

Primrose Hill Primary School and Childrens Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	129466
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	328517
Inspection dates	22–23 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Joe Peacock

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	284
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	Mr Paul Thompson
Headteacher	Mrs Gill Harding
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Phoebe Street Ordsall Salford Greater Manchester M5 3PJ

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	22–23 April 2009
Inspection number	328517

Telephone number
Fax number

0161 9212400
0161 9212415

Age group	4-11
Inspection dates	22-23 April 2009
Inspection number	328517

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school opened in September 2007 and was formed by the amalgamation of two schools. It is larger than average and is situated in an inner-city residential area. Most pupils are White British with less than 10% from a minority ethnic background. Very few pupils have English as an additional language. There is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage with children taught in a Nursery and Reception unit. A separate inspection report is available for the Children's Centre which opened shortly after the school. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There have been a significant number of long term staff absences since the school opened.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. However, the ambition and drive of the headteacher combined with an attractive new school building with its spacious grounds are inspiring staff and pupils alike. As a result, some aspects have developed well and are good but some are still embryonic and developing. All staff are enthusiastic about the exciting journey they have embarked upon. Establishing a new school and coping with significant staff absence has called for calm and purposeful leadership by the headteacher to guide the school through a challenging period. She has earned the admiration of staff and the confidence of parents.

Because this is a new school the only data available relates to 2008. Pupils get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve broadly average standards. Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and improving. In the 2008 results for Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science were below average. There is no data for the school available before this to show a trend but inspection evidence and the school's tracking shows almost all pupils are making satisfactory progress to achieve the targets set for them. Effective strategies to identify and support pupils who are falling behind and the school's involvement in an intensive support programme are effectively raising standards. However, not enough more able pupils are achieving above average standards.

Overall, pupils' personal development is satisfactory, but improving. The good level of care, support and guidance is making a difference. Aspects such as pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, their enjoyment of learning and behaviour are good. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In a number of lessons teaching and learning are good but the school recognises the importance of improving the effectiveness of teaching to raise standards. In particular, the more able pupils are not always given sufficiently challenging tasks in some lessons and teachers are not consistently planning tasks which stimulate and motivate pupils to want to learn. Staff have concentrated on improving the provision for literacy, numeracy and science resulting in a satisfactory curriculum. Pupils enjoy enrichment activities such as the many after-school clubs, visits and visitors.

Care, guidance and support are good and all safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Staff invest heavily in their time and effort to ensure pupils are happy, safe and supported whenever the need arises. This has been helpful in ensuring pupils settle well into the new school. Good procedures have been established to assess pupils' progress and ensure all pupils have the help and academic guidance they need. Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. The headteacher and senior leaders have ensured systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. The role of the subject managers in evaluating the work of the school is developing but few have had the necessary time to impact fully on raising standards. The school's involvement in an intensive support programme is having a positive impact in bringing about improvements and giving the school a good capacity for further improvement. Staff can be proud of the 'I can do' culture that has been established. 'Excellent roots for the future', is a typical and accurate comment from parents.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start school with skills that are well below those typical for their age. They make good progress because the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. However, overall standards are still generally below expectations when children enter Year 1. Children's progress is carefully checked. Achievements are noted and photographed to form attractive records for parents of their children's successes. In addition to celebrating achievement, staff use the records effectively to plan the next stage of learning. Teamwork between all staff is outstanding. Good procedures are in place to ensure that the care and welfare of children have a high priority. Staff are good at developing children's independence in learning through well planned and resourced activities. The indoor and outdoor environments support and extend children's spontaneous play well allowing them to initiate their own learning. This good provision underpins children's enjoyment of learning and their good attitudes. The development of children's early literacy and numeracy skills are given a high priority through regular well organised sessions to meet their individual needs. As children progress, they use their growing knowledge and understanding of letter sounds to write words, captions and phrases to describe aspects of their work. The achievement gap between boys and girls is closing because the interest of boys is captured well through themes such as 'Superheroes', 'Spaceships' and 'Safari Adventure'. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are quickly identified and receive sensitive support. This enables them to take as full a part as possible in the school community. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and is a motivating force in bringing about changes to improve the provision and outcomes for children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Ensure teachers consistently plan exciting and stimulating learning opportunities for all pupils and set sufficiently challenging work for more able pupils.
- Develop the role of the subject leaders in evaluating the work of the school and raising standards.

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

Pupils make good progress from their below average starting point on entry to Year 1 to reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Inspection evidence shows that pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. In the first national test results for the school in 2008, standards for Year 6 were significantly below average. They were especially low in science. However, this represented satisfactory achievement because of the low starting points of a high proportion of the pupils, who had been in this new school for less than one year. The school is involved in an intensive support programme with consultants from the local authority supporting staff in their efforts to raise standards. Their collective efforts are beginning to pay dividends. Inspection evidence shows that standards are improving throughout the school, although overall, the current Year 6 are still below average in English and mathematics. This is because not enough more able pupils are achieving above average

