

# Princes Risborough Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133513
<b>Local Authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328706
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Mankelow

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)	230
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Whitaker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Andy George
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 October 2007
<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>	Wellington Avenue Princes Risborough HP27 9HY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01844 345251
<b>Fax number</b>	01844 344917

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Princes Risborough is an average-sized primary school. It has been led by an acting headteacher since September 2008. The school includes specialist provision for 12 pupils who have social communication difficulties (SCD). These pupils are reflected in the higher-than-average percentage of pupils who have statements of special educational need. The vast majority of pupils are White British. When the school was inspected in November 2007, it was judged to be providing an inadequate education and required significant improvement in relation to the work of the SCD department, the curriculum, academic guidance and support and leadership and management. The school provides Early Years Foundation Provision (EYFS) through Nursery and Reception classes. The school has received a number of national awards, including the Healthy School and Activemark awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Princes Risborough is now a satisfactory school. Outstanding leadership from the acting headteacher, who is a National Leader of Education, and effective support from the local authority have resulted in rapid improvements. Most parents recognise the recent improvements and are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, one typically commenting, 'What a difference a few months make! The acting headteacher has been a revelation.' The school provides good pastoral care and this results in pupils' good personal development. The SCD department now makes good provision, so pupils make good progress in overcoming their particular difficulties. This is because they are taught well and, where possible, are fully included in the life of the school. They make satisfactory academic progress.

On entry to the Nursery, each group of children has differing levels of skills, but overall these are broadly as expected for their ages. Children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning, except for their personal, social and emotional development (PSED) in which they make good progress. Children move into Year 1 at levels broadly in line with the local authority averages. They make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6 and move on to their secondary schools with broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science.

Overall, teaching is satisfactory, and much of it is good in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is characterised by good relationships, which result in pupils having good attitudes towards their work. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Teachers mark work conscientiously, so pupils know how well they have done and are frequently given ideas about what their next steps should be. However, they are not always given sufficient opportunities to carry out the teacher's advice and this slows their progress. There are now effective procedures to assess pupils' attainment and track their progress. However, these are new and some teachers do not yet have a full understanding of the information that the assessments provide, so are not setting medium- and long-term targets that are sufficiently challenging. In addition, day-to-day assessment information is not always used to plan work that is accurately matched to pupils' prior learning. This is particularly so for the more able pupils, who are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons and so do not make the progress of which they are capable.

The curriculum has improved and is now satisfactory. Teachers are beginning to link subjects together and provide more work that is exciting, which results in most pupils thoroughly enjoying coming to school. The curriculum now ensures that pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local communities. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory overall, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of Britain as a diverse society and to engage with others from a different cultural background, in the United Kingdom and further afield. The school has identified this as an area for further development.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The acting headteacher has identified staff with leadership skills and, with support from local authority consultants, is helping them to develop these skills. They are beginning to be involved in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school and this work is beginning to have a positive impact on the provision made for pupils. For example, the mathematics coordinator's monitoring of standards in the subject has led to earlier identification of pupils at risk of underachievement, and the provision

of appropriate booster sessions for them. However, it is too soon for the recent actions of the senior management team and other subject leaders to have made a full impact on achievement.

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

### **Grade: 3**

The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is satisfactory. The school's good pastoral care begins as soon as children enter the Nursery. As a result, most children settle happily and quickly become familiar with school routines. All staff in the Nursery and Reception classes have good relationships with the children, so personal development and well-being are good. Staff pay good attention to children's welfare. Good use is made of the outside area to provide activities covering all areas of learning. Teachers excel in catching children's attention through imaginative reading of stories, such as 'We're going on a bear hunt', and then acting out the story outside, going 'squelch, squelch' as they wade through the 'thick, oozy mud'. However, opportunities are then lost to capitalise on the children's enthusiasm by developing their skills through activities related to the original story, for example by giving opportunities for free writing. This limits children's achievement.

Leadership and management of the EYFS are satisfactory. Staff make and record regular assessments of children's learning and use these to plan the next day's and week's work. However, they are not yet making full use of the results of assessments made at the end of the EYFS to target areas of relative weakness.

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

- Improve the consistency of teachers' understanding of assessment data so that they all set appropriately challenging medium- and long-term targets for pupils' achievement.
- Ensure that all teachers' day-to-day planning provides work that is accurately matched to pupils' prior attainment, especially for those with the potential to reach higher-than-expected levels.
- Raise achievement by involving senior managers and other subject leaders more in evaluating pupils' learning across the school.

