

Preston Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

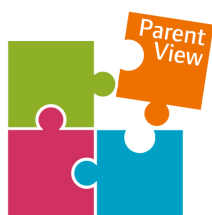
Inspection report

Unique reference number	123819
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	380737
Inspection dates	31 January–1 February 2012
Lead inspector	Alex Baxter

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Kerrigan
Headteacher	Bernie Green
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 April 2009
School address	The Toose Yeovil BA21 3SN
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	31 January–1 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Alex Baxter	Additional inspector
Anne Newall	Additional inspector
Fiona Robinson	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 31 lessons taught by 17 teachers and listened to pupils reading. The inspectors also attended collective worship/assemblies, observed break times and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils, and parents and carers. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. The inspectors analysed 232 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as those returned by 94 pupils and 38 staff.

Information about the school

This school is larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils attending the school are of White British heritage and the proportion who speak English as an additional language, including those at an early stage of acquiring English, is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two designated Reception classes. The school meets the government's current floor standards for academic performance.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- Preston is an outstanding school. The driving force behind the school's success is the inspirational headteacher. Since commencing in September 2009, her infectious enthusiasm has raised aspirations and empowered those associated with the school to work together for its further improvement.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Overall attainment, especially in mathematics and writing, has risen substantially since the previous inspection and is above average by the end of Year 6. Attainment in reading is also above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Children in Reception progress extremely well across the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Excellent progress continues across the school because, as pupils say, 'Learning makes us think hard, but is often fun.'
- Teaching has also improved since the previous inspection and is outstanding. Teaching is typified by teachers' high expectations, challenging questioning and informative marking, which extend pupils' understanding. Pupils' writing is not always displayed to best effect in classrooms.
- The staff's encouraging role models and the school's caring ethos strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently, pupils' outstanding behaviour, hard work and full enjoyment of school greatly enhance their ability to learn.
- The governing body and senior staff provide pupils with excellent support and comprehensive safeguarding arrangements, and sustain excellent partnerships with parents and others to advance pupils' learning.
- Exemplary assessments of pupils' needs and progress underpin excellent self-evaluation, ensuring that the right priorities are targeted. The development of the curriculum, for example by recently providing iPads for Year 6 pupils, has

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enhanced their educational experiences.

- The track record of bringing and building upon outstanding provision and outcomes for all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, clearly illustrates an outstanding capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on existing outstanding practice to improve the quality of pupils' writing by displaying more examples of their writing to:
 - enthuse pupils even more by celebrating their achievements
 - provide models of writing which can be used to involve pupils more in evaluating their own performance and identifying what needs to be done to bring further improvement.

Main report**Achievement of pupils**

Children's pre-school experiences vary considerably but overall result in children entering with broadly expected levels of skill and understanding. The quality of pupils' learning and progress, as observed in lessons, is outstanding. This is equally the case for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, who with additional sensitive support from adults, often bridge gaps and attain as well as other pupils. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those considered gifted or talented also make excellent progress. Inspectors listening to readers, observations of group reading and scrutiny of home-school reading records also showed that children in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 know letter sounds, blend them together effectively to tackle new words and become very competent readers. As a result, pupils' attainment in reading is above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave at the end of Key Stage 2. This shows that the views of pupils and their parents and carers of very good progress in reading are well founded.

Children make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in developing self-confidence and speaking and listening and social skills. This is because they have lots of opportunities to express and build on their own ideas. The pupils' above-average attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 in English and mathematics shows that all groups of pupils achieve extremely well. Pupils' spoken responses in lessons, typically their vocabulary and ability to articulate ideas, develop their explanations and raise questions in meaningful sentences, are also very impressive. For example, a Year 3 pupil, when asked if he had a plan ready, confidently exclaimed, 'I have a picture in my head!' The pupils' carefully constructed and grammatically correct stories in their writing books and accurately set out calculations in their mathematics books further illustrate above-average levels of skill and their excellent progress over time. This extends across the curriculum. For

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example, pupils further develop their literacy, numeracy and computing skills and apply their very well-developed independent and collaborative learning skills to research topics such as 'The benefits of wearing a school uniform.'

Quality of teaching

Parents, carers and pupils expressed the view that teaching is a strength of the school, and this is borne out by inspection findings. Notable features in the quality of teaching observed typically included the teacher's careful outlining of expected lesson outcomes and very helpful marking, which not only celebrated pupils' achievements, but also provided clear guidance on what pupils have to do to improve. Discussions with pupils revealed that they know their own targets very well and also understand how they can achieve specific lesson objectives. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 2, pupils clearly articulated their understanding of symmetry and challenged themselves and each other by examining more complex patterns. Teachers' consistently very effective management of behaviour sustains pupils' full engagement in lessons and an ethos of focused learning permeates all classrooms. This was evident in an English lesson in Year 4, where the teacher's skilful use of teaching assistants and sharp questioning helped secure the pupils' understanding of the difference between haiku and acrostic poems.

