

Prince Edward Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107090
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	331263
Inspection dates	16–17 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Susan Bowles HMI

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)	308
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 Richard Foster
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Parry
Date of previous school inspection	20 February 2008
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	747 City Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S12 2AA
Telephone number	0114 2281900
Fax number	0114 2399307

Age group	3–11
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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

The school is larger than average. It is in a regeneration area near the centre of Sheffield and serves an area of social and economic disadvantage. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well above average. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very high. Most pupils are White British with a small minority from African or Asian backgrounds. A few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The school has the Healthy Schools Award. In February 2008, the school was given a notice to improve. After a period in a learning partnership with another primary school, a headteacher with considerable experience of leading similar schools was appointed in April 2009. The school continues to receive substantial support from the local authority. Some new staff have been appointed and take up their posts in September 2009. The Early Years Foundation Stage now occupies a newly refurbished unit within the school.

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. It provides satisfactory value for money.

Prince Edward's School provides a satisfactory quality of education. Over the past year, pupils' attendance and progress have improved from an unsatisfactory position, and the improvements are gathering pace. Standards remain low but have risen across the age range. Pupils' progress is now broadly satisfactory, though they have not made up for all their earlier slow progress and underachievement. The school has not yet met the national expectations for pupils' attainment in Year 6, though it has moved much closer. Pupils' personal development and well-being are sound in all respects except their future economic well-being.

The improvements seen have been brought about by leadership which has raised achievement by offering more effective support to pupils at risk of falling behind and by improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Partnerships and resources are used well to boost attendance. Good use of local authority support has provided intensive guidance for teachers and assistants. The curriculum is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are consistently satisfactory, with some good features, but not enough teaching in key areas is consistently good enough to eradicate the effect of past underachievement. Teachers are increasingly competent at assessing the levels pupils are working at, but their planning does not always reflect the good understanding of how pupils learn in different subjects that is needed to accelerate progress. Teachers give their pupils clear information about what is expected of them and how well they have done, but there is little evidence that pupils respond to the guidance so that they move forward quickly in their learning. The school's senior leadership has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, which is shared with the supportive governors. It already has plans to deal with the areas for development identified in this report. To date it has implemented appropriate strategies at a well-judged pace and with impact. From September, nearly half the staff, including two associate headteachers, will be new to the school. Middle leadership is currently underdeveloped. However, there is a clear direction which is understood across the school and this, together with the school's recent record of improvement, indicates sufficient capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Facilities have improved since the last inspection, and children benefit from a good mix of child- and adult-led activities, indoors and out, although not all activities are made as exciting as they could be to enrich learning. Effective leadership and management have ensured consistent use of sensible strategies, so that staff work well as a team, make good observations and develop positive relationships with parents. New children joining Nursery are settled in and individual needs are identified so that early intervention strategies are quickly applied. Good attention is paid to welfare requirements. Children's steps in their learning and development are carefully tracked. Staff share records of children's achievements with parents, quite a number of whom expressed appreciation about their children's progress and happiness. Children's overall achievement is satisfactory and is steadily improving each year. In the Nursery, children consistently make at least satisfactory progress from very low starting points. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage children's skills are still below those expected nationally for

their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. Children's personal development and well-being are satisfactory: they enjoy their experiences, learn to take turns and make friends well. They behave sensibly when sharing toys and are aware of risks. Planning details clearly how all areas of the curriculum are covered and is responsive to children's interests.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the number of pupils reaching the nationally expected standards for their age.
- Move more teaching to a good quality, by developing teachers' understanding of how pupils learn in different subjects, so they plan more effectively to accelerate progress.
- Ensure pupils reflect and act on their teachers' guidance to help them move forward in their learning.
- Ensure new leaders and staff at all levels are effective in evaluating and leading the improvement of 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

Standards are well below average and achievement is broadly satisfactory. Both have improved since the last inspection over a year ago. When children join the Early Years Foundation Stage their skills are much lower than those typical for their age. By the end of Reception, their skills are still below the expected level, but they have made at least satisfactory progress. The school has good grounds for expecting about 30% to reach the nationally expected level at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage this year, compared with 24% last year. In Key Stage 1, standards have steadily risen and achievement was satisfactory for all groups of pupils in 2008. School data for the current Year 2 indicate satisfactory progress. Although standards are below average, the attainment gap has been reduced in both mathematics and writing this year. This group of pupils includes a higher proportion with low starting points than the previous cohort. The rising standards in Key Stage 1 reflect the developing skills of the teaching team.

