

# Prior Weston Primary School and Children's Centre

White Cross Street, London, EC1Y 8JA

**Inspection dates** 15–16 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- All groups of pupils achieve well and make good progress from their starting points.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, those new to learning English, and those with particularly low levels of prior attainment make equally good progress to that of others.
- The school has successfully eliminated the gaps in performance between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average and achievement is rising year on year.
- In English and across the curriculum, pupils' reading and writing skills are well developed.
- The quality of teaching is good with some examples of outstanding practice. Teaching is improving and most is demanding, exciting and gets the most out of pupils.
- Pupils behave well and feel very safe. They have a good understanding of the school's high expectations of behaviour.
- Adults place pupils' well-being at the centre of their work and this makes the school a happy place to be.
- The headteacher's great determination and drive to ensure that all pupils succeed are supported very well by senior leaders and staff.
- Leaders, managers and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and have taken decisive and effective action to improve the quality of teaching and to raise pupils' achievement further.
- This is a school that continues to make prompt progress on its journey to excellence.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not outstanding in enough lessons. There is sometimes insufficient challenge for the more-able pupils and questions are not always used well enough by teachers to encourage pupils to think deeply.
- Teachers do not always make sure that pupils respond to what has been asked of them when their work is marked.
- Excellent practice in teaching is not always shared well with others.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 21 lessons, including 15 that were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and visited classrooms with senior staff to look at how well disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs were learning. Inspectors also visited lessons with senior staff to look at pupils’ progress in mathematics and English and at learning in a wide range of other subjects.
- Discussions were held with senior and subject leaders, staff, the Chair and one other member of the governing body, two representatives of the local authority and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at its self-evaluation and planning documents, external evaluations of its work and examples of pupils’ work.
- Inspectors took note of the 97 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Parents’ and pupils’ responses to the school’s own recent surveys, and written comments made by parents were considered. Inspectors also analysed the responses to inspection questionnaires returned by 34 staff.

## Inspection team

Michael Merchant, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sara Benn	Additional Inspector
Gill Walley	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is a larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Just under a half of all pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest of which are pupils of Black African heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional funding from the government for some groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those with a parent in the armed services) is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- The school shares a common campus with a children's centre and a school for children with profound learning difficulties, which are subject to separate inspection reports.
- There have been considerable changes to the leadership, management and staffing of the school since the last inspection. After a long period in which the school was led by interim headteachers, a new, permanent headteacher took up post in April 2013. A new deputy headteacher began in September 2013. High numbers of staff have left or joined the school over recent years.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that pupils make consistently rapid progress in all year groups and attainment rises further by making sure that:
  - all teachers plan tasks that get the most out of the more-able pupils in their class
  - all pupils respond to the very helpful marking provided by teachers
  - all teachers consistently use questions in lessons which prompt all pupils to think deeply and give full answers
  - teachers have more chances to share what works best in their lessons with each other.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils join the Nursery with skills and abilities that are generally below those typical of their age group. Many have particularly weak skills in communication.
- Highly effective liaison between the school and the children's centre ensures that children settle into the Nursery classes quickly, are keen to learn, play together well and are well behaved.
- The excellent space for the youngest children is generally used to very good effect. Inside spaces are fresh and clean, with clearly marked labels on drawers and containers so that children can find and put away equipment independently. The outside area offers much opportunity for learning and is used well by adults to help develop children's climbing and clambering skills.
- The achievement of all groups of pupils as they pass through the school, including those from the wide range of different heritages and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, is good. This reflects the success of the school's determination that all pupils should have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment, overall, is above average, and is getting better year on year. Many pupils make particularly impressive gains in mathematics. The school's information shows that most pupils are currently working at mathematics levels that are, on average, a year ahead of where most pupils typically are nationally.
- These rapid gains in attainment and progress, however, are not consistent across all year groups and subjects and so pupils' overall progress is good rather than outstanding. In Year 1, most make the progress expected of them. Progress is good throughout Years 2 and 3, and in Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils make rapid gains.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make consistently good and, sometimes, outstanding progress. Teachers and other adults prepare work for these pupils at precisely the right level. Carefully targeted support means that they make at least good progress in relation to their starting points.
- Across the school, teachers are very aware of the need to develop the reading, writing and speaking skills of pupils and they plan carefully to use these skills in lessons. Very well-considered and effective reading support starts in Year 1 for any pupils who need it. As a result, pupils read, write and speak with increasing confidence as they move through the school.
- Pupils that enter the school speaking English as an additional language make good progress at developing their speaking, reading and writing skills. All teachers regard themselves as teachers of English as an additional language and they, and other adults, play an important role in supporting pupils.
- Until recently, pupils supported through the pupil premium were, on average, one term behind other pupils in the school. The school now uses its pupil premium funding very effectively to provide individual help and guidance in lessons, additional tuition and increase participation in out-of-school activities and courses. This support has reduced the gap in attainment between these pupils and others across all year groups, so that it is smaller than that seen nationally. They attain very similar levels in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 as other pupils and make very similar rates of progress.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers expect much of their pupils, not just in terms of achievement, but in the amount, complexity and challenge of tasks.
- Teachers' strong subject knowledge and understanding are used well to pace learning so that time for imaginative and engaging activities is used flexibly. This was well displayed in an excellent English lesson when pupils in Year 6 were gripped by the sheer speed and demand of the task to write an effective diary set by the teacher. They worked flat out, relished the

intellectual demand of the activity and took great pride in accomplishing the task.

