

Priestsic Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122468
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	367426
Inspection dates	24–25 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	487
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Bowers
Headteacher	Sarah Stamp and Tracey Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	13 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 26 lessons. All 14 teachers were seen teaching, most of them twice. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its methods for tracking pupils' progress, at a range of school documents, including its policies, minutes of governing body meetings, monitoring records, an extensive sample of pupils' work, and reports from the School Improvement Partner. One hundred and eighty nine responses from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire were received and considered, along with questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of the actions taken by the school to address the apparent and recent decline in the rate of progress being made by all pupils.
- The extent to which the school knows its own strengths and weaknesses.
- The accuracy of the school's evaluation of the quality of learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about the school

This school is much larger than average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background is below average and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. The school has experienced significant leadership and staffing disruption in recent years. New co-headteachers have been in post since September 2010. The school runs a small pre-school breakfast club.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It has coped well with the inevitable effects of recent staffing changes and is now improving. The co-headteachers have quickly and accurately identified the larger issues which need to be addressed, and have taken firm and successful steps to refocus the school's work on the learning and progress of pupils. Adults in the school work very well together and their morale is high. There is convincing evidence that the majority of pupils are making good progress. The school collects considerable amounts of assessment data to support its view that pupils are making good progress over time and in lessons. However, this data is not always analysed well enough. This leads to some inaccuracies in the detail of the school's self-evaluation. Nonetheless, senior staff do have a clear overall picture of how good the school is. This coupled with their success in accelerating pupils' progress means the school has good capacity to improve further.

Pupils like coming to this vibrant and colourful learning environment, though a small minority are not punctual enough. Pupils achieve well in their academic work and in building their personal skills. Their consistently good behaviour is particularly noticeable in lessons where they are keen to do well. Pupils enter Nursery with skills well below those normally expected for their age. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average overall. It is above average in mathematics and close to average in English. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is measured accurately and is good, especially in mathematics.

Teaching is good. Teachers are enthusiastic, have good subject knowledge, excellent relationships with the pupils, and generally move lessons forward quickly. In several outstanding lessons, pupils had many opportunities to solve interesting problems independently. Not a minute was wasted and learning was excellent. In some lessons, teachers spent too long telling pupils what they were going to be doing instead of letting them get on with it. Sometimes assessment information was not used effectively enough to match work to the needs of different groups and all pupils in the class received the same instruction or task.

The curriculum focuses strongly on the basic skills, and also provides a wealth of additional artistic experiences. This ensures that pupils use their imagination to reflect on what they are learning. It supports their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, and underpins their good all-round personal development.

Pupils quickly learn to respect those who are different from themselves. They give thoughtful consideration to issues and situations they encounter and celebrate the achievement of others spontaneously. They treat those less fortunate than themselves with considerable generosity and kindness, because of the good care guidance and support they experience themselves.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that leaders at all levels make clear and accurate evaluations about the progress pupils are making by:
 - adopting a systematic whole school approach to gathering pertinent information about what pupils know and can do
 - being objective, succinct and precise in the analysis of the information thus gathered.
- Ensure that more lessons are good or outstanding by:
 - reducing the time spent on introductions and explanations, and increasing the time pupils spend finding things out for themselves
 - making consistently good use of assessment information to set work which meets each individual pupil's learning needs well.
- Work with parents and carers to ensure that pupils arrive punctually at the start of morning and afternoon sessions.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or from minority ethnic backgrounds, learn well in lessons. Instances of outstanding learning were seen in all three phases of the school. The personal attributes of consideration, respect and tolerance developed so rapidly and securely in the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensure that pupils have very good attitudes to learning in succeeding years. Lessons run smoothly and pupils are productive. Pupils respond quickly to guidance from the teacher. They listen carefully to each others' views and opinions. They work sensibly when not directly supervised. This was seen to outstanding effect in a Year 2 mathematics lesson when pupils used correct mathematical terminology in developing their own strategies to solve word problems involving three digit numbers. They shared ideas, self-checked their logic by discussing place value and made very effective use of resources with minimal adult intervention. Learning was rapid and confidence soared.

Pupils enjoy coming to school because 'teachers make the work so interesting'. Overall their attendance is average, but this is skewed by the persistent absenteeism of a small number of pupils. Despite the very best concerted efforts of the school over several years working directly with families, this remains a difficult issue to overcome. Pupils feel, and are, safe in school. They are confident about speaking to an adult if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils say that on the rare occasions bullying occurs it is always dealt with quickly and effectively. They are aware of the dangers they may face outside school and what steps to take to avoid them. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives and pupils can describe the effects of exercise and diet on the body. Pupils are proud of their school and the donations they make to charities. Their involvement in activities in the immediate local area is strong. Their understanding of the different cultures they are likely to meet within the United Kingdom and across the globe is satisfactory rather than good because direct contacts are limited. When they leave school at the end of Year 6, pupils are well-balanced and thoughtful young citizens with average levels of attainment. They are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education and their lives.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good and a significant proportion of teaching observed during the inspection was outstanding. Classrooms are colourful yet calm places. Recently qualified teachers are often paired with more experienced colleagues to help them develop their skills more rapidly. Close scrutiny of pupils' books shows that teaching is good across the school, but has some inconsistencies in the level and range of challenges set for pupils of different abilities. Most marking is helpful and gives good advice to pupils on how to get better. Teaching assistants are well deployed and play an important role in supporting different groups of pupils to make good progress over time. They ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to access all the school has to offer.

