

Preston Grange Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108578
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	377775
Inspection dates	22–23 May 2012
Lead inspector	Gordon Potter

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trevor Nicholson
Headteacher	Tracey Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Gordon Potter
Linda Buller

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 12 lessons taught by eight teachers, including joint observations of several classes with the headteacher. The inspectors held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils, parents and carers, and spoke to the school's most recent local authority education development adviser. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school policies and documentation relating to safeguarding and strategic planning, examples of pupils' work, assessment data and monitoring records. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line (Parent View) survey in planning the inspection. They also scrutinised the 73 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as questionnaires from pupils and 19 staff.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British heritage. A small proportion of pupils are from other cultural backgrounds, about half of whom speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils who are supported by School Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school meets the current floor standards which are the minimum standards expected by the government for attainment and progress.

The headteacher, the fourth in five years, has been in post since January 2011. There has been some turbulence in the life of the school since the previous inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. The headteacher has reversed a decline in standards. She has introduced initiatives which have improved the quality of teaching and the curriculum, and established accurate information about pupils' attainment to identify gaps in their learning. It is yet not an outstanding school because pupils' progress remains limited by a lack of opportunities to apply their skills in open-ended, investigative, problem-solving activities, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' achievement is good. From starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage that are generally in line with age-related expectations, pupils make good progress to attain standards at the end of Year 6 that are above average. There are good outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Teaching is good overall. Teachers make it clear to pupils what they will learn, deliver lessons with good pace and provide interesting activities which engage pupils. Teachers do not always plan work that is well-matched to the learning needs of the most-able pupils or give pupils clear advice about how to improve their work.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils play and learn well together, helping one another to behave well and feel very safe in school. They enjoy school and say that misbehaviour is uncommon. Their attendance is above average, indicating their positive attitudes to learning.
- There has been effective implementation of strategies to improve school effectiveness, based upon clear and accurate evaluation of strengths and weaknesses. Senior leaders offer strong and clear direction and ensure good teaching by judicious management of performance. Some middle leaders are new to their posts and some leadership structures are yet to become embedded. The governing body has developed a clearer view of pupils' attainment, supports senior leaders well and offers increasingly focussed challenge.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the summer of 2013, further increase the rates at which pupils make progress and raise attainment, by:
 - providing pupils with even more opportunities in lessons to work independently or together in a range of open-ended, investigative activities which develop independence, confidence and problem-solving skills, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - ensuring that all work is matched accurately to the needs of individual pupils, especially the most-able
 - giving pupils clear advice about how to improve their work.

- Further increase the effectiveness of middle leaders, by embedding the recent changes to management structures and responsibilities and developing the expertise of those leaders who are new to their role.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils enjoy lessons most when they are actively engaged in challenging activities and are finding things out for themselves, and they make good progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 1, pupils were excited by having their own Olympic Games and keenly measured the length of their long jumps, learning that accurate measurement is essential.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and they make good progress from their starting points, especially in reading and writing. Progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is typically average and pupils have made good progress from their starting points. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is typically above average, although there has been a decline in recent years. In 2011, the large majority of pupils attained the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Although they made good progress in mathematics from their starting points in the Reception class, some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching had slowed their progress, particularly in English, in Key Stage 2. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that as a result of strategies implemented by the headteacher, progress for pupils currently in school is good, attainment across school is rising rapidly and pupils in Year 6 are on track to have above expected attainment.

Attainment in reading by the end of Years 1 and 2 is typically average and by the time pupils leave school in Year 6 it is above average. Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because work and support are well-targeted at their needs.