Progress is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 2, but more patchy. The pupils currently in Year 6 underachieved in the past and started Year 3 with exceptionally low standards. Most pupils are now on track to meet their suitably challenging individual targets. Their progress has accelerated, due to better use of assessment and intensive, targeted support. The school's assessments indicate that standards in Year 6 are still low, but significantly more pupils this year than last are working at the standards expected nationally for their age. Progress is generally satisfactory in the other Key Stage 2 classes, though with patches of slower progress, for instance, in Year 3. One factor has been the lack of challenge to match pupils' prior attainment. The school has made good use of its systems to detect variations in progress and the quality of teaching and assessment. It has acted effectively to support teachers so that progress is now more consistent. This includes for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, whose progress has mirrored the improvements shown by others and is also satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Attendance has improved from a very low level two years ago to just over 92% this year so far. This has met the local authority's target and compares reasonably with similar schools, though it is below the national average. Most pupils behave with some self-control, though there are occasional incidents of rudeness. They are aware of risks, because adults check they understand the reason for safety rules. A small number of parents expressed concerns about bullying, but they and pupils agree that school staff listen and act when problems arise. Racist incidents are rare, as a result of pupils' social and emotional learning. Spiritual, moral and cultural development is generally satisfactory. Pupils really enjoy learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, higher up the school, where teaching offers a well-pitched challenge. However, when the pace slows they become disengaged and low-level disruption surfaces. They respond well to calm reminders about good behaviour from adults, but many find it more difficult to work independently or in groups without close support. Pupils take up the opportunities to contribute to the school community, whether helping to operate technology in the Early Years Foundation Stage or being buddies to other pupils. They practise workplace skills by applying for posts of responsibility in school, but their low skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology hinder their future economic prospects.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are consistently satisfactory and some good features were seen. On occasions where teaching is good, it is well planned to support groups to learn independently and make solid progress. In the best lessons seen, pupils concentrate on the work for extended times and are challenged to think about what works and why. Talk is widely used, sometimes to good effect, for instance when pupils produce answers to quick-fire mental arithmetic problems or act out situations before they write. Recent developments in the use of assessment across the whole school ensure that planning is suitably focused and pupils use criteria for success to check their work. Monitoring has ensured that pupils receive constructive marking, although the impact is limited as pupils do not routinely have opportunity to respond to it. Teaching assistants help pupils to participate in lessons, so that all pupils understand what they need to do and are helped to engage with class discussions. Recent monitoring and work scrutiny by senior leaders have highlighted appropriate areas for improvement, including setting suitably challenging expectations and helping pupils to acquire new skills or understanding. Teachers reflect on the impact of their lessons but are not yet confident enough in the different subject areas to plan work effectively enough to help pupils make more rapid progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum fulfils statutory requirements and provides some opportunities for enjoyable practical learning which develops communication skills. Creative approaches have had a good impact on writing in Key Stage 1, as the fascinating display inspired by the story of 'The Princess and the Pea' showed. Pupils enjoy learning French. Display is well used to remind pupils of the key words and phrases they are learning. Suitable opportunities for physical education are supplemented by a range of after-school clubs. Pupils go out of school to learn in the community

