

The Priory Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116481
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338827
Inspection dates	4–5 March 2010
Reporting inspector	John Carnaghan

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Pender
Headteacher	Mrs S Kelly
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They spent more than two fifths of their time looking at learning, saw 14 lessons and seven teachers. They held meetings with parents and carers, groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and scrutinised the school's records, policies, assessments and documents and 89 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well subject leaders ensure that lessons promote progress for all pupils
- how justified is the school in its evaluations that teaching, care and the curriculum have particular strengths
- how effectively the school promotes community cohesion by helping pupils to understand cultural, ethnic and religious diversity beyond the school's locality.

Information about the school

The Priory Primary School is smaller-than-average. It has very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and almost all pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. There are no large groups of pupils with any one educational difficulty. The headteacher has been in post for two years.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

The Priory Primary School is outstanding. It strikes an excellent balance between nurturing pupils' personal development and providing them with strong academic challenges. Excellent, focused teaching is highly motivating, delivering tremendously enjoyable lessons in which pupils are most enthusiastic participants. Their outstanding behaviour and commitment to learning help ensure excellent progress across the school. Given children's starting points in the Reception class, which are at expected levels, and pupils' standards on leaving Year 6, which are well above average, the achievement of all groups is outstanding. Parents view the school very favourably. One comment, typical of many, said, 'We feel this is a great school that has created a lovely community where everyone is important and respected. Learning really is the key, but so also is making each child feel worthwhile and appreciated.'

Pupils' enthusiasm for school is infectious. From an early age they develop as courteous and considerate individuals. Pupils take pride in their tasty and nutritious school lunches and very few bring packed meals. The cook's supplies are regularly supplemented by fruit and vegetables supplied by the gardening club. Pupils understand that a good diet must be supplemented with exercise if they are to develop as healthy adults and many take part in after-school sports. Pupils are exceptionally well cared for. Warm relationships with all adults mean that, whoever pupils turn to for help or advice, they are rightly confident that their concerns will be listened to and addressed.

The leadership of the headteacher has created a positive, open ethos that pervades all aspects of the school. Her approach is gentle but insistently rigorous and staff work closely with her, promoting the best possible experiences for pupils. Systematic, precise monitoring provides the school with a very clear picture of itself and affords a very good basis for insightful planning for the future. The school's relentless pursuit of excellence has built a pattern of exceptional performance and systems to support the school's further development are well established. Its capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding. Community cohesion is satisfactory. While it ensures that pupils flourish within the school and their local community, it does not give them a good understanding of cultural, ethnic or religious diversity further afield in the United Kingdom.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By January 2011, develop pupils' understanding of its community with reference to contrasting national and global contexts.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Pupils enter Year 1 with standards that are above average and very well prepared for the challenges that lie ahead. Ambitious, challenging teaching is met with an equally positive response from pupils and they make excellent progress. They show great concentration and a powerful commitment to learning and, in consequence, develop understanding and demonstrate skills exceptionally well. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils' standards are well above average. Consistently very strong teaching and support means that achievement of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is outstanding.

It is no exaggeration to say that pupils love their school. One pupil accurately commented, 'School gives us lots of opportunities and a boost in confidence.' They find lessons challenging and fun. Outstanding behaviour creates an extremely positive ethos, ensuring that lessons suffer no unnecessary interruptions and excellent learning is the norm. Pupils' pride in the Priory is demonstrated in their enthusiasm to contribute to improving the school community. Older ones all have responsibilities that they take very seriously. The school council is active in implementing practical suggestions from all ages and regularly meets with governors. Pupils' outstanding progress in developing important skills in language, number and computing, and in personal qualities such as independence, prepare them exceptionally well for their futures. Attendance has improved and is well above average. Pupils happily report that their school is a safe place to be. They have a full understanding of risks, both in and out of school. For example, they understand the dangers of the internet and how to avoid them.

Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are quietly self-assured, insightful and empathetic. Pupils show great willingness to cooperate with one another and to resolve any potential conflicts amicably. They demonstrate well-developing cultural awareness. For example, Year 6 pupils confidently set the books they are creating to read to younger pupils in a variety of global environments.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum is relevant and interesting. Its strong focus on literacy pays off with consistently very high English standards. The school's emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills ensures pupils gain confidence and can develop ideas and communicate them succinctly. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' problem-solving skills across many subjects. Links between subjects are impressive when they occur, offering fascinating opportunities to learn, but these are rare because they are largely organised by individual teachers and not planned systematically. The school has interesting plans to address this. A wide variety of visits and visitors enliven pupils' learning. Numerous after-school clubs include the more usual sports along with the more esoteric, such as Latin club, and are very popular and well attended.