All parents and carers are of the opinion, rightly, that their children are making good progress.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have good subject knowledge and are skilful at modelling learning so that pupils know exactly what to do and how to make a success of their tasks. They include a range of interesting activities, deliver lessons at a challenging pace and help pupils to see the links between subjects. They use good questioning strategies to encourage pupils to develop their understanding and express their ideas. For example, pupils in Year 1 were enthralled by their visit from Professor Bing who was returning from Africa and they keenly asked questions about his journey before writing about why they would like to visit Africa. In Year 6, the teacher skilfully guided pupils through the strategies needed to calculate how many packets of water purifier would be needed to help African villagers have clean drinking water. Pupils also enjoyed how the work linked to their studies in geography and helped them gain a greater understanding about life in Africa. In English, pupils have many opportunities to explore characters through drama, engage with text, research ideas and develop their writing skills in extended tasks. However, teachers occasionally offer too much help and provide too few opportunities for pupils to explore together in open-ended investigative activities, particularly in real-life contexts in mathematics. While teachers plan work which is matched to the learning needs of groups of pupils, it is not always finely focussed on the needs of individual pupils, especially in whole-class activities, or sufficiently challenging for the most-able pupils. In marking, teachers do not always tell pupils clearly how to improve their work. Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, are taught well, as work is clearly focused on their needs and they have the opportunity to engage with tasks under the guidance of skilled teaching assistants.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teacher skilfully plans work which is well-matched to children's individual learning needs in reading and writing. There are many opportunities for children to write, and these are helping them to make good progress. Occasionally, teachers plan work too rigidly and there is too little scope for children to follow their own interests. Skilful teaching of how to link sounds and letters (phonics) ensures children make good progress in reading and clearly-targeted initiatives are helping pupils make good progress in reading across school. Almost all parents and carers are justifiably positive about the quality of teaching.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils enjoy school very much. Most parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaires agree that, overall, there is a typically good standard of behaviour at the school. However, a few parents and carers express some concerns about behaviour in lessons. The inspectors analysed the school's records of behaviour over time and talked to many pupils during lessons, at break times and more formally in group discussions. There is clear evidence that behaviour has improved over time as a result of the successful introduction of rewards and behaviour management strategies. These enable the few pupils who find managing their own behaviour difficult, to respond well to a consistent approach and clear guidance. As a result, good behaviour was evident in lessons observed during the inspection and around the school. Pupils are extremely polite to adults and keen to talk about their work and their school. They are highly respectful of each other and their school

surroundings. They are aware of different forms of bullying and say that racism or cyber-bullying, in particular, are uncommon. They say that behaviour is good in their lessons and that pupils feel very safe and know that older pupils as well as the teachers and other adults in school, will help with any problems if they arise. They say that their 'Castle groups', as well as the school council and playground buddies, have helped to develop the rules that help pupils to behave well and care for one another. They are particularly proud of the actions they have initiated to develop a 'vision' for the school and to improve aspects of school life, including the development of the school forest area and the money they raise for charities.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has had a rapid impact on improving school effectiveness through a clear analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the prioritising of those key initiatives which have led to a reversal of the decline in pupils' attainment. She has improved the quality of teaching, introduced programmes to develop pupils' basic skills and maintained a curriculum that enthuses pupils and helps them see the links between subjects. With the leadership team, she has ensured that information about pupils' attainment and the progress they are making is accurate and used to identify gaps in their learning. Leaders employ their own expertise and appropriate advice from other agencies to share and develop good practice and to develop programmes of continuing professional development. Accordingly, the school has good capacity for further improvement. The consistent application of the school's procedures to create, monitor and evaluate the impact of appropriate interventions is embedded. Leaders at all levels are fully accountable for progress in their areas. However, some middle leaders are new to post and some responsibilities are being re-structured as the school plans further improvements.

The school is highly successful in developing an inclusive ethos and has effective systems for promoting equality of opportunities for pupils to be successful. It tackles discrimination firmly. Safeguarding procedures meet the current government requirements. The school has a range of effective partnerships, for example to provide opportunities in music and sport, and to support pupils who have a range of learning, emotional and behavioural needs and their families. Members of the governing body are highly supportive and have acted to bring stability to the leadership after a period of some turbulence in the history of the school. They are developing procedures to monitor school effectiveness, including pupils' attainment, and offer increasing challenge.

There is a strong emphasis on developing basic skills in English, mathematics and the use of technology, including procedures to develop writing skills in other areas of the curriculum. The curriculum concentrates on helping pupils to see the links between subjects and develops their interest in and understanding of history, geography, science and religious education, as well as their regular enjoyment of drama, art and music. This approach promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development alongside well-planned enrichment activities, including visits to museums, and residential centres for outdoor activities. These help to develop pupils' very clear understanding of other faiths and cultures. There are many popular extra-curricular clubs which promote learning and enjoyment in cycling, sport, music, artistic and environmental activities.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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 up 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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
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.



24 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Preston Grange Primary School, North Shields, NE29 9QL

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school. We particularly enjoyed talking to you about your school and your work and reading your views in the questionnaires some of you filled in. We were impressed with your good behaviour and by your politeness and the excellent care you show for one another. We also enjoyed your impressive artwork and your excellent assembly. Your school takes good care of you so that you feel very safe in school. Most of you attend school very regularly – well done!

You go to a good school and your headteacher and the governing body know how to make it even better. You told me that you look forward to coming to school because you like your teachers, lessons where you are actively engaged, 'Castle time' and after-school clubs and visits. Your parents and carers like the school very much.

In order to help you enjoy even better lessons, we are asking your teachers to make sure that:

- you always have enough opportunities to find things out for yourselves and then use what you have learned to improve your skills, especially in mathematics
- all the information that teachers have about how well you are doing is used to plan work that helps more of you reach the higher levels of attainment
- when marking your work they give you clear advice about how to improve.

You can help by continuing to do your best and continuing to attend regularly. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Potter
Lead Inspector

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