

# Preston Hedges Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131123
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328556
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 April 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Terry Elston

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	424
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	59
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Karen Osler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Watson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Wootton Hope Drive Wootton Northampton NN4 6BU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 665860
<b>Fax number</b>	01604 665861

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

- The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:
- the standards attained by boys in English at Key Stage 1 and by more-able pupils in mathematics at Key Stage 2
- the consistency of good teaching and learning
- the role played by middle managers in raising standards.

The inspectors gathered evidence from observations of lessons, discussions with pupils, governors and staff, tracking pupils' progress, analysis of attendance and gaining the views of parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a large school with few pupils from minority ethnic groups. Very few of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below that of most schools. The governing body manages before and after school clubs on the premises for around 30 children. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are typical of their ages.

## 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 with some outstanding features, where pupils achieve well and leave well-prepared for the future. As one parent said, reflecting the views of many: 'They develop into confident, well-rounded individuals.' Pupils build well on their excellent start in the Reception classes so that, by Year 2, standards are above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. Boys' standards are not as high as those of girls' in reading and writing because they do not always have the same level of interest in these subjects. By Year 6, pupils continue to achieve well and standards are exceptionally high in English, well above average in science and above average in mathematics. Standards are lower in mathematics than in other subjects because more able pupils are not always challenged to attain the high standards of which they are capable. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology, and art and design, and enjoy many opportunities to develop these skills. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. They are supported very well by skilled teaching and support staff and are given every opportunity to be fully involved in all school activities.

An important factor in pupils' good progress is their exceptional personal and social development. They reflect deeply on issues such as poverty around the world and take very good care of each other. One pupil summed this up well when saying: 'You never get lonely here because there is always a playground buddy or a friend to play with you.' They behave exceptionally well and are always keen to learn. They really enjoy school, and attendance figures are high. They take responsibility eagerly, and are justifiably proud of their role in improving the school as members of the school council or eco committee.

Pupils are full of praise for their good teachers, particularly for the way 'they are always trying to think of new ways to help you learn'. Lessons are a good balance between the teacher teaching new skills, pupils working at tasks well matched to their abilities and time for reflection at the end to assess their progress. A significant proportion of the teaching is outstanding, with very high expectations of pupils' work and imaginative use of resources to capture pupils' attention. Teachers' assessments provide accurate measures of pupils' attainment and they use them effectively to show pupils how well they are doing.

The teachers have designed an excellent and innovative curriculum that has a strong focus on basic literacy and numeracy skills while providing many opportunities for pupils to develop their talents in subjects such as art and design, film, dance and music. The curriculum provides much to teach pupils about how to stay healthy and keep safe, and they speak with authority on the best foods to eat and the hazards of smoking and drugs. There is a wide range of popular clubs at lunchtime and after school to enrich the curriculum. Pupils are thrilled with the wide range of visiting artists, dancers and actors that help to explain the school's high reputation for its arts provision and make learning such fun. The school is very good at adapting the curriculum to rectify weaknesses in pupils' attainment, and the improvements in provision for English at Key Stage 2 have raised standards significantly. Recent developments to provide greater challenge for more-able pupils in mathematics at Key Stage 2 and boys in English at Key Stage 1 are already bearing fruit. Parents think very highly of the school and, as one put it, the 'great start it gives the children'. They appreciate the very high quality of the care, support and guidance that makes their children feel safe and valued. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and reviewed regularly. The staff track pupils' progress very carefully and use the data well to set challenging targets. The good provision for children in the before- and

after-school clubs is much improved since it was last inspected, and parents say how much their children enjoy these stimulating and well run sessions.

Good leadership and management are keys to the school's success. The headteacher leads very well, with high expectations of the school and a determination that that all pupils, whatever their abilities or background, have every opportunity to succeed. Senior staff and middle managers support the headteacher effectively, and those who are relatively inexperienced take full advantage of the many opportunities to develop their leadership skills. Their strength is the way they work as a closely-knit team to analyse the school's performance in great detail and produce comprehensive action plans to make improvements. The school promotes community cohesion well, and gives pupils many opportunities to appreciate the diversity of cultures, faiths and economic backgrounds in school, in the wider community and across the world. The well informed governing body provides good support to the school and is not afraid to challenge the leaders' decisions. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection, particularly in ensuring the consistency of good teaching and learning, and it is well set to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

The provision is outstanding, and children's standards are above average by the end of Reception. The very good induction procedures, excellent partnerships with parents and rigorous attention to children's welfare ensure that they settle quickly into school routines, feel safe and are ready to learn. As one parent put it: 'This is a wonderful start to a child's education,' The high quality of the teaching, with a strong emphasis on developing children's language, writing, numeracy and social skills, ensures that they achieve exceptionally well. The outstanding curriculum, built around the stimulating indoor and outdoor classrooms, fully supports all the different areas of learning. Children grasp every opportunity to learn and play, and do both with great enthusiasm. For example, they had just as much fun writing about their journey on a magic carpet as riding on a pirate ship and mixing a potion to make their spells work. Staff observe children's learning and development very carefully, and use the information well to plan future work.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent, and the sensitive encouragement and guidance they receive helps them to become happy and independent learners. They behave exceptionally well and learn to play with and help each other. The provision is led and managed extremely well. Staff have a clear understanding of how well the provision meets children's needs and how it could be improved still further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- At Key Stage 1, ensure that boys are motivated to achieve as well as they can in reading and writing.
- At Key Stage 2, raise standards in mathematics by always ensuring that the more able pupils have opportunities to make the best of their abilities.

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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?	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?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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?	2
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**

1 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Preston Hedges Primary School, Wootton, NN4 6BU.

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and play so happily outside. The many of you who were kind enough to speak to us showed how proud you are of your school. You are right to be, because it is a good school!

What we found out about your school

- You love school and make good progress to attain higher standards than are found in most schools.
- You behave really well, both in class and out in the playground.
- You get on exceptionally well with other pupils and always look after each other.
- You know a lot about how to stay safe and live healthy lives.
- You think carefully about people in the world who are not as fortunate as you.
- The leaders are good at running the school and know how to improve things.
- The excellent topics planned for you make learning very interesting, and you love the many clubs at lunchtime and after school that develop your skills in things like music, film and sport.
- Your teachers are doing a good job. They work very hard to plan interesting lessons and, as one of you said: 'They explain things very clearly.'
- All staff at the school take outstanding care of you and keep you safe.
- The excellent Reception classes give children a fantastic start to school.

What we would like the school to do now

- Help the younger boys do as well in their reading and writing as girls. You can help, boys, by always trying to do your best work.
- Ensure that those who find mathematics easy at Key Stage 2 are given work to make the best of their abilities.

Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston

Lead inspector