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**

Results of statutory assessments for Year 2 pupils in 2008 were broadly average, with a strength in mathematics. Provisional results in 2008 for pupils in Year 6 were better than in 2007. The proportions of pupils reaching the standard expected for their age were around national averages in mathematics and a little above those in English and science. The proportions reaching above the expected level were similar to previous averages in all subjects. Good provision is made for pupils with identified learning difficulties who are on the school's mainstream roll and those in the SCD department. As a result, they make the same academic progress as other pupils.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy coming to school because they are well looked after, and many lessons are now much more interesting than they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils enthused, for example, about the Civil War Day that supported their learning in history, English and science, and involved members of a local battle re-enactment group. Spiritual development is good because pupils are given opportunities to reflect during lessons. For instance, Year 6 pupils showed deep empathy for the plight of Battle of Britain pilots when one, taking the role of a pilot, was asked by another, 'How did you feel when you saw your friend so badly burned?' Moral development is good; pupils have a well-developed understanding of what is right and what is wrong and they behave well. Social development is also good. Pupils grow to be polite, mature young people and the school has a calm, purposeful atmosphere. They feel safe and well cared for and readily approach an adult if they have any worries. Satisfactory achievement in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) prepares pupils adequately for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

As a result of good support from the acting headteacher and from the local authority, more of the teaching is now good than was found at the time of the last inspection. In particular, teaching is more focused on the basic skills of reading and writing and more lessons move at a brisk pace. However, some inconsistencies remain. In some lessons, work is not matched closely enough to pupils' needs and abilities, and the work does not always build on what pupils have already learned. As a result, in these lessons, pupils' progress slows. This is especially so for those with the potential to reach levels above those expected for their age. Learning objectives for each lesson are usually made clear, so pupils know what they should have learned by the end of the lesson. Teachers are increasingly giving pupils opportunities to assess for themselves how well they have achieved, but this practice is recent and has not yet had time to raise achievement.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is broad and balanced and covers all statutory requirements. A good range of sporting clubs and the curriculum for physical education make an important contribution to pupils' good healthy lifestyles. Visitors to school enrich the curriculum; for example, a retired Dakota pilot stimulated pupils' work about the Second World War. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the theme days and weeks, for example, those about pirates, the Olympic Games, the Civil War and Charles Dickens. Improved provision for religious education has given pupils a sound knowledge of the features of a variety of religions, but this does not include an understanding of diversity in Britain or globally.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

The school works well with outside agencies to support vulnerable families and pupils with statements of special educational need, including those in the SCD department. The pastoral support for these pupils is outstanding. Teachers regularly assess pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics and the results are clearly recorded. However, academic guidance is inconsistent, because some teachers do not use the wide range of assessment information that is now available to them to set sufficiently challenging medium- and long-term targets. This restricts pupils' progress.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

In his brief time at the school, the acting headteacher has made an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has brought about many rapid improvements. Improvements in the SCD department, the curriculum and assessment and tracking systems demonstrate that the school is soundly placed to continue to improve. Staff are now united, motivated and committed to school improvement. Phase and subject leaders are beginning to take responsibility for raising standards, but their actions have not yet had time to make a significant impact on achievement.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors now have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because they are given accurate and detailed reports by the acting headteacher, and increasingly by other senior leaders. Governors are now linked to specific phases within the school, but these links are not fully developed and have not had time to make an impact on raising achievement.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<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>	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
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

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

10 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Princes Risborough Primary School, Princes Risborough, HP27 9HY

You may remember that I visited your school a little while ago with another inspector. Thank you very much for telling us all about your school and for making us feel so welcome. I am writing now to tell you what we found.

When your school was inspected just over a year ago, the inspectors who came then said that there were many things that needed to be improved. Many of you told us that things are a lot better now and we agree with you. We were especially pleased to see how much you enjoy coming to school. Many of your lessons are really interesting, especially when you have the theme weeks like the ones about the Civil War, the Second World War and Charles Dickens. All of the staff look after you well and if you have any worries, most of you are happy to talk to one of them.

Yours is now a satisfactory school. Teaching is satisfactory and is getting better. Teachers assess your work regularly and keep good records of how well you are doing.

There are three things that we have asked school to do to make things even better:

- use its assessment records to make sure that your targets for the end of the year are high enough
- make sure that you are always given work that is hard enough in your lessons, especially those of you who find work easy
- make sure that the senior staff work together to check that you are all doing as well as you should be.

You can help your teachers a lot by continuing to behave well and work hard.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

David Mankelow

Lead Inspector