Teaching is enlightening and empowering to pupils. Lessons have drive and energy and not a moment is wasted. Adults and pupils work as a team to joyously learn together. A 'can do' atmosphere permeates classrooms and teachers are both encouraging and challenging in their interactions with their charges. Questioning checks understanding, consolidates knowledge and often opens up new vistas for pupils. Activities are extremely well chosen to really stimulate pupils' enthusiasm, such as the Year 2 follow-up writing on the previous day's visit to Portchester castle. Teaching assistants are well-informed and proactive, creating a good team with class teachers. Teachers mark pupils' work very well, their comments providing praise as well as firm but friendly advice on how to improve.

Very well targeted support for all pupils ensures consistently excellent progress. Pupils are all known as individuals and recognise the excellent care they receive. One pupil, speaking for many, commented of the school, 'It's really friendly and welcoming all the time.' Steps to promote attendance have brought about rapid improvements over the last year. Close links with feeder nurseries and secondary schools ease pupils' transition in and out of the school. The school's work with families and children facing difficult circumstances is excellent, helping to ensure that no pupils are left behind. Professional assistance is judiciously employed to provide high quality additional support for pupils whenever this is necessary. The gifted and talented are equally well catered for. The school adapts the curriculum exceptionally well to stretch these pupils and this raises their confidence.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and staff work as a close-knit team, sharing a strong sense of purpose and working exceptionally well together to drive improvement and meet ambitious targets. Senior staff monitor teaching closely, successfully promoting best practice. For example, thanks to their efforts, marking of pupils' work has improved considerably in the last year. High quality leadership has enabled the school to maintain exceptional standards.

Governors monitor the school very thoroughly, gaining considerable insights into its performance. Their evaluations are robust and inform the challenging way that they analyse the school's progress and hold it to account. Governors make a considerable contribution to the thorough arrangements that ensure pupils' safety. Staff and governors show a deep awareness of all safeguarding issues, such as child protection, and work very effectively to keep up-to-date with all requirements. The school's firm focus on each pupil as an individual ensures that there is no discrimination and that there is excellent equality of opportunity for all. This ensures that all share equally in the school's excellent provision and outcomes.

Relationships with parents and carers are highly positive. They are very well informed about the school's work and their children's progress through both the traditional media, such as newsletters, and through new technology, like texts. Parents and carers raise considerable funds for the school. These monies are used very well to promote learning by, for example, ensuring that all pupils can participate in the school's many educational trips. Numerous partnerships make an excellent contribution to pupils' achievement and well-being, providing excellent value for money. For example, local industry participates in improving science provision.

The school has carefully checked its promotion of community cohesion. It understands its context thoroughly and the school itself is very cohesive. However, limited links nationally and internationally mean that the way the school reaches out to other communities is not well developed. Plans are in hand to address this.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

High quality work by all adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures excellent outcomes for all children. The outstandingly managed transition into the school, aided by highly constructive links with local nurseries, ensures children settle in quickly and make a terrific start to their schooling. Their excellent progress means that children start Year 1 with standards that are above average in all areas, despite entering the Reception class with skills and knowledge close to expected levels.

Children's learning is exceptionally well planned and lessons provide an excellent balance of interesting teacher-led and child-initiated activities. The stimulating outdoor area is very well used to provide varied experiences. Children respond to challenges and offer ideas with great enthusiasm, showing a mature approach to school. They demonstrate strong powers of concentration and their behaviour is outstanding. Children frequently work with great independence and, just as happily play together, sharing toys with their friends.

The area is outstandingly well led and managed. Thorough assessment procedures ensure regular check-ups are made on each child's progress and swift remedial action is taken when required. Highly effective partnerships with parents and carers are the norm and do much to help children's settling-in and subsequent progress. Children's well-being is enhanced by the area's excellent organisation and careful safeguarding and risk assessment.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers regard the school very favourably. The questionnaires revealed very few criticisms and none that emerged as recurring concerns. The overwhelming majority are happy with their child's experiences at the school and are very confident in its leadership.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at the Priory Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 89 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 166 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	76	20	22	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	66	74	22	25	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	46	45	51	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	56	34	38	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	56	63	31	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	52	38	43	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	66	74	19	21	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	42	47	34	38	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	48	54	36	40	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	45	42	47	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	44	40	45	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	67	75	20	22	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	65	73	22	25	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



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6 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of the Priory Primary School, Tadley RG26 5QD

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We agree with you that the Priory is an outstanding school. We would like to congratulate you on the part you play in the school with your outstanding behaviour. Well done!

Your lessons are excellent and often, as you pointed out, great fun so that your learning is outstanding. It was good to see how well you get along with one another and your teachers, and we were very impressed with your understanding of the benefits of exercise and eating well. We are pleased that your teachers take such very good care of you. These strengths mean that you all achieve outstandingly well and standards by the time you leave Year 6 are well above average.

All these strengths are because the headteacher and all staff work extremely well together to give you all the best experiences possible.

There is one area we have asked the school to improve:

- develop links with schools in contrasting parts of the United Kingdom and abroad so you develop a greater understanding of life in very different environments.

Once again, many thanks for all your help and courtesy. It was great meeting you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan

Lead inspector

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