

# Princes Plain Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101600
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	376598
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Shepherd

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	451
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Roger Bristow
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pam King
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Church Lane Bromley BR2 8LD
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<b>Age group</b>	<b>3–11</b>
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	<b>2–3 November 2011</b>
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, who observed 24 lessons led by 17 different teachers. Meetings were held with the senior staff, a group of pupils and two members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding documentation and the school's analysis of its data. Questionnaires from 183 parents and carers, 50 staff and 207 pupils were received and analysed.

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

- Why has attainment in reading, writing and mathematics remained below national averages for a number of years in Year 2?
- How consistent are teaching and assessment throughout the school?
- What is the impact of the monitoring carried out by senior staff on pupils' progress and attainment?

## Information about the school

This school is larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. The main home language of these pupils is Bengali. Higher than average proportions of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average, as is the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs. The school has two resource base classes for pupils with severe learning difficulties. Higher than average proportions of pupils join the school during the year. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of one Nursery class and two Reception classes. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and Investors in People. The school has a children's centre on site and this is subject to a separate 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: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Princes Plain Primary School is a good school. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is built upon through the school, and pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress in line with their capabilities. This is because teaching is good. Excellent care, guidance and support mean that pupils enjoy school, feel extremely safe, get on well together, lead very healthy lifestyles, behave well and play an important part in enabling the school to run smoothly. Pupils are gaining a good understanding of their responsibilities to each other, the school and wider community. As one parent wrote, 'This is the very best school for any child to attend. It provides everything a child needs.'

Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen steadily during the past three years and is now average in English and mathematics. Attainment in writing is not as high as in reading and mathematics. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls throughout the school. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 has risen during the past three years, but it still remains below national averages. This is because pupils start in Year 1 with skills and abilities in reading, writing and mathematics that are below the levels expected of their age and staff have to work hard to help them make up this ground.

Relationships between pupils and adults are consistently good, and this is a key feature of lessons. As a result, pupils try hard to please staff. Teachers ask pupils searching questions which identify what pupils know and what they need to learn next. They provide pupils with key words they might use that help them spell correctly. Lessons include learning objectives but, on a few occasions, these do not consistently indicate what pupils at different levels of ability are to learn in lessons. The impact of this is that occasionally a few pupils do not achieve as much as they could. Marking provides encouragement and good guidance for pupils about how to improve and opportunities are given for them to respond to suggestions made. However, these good features are not consistently present in all classes. The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and is enriched by a wide variety of visitors to the school and visits to places of interest. However, on occasions pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to consolidate their writing skills across the curriculum.

The headteacher provides clear and decisive leadership, and strong teamwork between the headteacher, staff and the governing body is a notable feature of

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leadership and management. The headteacher and senior staff understand the needs of individual pupils very well. Their evaluations are accurate and rigorous, and have led to clear improvements in provision and outcomes for pupils. A number of subject leaders are new to their roles and have not yet had time to have an impact on improving progress and attainment in their areas of responsibility. Links with parents and carers are outstanding. The governing body is keen and supportive. This, along with the good relationships throughout the school and the school's success in raising attainment in English and mathematics, demonstrates the school's good capacity to sustain further improvement.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- By July 2012, improve attainment in writing by providing pupils with more opportunities to write in other subjects.
- By April 2012, improve the quality of teaching and assessment by ensuring that all teachers consistently:
  - identify to pupils at different levels of ability what they are to learn in lessons
  - indicate in marking the next steps in learning and provide pupils with opportunities to correct their mistakes.
- Ensure the monitoring and evaluation carried out by subject leaders new to their roles lead to improved outcomes for pupils by:
  - training senior staff new to their roles further in the techniques of monitoring and evaluation
  - providing opportunities for them to monitor and evaluate outcomes in their areas of responsibility
  - ensuring areas for development identified are included in plans for improvement and implemented.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils' achievement is good, given that they start in Year 1 with skills that are below average levels, and progress to the point where test results, as well as attainment seen in lessons and pupils' work by inspectors, are average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, are developing their basic skills well and are well equipped with wider skills and personal qualities for their future lives. The progress made by pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also good.

Pupils settle down quickly to their work. For example, in Year 6, pupils were fully engaged and responded enthusiastically as they measured obtuse angles using 360 degree protractors. In Year 3, pupils were excited by and enjoyed the activity of thinking about adjectives to describe animals they had seen on a recent visit to the

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zoo, such as lazy lion, diving dolphin and grumpy gorilla. Year 1 pupils speedily worked out answers to questions posed by their teacher using number fans.

Pupils have an excellent knowledge and understanding about healthy eating and the importance of regular exercise. They enjoy physical activities in lessons, at playtimes and in after-school clubs, which help promote their healthy lifestyles. The impact of the Healthy Schools status can be seen by pupils’ positive responses in their questionnaires. Pupils’ behaviour was good during the inspection, and often exemplary. However, a few pupils indicated in their questionnaires that behaviour is not always as good as this. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local communities. For example, older pupils act as prefects and house captains, and help others during playtimes and lunchtimes. Pupils in all classes carry out tasks to help their teachers, such as giving out and collecting equipment and books. Elected pupils represent their peers on the school council. They collect funds for a range of charities at home and abroad. They have currently collected shoe boxes to send to Eastern Europe. Pupils reflect thoughtfully upon some of the broader issues in life, such as understanding about different beliefs and cultural traditions.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers’ planning and classroom organisation are effective in enabling lessons to flow smoothly. Good use is made of writing frames which help pupils develop a story and write at length. Pupils are encouraged to check their work following criteria on a marking sheet and this helps them to edit and correct their own work. Teachers and

<sup>1</sup> 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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teaching assistants provide good guidance and support for pupils. They support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities extremely well on an individual and/or group basis in class and in the two resource base classes and this helps these pupils in their understanding of particular aspects of their work. This additional teaching helps these pupils make good progress. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is also good as indicated by the good progress made by these pupils. Occasionally, the introductions of lessons are too long for some pupils to sustain their concentration, and the pace of learning in these lessons is too slow.