Enjoyment and interesting learning typify lessons across the school, and in Reception they are enriched by an optimum balance of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children themselves. Teachers also use questioning skilfully to build on pupils' previous experiences and to draw out new learning, for example when Reception children used mirrors to draw and talk about portraits of themselves.

Teachers show excellent subject knowledge and also adapt their teaching methods well to match pupils' interests and promote understanding. This was seen in Year 6 when pupils were shown how to use iPads to access websites and investigate the suitability of France as a tourist destination, and again in Year 1 when children took part in a lively role play acting out 'Little Red Riding Hood'. Class topics and events such as 'Evacuee Day', visits to the Fleet Air Museum and assembly themes such as 'Worship through Song' reflect the stimulation of the planned curriculum, which also successfully promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and enjoyment of school. All teachers make good use of display to prompt numeracy and literacy through basic number bonds, spellings and punctuation rules. Pupils' writing in books is very well presented and is frequently praised by the teachers. However, opportunities are not always taken to enthuse and inform pupils even more about how to improve by displaying examples of their work.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils say, 'We are proud of our school and have fun learning together.' Pupils also say that they feel very safe and enjoy school. Most parents and carers agree, and inspection confirms this view. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and their confidence is clearly evident in their open responses to teachers'

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questions and willingness to raise their own questions during lessons. Behaviour was found to be good at the time of the previous inspection and discussions with pupils and responses in pupil and parent questionnaires showed that most agree that this has improved further. As a result it is now excellent. Very warm relationships also greatly enrich pupils' learning and enjoyment throughout the school, as seen, for example, in their joyful singing during collective worship assemblies.

School records show few recorded incidents of poor behaviour, and bullying of any kind remains very rare. Discussions with pupils and with their parents and carers showed that the school dealt with past issues very thoroughly. Most of the pupils, parents and carers questioned expressed full confidence that if any future incidents should occur then the school would deal with them quickly and effectively. There have been no incidents of racial abuse involving pupils in recent years. There are a few pupils with emotional and behavioural needs and they are managed and supported sensitively.

Attendance has improved and is now above average. Punctuality is also good. As a result, pupils are developing into sensible and responsible young people, very well equipped for the next stage in their education.

Leadership and management

The excellent leadership and management of the headteacher over the past three years have enabled senior staff to develop and capitalise on their strengths and share these very effectively with each other. In particular, her promotion of staff professional training and the development of phase and subject leadership have contributed to the significant improvements in teaching and learning. Parents and carers share this view, with one typically writing, 'The headteacher has made huge improvements and has made a massive difference.' Shared expertise has also raised the effectiveness of the governing body in plotting the strategic development of the school and in working closely with staff and parents to build on strengths and tackle areas in need of development. Collaboration now underpins the exemplary governance and senior management, which has secured pupils' above-average attainment and the school's excellent capacity to sustain improvements in the future. Leaders and managers also make sure that statutory requirements are fully met to safeguard pupils' welfare. These include child protection, staff recruitment and health and safety checks and excellent links with outside agencies.

The curriculum is outstanding. It is rich in memorable moments, such as Year 4's visit to Cleeve Abbey dressed as monks and Year 5's French Banquet, which further enrich the pupils' enjoyment and success in learning. Such events also strongly promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, clearly illustrated by the willing contributions of the pupils and their parents and carers to help build a school in Kenya. The school's caring ethos and the fact that all groups of pupils make equally outstanding progress reflect its exemplary promotion of equal opportunity and successful elimination of discrimination.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons, and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



1 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Preston C of E VC Primary School, Yeovil BA21 3SN

Thank you for your warm welcome and the help you gave us during the inspection, in discussions and through your questionnaires. We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour, willingness to learn and the way you confidently told us all about Preston. You told us, and we agree, that it is an outstanding school where you have fun learning and do extremely well. You certainly have lots of things to be proud of.

These are some of the things we liked most.

- You are reaching standards that are better than in most schools.
- The school buildings and grounds make it a great place to learn and from the moment you start school you make full use of the facilities and make outstanding progress.
- Teaching is outstanding because teachers challenge and question you at the right level and provide lots of interesting activities for you to do and to think about.
- Staff take excellent care of you and are very good at helping you to grow up as sensible, considerate and healthy young people.
- You tell us that you greatly enjoy school and feel very safe.
- Your school continues to improve because your outstanding headteacher leads a united and determined team of staff and governors in helping you to progress successfully.

Even though you go to an outstanding school, your headteacher, governors and staff still want it to get better. We saw some really beautiful stories written in your books, but not many were on display. The staff agree with the inspectors that another way to help you understand how to produce even better writing would be for the teachers to display more of your written work in classrooms and around the school, and so we have asked them to do this.

You can help by continuing to work hard. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter
Lead inspector

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