library and through visits such as to the Railway Museum and Bishop's House. Photographic displays clearly show the pupils' excitement when experiencing drama or the wonders of space through 'The Cosmos Zone'. The science curriculum is being reviewed to emphasise investigation. Pupils are keen to use the recently improved information and communication technology (ICT) resources to support their learning, but some opportunities to do so are missed. The organisation of the curriculum has recently been changed to support links between subjects and streamline the school day, something pupils appreciate. Several well-resourced rooms provide well for the wide range of appropriate intervention groups. The immediate effect of the intervention is tracked, although the longer term impact on pupils' progress is not clear.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff are careful about risks to the pupils' health and safety. Attendance has improved because a robust strategy to reduce absences has been applied with rigour and good cooperation between staff and other agencies. This has had a positive effect on the attitudes and habits of some casual and persistent absentees, though the school knows there is more to be done and continues its efforts. Pupils at risk are identified early and receive good support. The nurture group enables some vulnerable children to make good progress in their social and emotional skills, though it has not yet secured good academic progress. The school tries many ways to listen to and involve parents, for example, in early learning activities at the start of the day and celebrations of their children's achievement. Academic guidance has improved with more accurate and detailed assessment. Recently, effective monitoring and clear advice to teachers have had a good effect on the marking of pupils' work. Across the age range, pupils are receiving specific and helpful comments on their work, though the impact on raising standards is limited because pupils do not routinely follow them up.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are effective and strengthening. The improvements seen in pupils' attendance have been achieved by well coordinated teamwork over the past year. The current senior leadership team, formed recently with local authority support, has a strong mix of expertise. The headteacher has successfully communicated a powerful sense of direction to staff. The school evaluates itself accurately and has a realistic plan which is steering much hard work. The senior team monitors the work of the school rigorously and supports staff effectively. Though middle leadership is at an early stage, it has made its mark on learning in literacy and numeracy across the school. Staff spoken to say they have learned how to be more effective and some feel empowered. Suitably challenging targets are being used to raise standards for all learners; regular tracking of pupils' performance is used to focus improvement and staff are more accountable. This has recently accelerated pupils' progress and is reducing the amount of very low attainment. With several further changes of staff this summer, the challenge for the school is to ensure leadership at all levels is developed and effective.

Governors are supportive and informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They check how well the school implements its policies and how effective these are, including for equality of opportunity. Steps to safeguard pupils' welfare meet government requirements. Pupils now have improved access to outdoor learning, ICT and more interesting books. Parents

are generally positive about the school. The school has taken stock of what causes divisions in its local community, openly addresses feelings about race and cultural differences and invests in building closer links with parents. Thus it has made a reasonable start on promoting community cohesion.

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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?	3
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?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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	4

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?	3

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	3
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**

Thank you for your warm welcome when I and two other inspectors visited your school recently. We enjoyed seeing your writing and pictures and hearing you talk about your interesting investigations. My congratulations to all of you who contributed to that exciting project on 'The Princess and the Pea'!

The inspection judges that your school is now satisfactory and no longer needs a 'notice to improve'. You made it clear to us how it is improving. Many of you enjoy coming to school, and say lessons have become more interesting, especially the ones which give you a practical challenge. Teachers are helping you understand what you are learning and how to do it well. With better teaching, you have recently moved forwards more quickly. You are behaving better in class, though only some of you work well independently. The standard of your work is steadily rising, but needs to be higher so that you have good prospects for the future.

You generally feel well looked after by the staff. Some of you apply for responsible jobs in school and feel that your views count. There are still some of you who don't come to school regularly, but attendance has risen. As some of you explained to us, you've realised that you only get this chance once.

The school is keen to do even better. The headteacher has a clear plan and made an efficient start. Recent changes have made a difference, for example, to the marking of your work. Next, the school should make sure that:

- you reach at least the nationally expected standards for your age
- more teaching and learning become good, by strengthening teachers' understanding of how you learn in different subjects
- you reflect and act on the comments on your work
- the staff become more involved in checking and improving how well the school works.

You can make a start today by reading what your teacher said about your work, and deciding what you are going to do about it. I would like to wish you all the very best for the future.