, and by doing many other important jobs to help the school.

You have an extremely good headteacher and he wants to make the school as good as it can possibly be for you. We have asked him and all the other teachers to:

- help you to reach even higher standards by making sure that work you do in class is not too difficult nor too easy
- check carefully to make sure that this is happening.

We hope you enjoy the rest of your time at Preston Park Primary and keep having fun and working hard.

Yours faithfully

Ms M J Goodchild

Lead Inspector