Specialist provision in sports and music is popular with pupils as demonstrated by the high take-up of these activities after school. Pupils are particularly proud of their steel band which performs in other local schools. Provision to promote pupils' personal development is included effectively throughout the curriculum. Pupils receive good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening through working in pairs, especially at the beginning of lessons. Occasionally, work in geography, history and religious education does not provide pupils with enough opportunities to consolidate their writing skills.

Excellent arrangements for pupils joining the school at the beginning of the school year and at other times ensure that they settle very quickly. In replies to their questionnaires, most pupils responded that they were looked after very well by staff. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified effectively and excellent provision, especially in the two resource base classes, is allocated to meet their needs. The school enlists the support of all appropriate agencies and works extremely closely with parents and carers to meet pupils' special social, emotional and learning needs. One parent reflected this when writing, 'My son has behaviour needs and the school is handling him and his behaviour extremely well.' Procedures for promoting attendance are effective, as indicated by improving levels of attendance. The breakfast club and after-school club provide pupils with good levels of care. Transition arrangements are excellent from the Reception class into Year 1 and from Year 6 to secondary school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

Morale is very high because staff feel that their contributions are valued by the headteacher and senior leaders. The impact of the Investors in People award can be

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seen in the strong sense of pulling together to achieve goals. This is because the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has successfully instilled a sense of ambition and drive to improve the work of the school. The school identifies appropriately the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning and incorporates the areas for development into plans of action. Monitoring and evaluating progress and attainment are systematic but on a few occasions are not always rigorous enough to correct the inconsistencies in teaching and learning.

The school has excellent relationships with parents and carers. Initiatives such as weekly newsletters, parents’ mail and the availability of the headteacher and teachers to parents and carers at the beginning and end of the day all help to promote this positive relationship. Parents and carers are invited into school on a number of occasions, such as for consultation evenings, assemblies and productions. One parent, reflecting the views of others, wrote, ‘The teachers and teaching assistants cannot do enough to make sure that my daughter learns, is happy and well looked after.’

The governing body is effective. It is keen, enthusiastic and shows high levels of commitment and a good level of challenge to the school. Safeguarding procedures are outstanding. Staff are rigorously vetted and trained regularly in child protection procedures. The school’s procedures for safeguarding have been recognised by the local authority as representing good practice. Links with the local authority and medical services help to promote effectively the personal development and well-being of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Links with the children’s centre are excellent as it is integral to the school.

The school promotes equality well for the different groups and tackles any racist behaviour and discrimination effectively. This enables all groups of pupils to achieve well. Community cohesion is good. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of their local, national and international communities.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>

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**The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money**

**2**

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Nursery class with skills and abilities that are below the levels typically expected for their age. Their skills and abilities in reading, writing and calculation are well below expected levels. Children make good progress from these starting points in all areas of their learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress in line with their capabilities.

Children enjoy their learning and tackle their activities with relish and enthusiasm. They are looked after very well and are kept extremely safe. They are given good opportunities to chat to adults about what they are doing. They practise the sounds letters make, read, write, count and play with toys and other equipment and are challenged very effectively at their different levels of skills and abilities. Behaviour is good and children get on well with each other and with adults. The inside and outside learning environments are stimulating and very well organised. They provide children with an enjoyable range of activities which helps develop their understanding and skills in all areas of learning. The balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities is good. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and staff work well together as a team and have a good understanding about early years provision. Children’s progress is monitored and recorded rigorously but assessments are not always documented sufficiently to demonstrate an appropriate level of challenge for children. Links with parents and carers are outstanding. Induction procedures are outstanding and children settle quickly into school routines.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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 higher than average proportion of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. Approximately one fifth of the questionnaires included written comments, the majority of which were positive. Written comments focused on their children’s enjoyment of school, caring and hard-working staff, outstanding provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and good teaching. Their very positive views have been included throughout the report but can be summarised by the parents who wrote, ‘Fantastic school’ and ‘This school is a little miracle.’

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Princes Plain 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 183 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 451 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	129	70	52	28	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	113	62	66	36	2	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	97	53	80	44	4	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	97	53	78	43	5	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	114	62	67	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	101	55	76	42	3	2	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	90	49	85	46	2	1	1	1
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)	89	49	78	43	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	87	48	88	48	4	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	83	45	85	46	9	5	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	85	46	84	46	7	4	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	111	61	65	36	2	1	4	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	117	64	60	33	4	2	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



4 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Princes Plain Primary School, Bromley, BR2 8LD**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. Thank you to those of you who completed the questionnaire for us. We found your responses very helpful. You go to a good school where adults work hard to prepare you for the future. Here are some of the best things we found.

- You enjoy school and get on well with each other.
- You feel extremely safe and understand the importance of eating healthy foods and taking exercise.
- You like your teachers and teaching assistants and try your best to please them.
- You are well behaved and make a good contribution to the school.
- You are enthusiastic about all the different activities provided for you, including sports clubs, music clubs and visits out of school.
- You have good teachers who look after you extremely well.

We have asked your headteacher, teachers and the governing body to do three things to make your school better.

- Give you more opportunities to practise your writing in geography, history and religious education lessons.
- Let you know what you are expected to learn in lessons, how well you have done and give you time to carry out the improvements suggested in marking.
- Make sure that the plans they have to help you do even better are working.

All of you can help by continuing to work very hard.

Yours sincerely

David Shepherd  
Lead inspector

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