The well thought out curriculum is one reason why achievement and personal development are good. It combines a strong focus on building pupils' basic skills with ensuring that pupils securely develop positive values and qualities. Teachers develop these attributes constantly by trusting pupils to work independently and to take personal responsibility for their actions.

The school knows the pupils and their families well. Strong links between school and home are established early through, for example, 'stay-and-play' in Nursery. These links are sustained consistently over time. This allows the school to identify and address swiftly any personal issues which might arise. Arrangements for supporting those pupils whose

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circumstances make them vulnerable are positive and effective, and recognised as such by parents and carers. This ensures that these pupils are able to access all the school has to offer, and make the same good progress as their peers. Transition arrangements are well managed and ensure that pupils transfer into school, from one class to another, and on to secondary education, with the minimum of fuss or misunderstanding. The small pre-school breakfast club provides those pupils who attend a well-balanced and nourishing start to the day.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The co-headteachers and senior staff have the loyalty and respect of the staff, pupils, parents and carers. Their clear strategy for improvement, though relatively new, is fully understood and accepted. Actions being taken to raise attainment and accelerate improvement are already having a measurable effect. Several staff monitor the quality of learning in lessons, and carefully track the progress of individual pupils. This generates an enormous amount of information which sometimes leads to difficulties in evaluating precisely enough key strengths and areas for development. Though the school's self-evaluations of teaching, learning and achievement are accurate, occasionally it over-estimates the effectiveness of a small number of other aspects of its work because it focuses on what it is doing rather than on the impact it causes.

Procedures for safeguarding are satisfactory. They are clear and easily understood. The school's single central record fully meets current requirements. Governance is good. Members of the governing body have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are hard working, approachable, supportive and challenging.

The school makes good provision to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. Every pupil has access to the support necessary to make good progress. The school works successfully to ensure that pupils understand that inequality must be confronted. There is no discrimination or bias. The effectiveness of the school's provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. Work is well underway to develop local links further and to extend them nationally and globally. This is beginning to enhance pupils' understanding of cultural diversity beyond that already satisfactorily established through work in geography, history, art and religious education lessons.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because teaching and resources for learning are good. Their communication language and literacy skills are usually very low when they join. By the time they reach the end of Reception, the majority of children are still working below national averages. However, their skills and understanding have increased markedly and their achievement is good. They are happy here.

Children settle into positive learning routines quickly because adults are very supportive. Good links with parents and carers are well established and underpin this. Children trust the adults around them and have excellent relationships with them, and with each other. They play and learn together in harmony, and quickly develop their self confidence. A small number of lessons are overly adult led and do not give children sufficient opportunity to work and develop their skills independently.

Leadership and management are good. Learning and progress are monitored carefully, and assessment information is used well to inform the planning of future lessons. The recently appointed Early Years Foundation Stage leader has moved quickly to sharpen the focus on developing children's speaking and listening skills through a well founded programme for linking letters to the sounds they make. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of provision, and knows what needs to be done to improve it. Welfare requirements are met well.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A slightly higher than average proportion of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire. Almost all of the responses were strongly in support of the work of the school. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed some individual and particular concerns. Inspectors followed up these concerns thoroughly and weighed all the views expressed carefully, in reaching the overall judgements expressed in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Priestsic Primary and Nursery 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 189 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 487 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	126	67	58	31	5	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	125	66	62	33	2	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	78	41	95	50	13	7	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	111	59	74	39	2	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	125	66	61	32	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	107	57	75	40	5	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	92	49	95	50	2	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)	83	44	98	52	3	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	97	51	81	43	8	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	94	50	82	43	11	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	80	42	97	51	9	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	102	54	76	40	7	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	124	66	63	34	1	1	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 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	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



26 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Priestsic Primary and Nursery School, Sutton-in-Ashfield, NG17 4BB

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We were very impressed with your good manners and your very good attitudes to learning in lessons. You obviously get on very well together, and also with your teachers. We also noticed how trustworthy you are, including when working independently to find things out for yourselves. You told us you liked taking on responsibility, and we saw how well you did this when tidying up after some exciting practical learning.

We found that Priestsic is a good school. It provides you with a good education. You are taught well, learn a great deal about lots of different and interesting things, and you are making good academic progress over your time in the school.

However, there are some things which the school could do even better. So I have asked your teachers and the adults who lead the school to do the following to help you learn more quickly:

- make sure that they organise the information they have about what you have already learned so that it is easy to understand and simple to use
- provide work in lessons that no-one finds either too easy or too hard
- firmly encourage you to get to school on time so that you do not miss any opportunities for learning.

Please continue to be the happy, well-mannered and friendly young citizens you already are. I wish all of you good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry McDermott

Lead Inspector

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