standards. In science, standards are also below average and a significant improvement on the very low results attained by pupils in the 2008 tests. They are improving because there is much more emphasis on pupils investigating for themselves. The volume and quality of work in the current Years 5 and 6 is impressive. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress throughout. This is largely due to the effectiveness of the support they receive in lessons and the wide range of effective programmes to support and encourage their learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils behave well, are clear about school rules and understand the consequences of their actions. They are enthusiastic about receiving certificates in recognition for good work and behaviour. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities such as being a school councillor, looking after the 'help desk' which enables others to make suggestions about school improvement and running the healthy tuck shop at break times. They have a sound knowledge of what is required to live healthily. Pupils feel safe in school because staff ensure that they are well cared for and supported when in difficulty. They know how to deal with bullying and are provided with good opportunities to explore their feelings and emotions. Attendance is broadly average and punctuality is an issue that the school is trying hard to resolve with parents, pupils and the support of outside agencies. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show a good level of respect and concern for others. This was seen in the mature way Year 5 and 6 pupils empathised with children in India and Africa who could not go to school and who could not read. Reflective assemblies highlight a range of themes that link closely to the pupils' own lives and events such as Saint George's day. Community links are developing well and the effective programmes for pupils' personal, social and health education together with rising standards in basic skills ensure pupils are adequately prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Although the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, there are pockets of good practice. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and help pupils to grow in confidence and be positive about school and their learning. On the occasions where teaching is good, pupils make good progress. In these lessons, teachers plan interesting and demanding tasks to meet pupils' different needs and abilities, making learning exciting and fun. However, in some lessons, learning is hampered by activities that are not planned well enough to interest pupils or meet the full range of needs within the class. On occasions, introductory sessions are too long and the slow pace of some lessons causes pupils to lose interest. In some instances, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough, especially for the more able who quickly finish work that is too easy. Consequently, rates of progress are no better than satisfactory in these lessons. Teaching assistants provide valuable support, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are learning to speak English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The satisfactory curriculum enables most pupils to make steady progress. Staff, with the support of local authority consultants, have successfully reviewed the curriculum for English, mathematics and science and inspection evidence shows this is helping to raise standards, especially in reading. However, staff absences have disrupted the development of a more creative curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development giving them the right attitudes and skills to help them to succeed. A number of after-school enrichment activities such as kick boxing and cheer-leading extend pupils' learning and social skills and contribute to the development of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures is nurtured through visitors such as Zulu Nation, African art and learning French. Frequent visitors to the school and visits to the local community contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning in all subject areas.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Policies and procedures to safeguard pupils are in place and reviewed regularly. Strong relationships result in pupils behaving respectfully and having trust and confidence to turn to adults when help or advice is needed. Attendance is improving because the school has a wide range of strategies to tackle absence including first day home contact. The school does all it can to prepare pupils for secondary education so that most Year 6 pupils feel confident and well prepared for the next steps in their education. The school is strongly committed to inclusion and equality of opportunity. For example, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those with English as an additional language, make similar progress to other pupils because of the effective support they receive from teaching assistants and outside agencies. Support for pupils' academic development is good and helping to raise standards. Pupils' progress is checked every half term so that any underachievement can be quickly nipped in the bud. Pupils know their targets and what they need to do to attain them. Teachers' comments in exercise books are usually clear in indicating what pupils should do to make their work better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher ably supported by senior leaders leads an enthusiastic staff team. All share the vision of creating an outstanding school but staff absences have resulted in delays and disruption to this ambitious target. Staff are committed to raising standards and ensuring equality of opportunity for pupils. Together with leaders and managers they have created a happy and vibrant school. Subject leaders are developing their role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning but some are too new to have had full impact on raising standards. Nevertheless, self-evaluation is good and the school has a good understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. There are effective procedures in place to evaluate the school's performance and monitor pupils' achievement. Community cohesion is satisfactory with new links being forged within the local and wider communities. Governors are very supportive and

are particularly keen to help the school to improve and are strengthening their procedures to evaluate the school's effectiveness.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
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?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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 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?	2

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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

Inspection of Primrose Hill Primary School and Children's Centre, Salford, M5 3PJ

Thank you for being so friendly and polite to me and my colleagues during the inspection. We really enjoyed visiting your lovely new school. You helped us to find out all we needed to know about how well you work and learn. We also had a good response to the parental questionnaire and it was pleasing to see how much your parents appreciate the close ties that are developing with staff and their involvement with school and your learning.

You go to a satisfactory school that has some good features. There is so much for you to do and to enjoy like the interesting after-school clubs and all the trips and visitors that are arranged for you. You told us that staff take good care of you. We could see how well you get on with your teachers and how much you like school. All my colleagues were impressed with your good behaviour and concentration in lessons, even when some of your tasks were far too easy or not very exciting.

Children in the Nursery and Reception unit get off to a good start and really enjoy choosing their own activities in class or in the outdoor area with its tents and planks and palettes to make bridges. Overall, you are making satisfactory progress but your standards are below average in English, mathematics and science. We have asked your teachers to help you improve in these subjects. It does not help when you miss school or are late! We have also asked your teachers to try and make all your lessons enjoyable and exciting and that those of you who sometimes find work easy are given tasks that will make you think really hard!

We know that leaders and managers do a satisfactory job and are working very hard with your other teachers to improve your school. We have asked that those teachers who take responsibility for different subjects check more closely on how well you are doing to help raise standards.

Thank you again for your help. Good luck for the future and keep up the good work.