- Pupils respond very well to the teachers' high expectations and make strong contributions to their own and others' learning. They eagerly grasp all opportunities to work in pairs, in groups or independently. They delight in sharing information and helping each other to learn. Teachers often stand back and let pupils get on by themselves, intervening when necessary, but giving the pupils chances to find things out for themselves.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with teachers to ensure that materials are suitably adapted for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Where teaching is not yet outstanding, learning is held back because:
  - teachers do not get the most out of every pupil because, sometimes, all pupils complete the same tasks and these are not always hard enough for the more-able pupils
  - questions are not always used as well as they could be to probe pupils' understanding and to prompt them to fully explain their answers
  - although most marking is thorough, teachers do not always check to see that pupils are acting on the advice previously given.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The great majority of pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and respond well to the effective systems the school uses to manage behaviour.
- Strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to their consistently good behaviour around the school and in enrichment activities and assemblies. They develop very well as articulate, courteous and considerate young people, extremely well aware of how to lead safe and healthy lives.
- Pupils from different cultural and religious backgrounds get on very well together and appreciate the harmonious and tolerant climate created in the school.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and if they have a problem, they know they can talk to an adult who will help them solve it.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and say that the use of racist or unkind language is extremely rare. If it does occur, pupils are confident that it will be challenged and dealt with successfully by staff. The school actively encourages all pupils to express their individuality and appreciate that people are different.
- Attendance is currently above average and is improving for all groups of pupils. Most pupils come to school regularly and are punctual.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because in some lessons, pupils can be passive and over-reliant on the teacher, and in a few lessons are less than enthusiastic in their learning.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Senior leaders, staff and the governing body share a determination to make Prior Weston an exciting school that aims for the highest possible standards of attainment.
- The highly effective headteacher has directed improvement extremely well to improve pupils' educational opportunities. He communicates his high expectations tenaciously and persuasively, so that all staff have a shared sense of direction and feel part of a successful team. Consequently, all aspects of the school have improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching has improved because leaders carry out rigorous checks on its quality. This leads to staff training and support that is well matched to the areas that need to improve. Staff are gaining confidence in leading staff training, although teachers do not always share what works well with each other in order to improve teaching further.
- The headteacher has ensured that there are secure procedures in place to make sure that teachers are accountable for their performance. Staff are not allowed to be rewarded financially

unless they are successful in helping pupils make at least good progress.

- There is strong commitment from all staff to achieve the best for all the pupils. Pupils are given challenging academic targets that have raised their ambitions. Leaders at all levels make good use of information on pupils' progress to check any slowing down. Checks are followed up swiftly with well-thought-out support that helps pupils to catch up.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high, but the team acknowledges that there are still a few pupils who could achieve even more, especially those that achieved highly at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The way in which subjects are organised provides well for the needs, interests and aspirations of all pupils.
- The school has used the new primary sport funding effectively to improve the quality and breadth of physical education and sport provision. The range of after-school sports clubs has been extended and specialist staff employed to improve pupils' expertise in different sporting activities. There has been increased participation in sporting activities.
- The school works very effectively with parents and carers and is building strong and secure links with families to ensure that all children and pupils gain the very best from Prior Weston. The great majority of parents and carers are very positive about all aspects of the school.
- The support from the local authority has helped the school to improve since the last inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have been highly influential in guiding school improvement through a period of great turbulence when the school was led and managed by interim headteachers. Governors keep their skills up to date through regular training and are very well informed about how well the school is doing. They receive regular and comprehensive information from the headteacher and visit regularly to monitor the school's work. They know where the best teaching is in the school and, as a result, are in a strong position to contribute to school development and improvement planning. Governors have contributed fully to the discussions on how the pupil premium funding should be spent and have kept a careful check on the impact of the extra support and guidance provided for eligible students. They hold the headteacher to account for the way in which increases in pay are used to reward teachers. They know how any underperformance is being tackled. Governors meet all their responsibilities well, including national requirements for safeguarding pupils.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100434
<b>Local authority</b>	Islington
<b>Inspection number</b>	425504

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

<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>	472
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Barbara Riddell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Aaron Griffiths
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 January 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7786 4800
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