

Prestbury CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111325
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	288927
Inspection date	7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Mike Hewlett

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	323
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Professor Ken Entwistle
Headteacher	Mr David Capener
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2003
School address	Bollin Grove Prestbury Macclesfield Cheshire SK10 4JJ
Telephone number	01625 828043
Fax number	01625 820005

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a large, church aided school situated in the village of Prestbury on the outskirts of Macclesfield. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with few pupils coming from other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is much lower than in most schools. Similarly, the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is well below the national average. Most pupils arrive at school with above average skill levels. The school holds numerous local and national awards including ArtsMark Gold, Eco School and International School awards and has met the standards for Healthy Schools.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'This is a superb school which goes the extra mile' is typical of the comments made by parents, and they are right. Prestbury C of E Primary is an outstanding school which provides excellent value for money. This is how the school sees itself in most areas. However, in standards and achievement, teaching and learning and capacity to improve its judgements are too modest. The inspection found that these areas are outstanding rather than good. Pupils flourish in the secure 'family' environment that the school creates. As a result, their personal development is outstanding. In response to the excellent care and support they receive, pupils develop as thoughtful, caring individuals fully meeting the school's high expectations. A real feature is the way in which pupils show great care and concern for others. For example, the way in which the anti-bullying committee supports pupils who are upset and through the generous way in which they raise funds for their partner school in South Africa. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the work of the school, and so are the pupils, who are happy that 'teachers give us hard work to do but they will always explain if we are not sure'. Pupils love coming to school. This is illustrated by their excellent attitudes to learning, the way they cooperate so readily and by the great enthusiasm they show as they get on with their work. Unsurprisingly, they enjoy the outstanding range of activities that the school provides. These enrich their learning both inside and outside the classroom and contribute to an exciting and imaginative curriculum. Very good use is made of partnerships with local sports, arts and musical organisations to widen the curriculum in this way. Pupils learn about the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle through their work on healthy eating and through the sporting activities on offer to them. Behaviour is impeccable. Pupils understand exactly what is expected of them and respond accordingly.

Pupils achieve well in response to the outstanding teaching they receive. The majority of children arrive in school with above average skill levels. They get off to an excellent start in the Foundation Stage and successfully build on this through Key Stages 1 and 2. Consequently, by the end of Year 6, standards are significantly above average in English, mathematics and science and have been for many years. However, throughout the school, standards are not as high in writing as they are in reading, particularly at the higher levels. The school has started to introduce a good range of strategies to ensure that all pupils build more rapidly on their writing skills. These have not yet had time to impact on standards and achievement in all year groups. Teachers' planning is very good and caters exceptionally well for different levels of ability. Provision for different groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with particular gifts or talents, is excellent.

Leadership and management are excellent. Despite achieving consistently high standards there is no complacency here. The headteacher is new to the school but, working very closely with the outstanding deputy headteacher, he has ensured a seamless transition built on the tradition of success, and has quickly identified the right priorities for improvement. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are well supported by committed staff and an outstanding governing body which knows the school very well and offers just the right level of challenge. Excellent progress has been made since the last inspection, particularly in improving pupils' understanding of their own learning. Everyone involved has the highest aspirations for the school and there is an excellent capacity to deliver them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement and raise standards in writing throughout the school, particularly at the higher levels.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

When children start school their skill levels overall are above those expected for their age. Children of all abilities make an excellent start so that by the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority are achieving standards well in excess of what is expected of them. The way in which they work cooperatively is a real strength. The rate of progress and achievement of all pupils, regardless of gender, ability or ethnicity, continues as they move through Key Stages 1 and 2. They consistently reach standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science that are significantly higher than national averages. Their ability to discuss confidently, plan work and take responsibility for their own learning is exceptional. In their English work they do better in their reading than their writing, particularly at the higher levels. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make first-rate progress because they are given such excellent support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

As pupils progress through the school they become increasingly mature and confident, take on responsibilities enthusiastically and develop excellent attitudes to learning. Their obvious enjoyment of learning is reflected in their high attendance rate. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Assemblies enable the pupils to gain excellent insight into spiritual matters. The rich curriculum enables them to acquire a very good understanding of the diverse beliefs and values of people from different backgrounds. They are very considerate towards each other and show care and concern for others, such as pupils in their partner school in South Africa whom they help 'because they don't have much money to buy books'. Pupils say they feel safe in school and would confidently go to an adult if they had any worries. They understand the importance of healthy eating and exercise. They respond very well when given responsibility, with the school council taking a leading role in helping to set the direction for the school as, for example, in helping to lead the 'walking to school' initiative. Their excellent achievements in basic skills and personal qualities prepare them superbly for the next stage in their schooling.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Classes are exciting places to be with most of the teaching and learning outstanding. Staff working in the Foundation Stage have a very good understanding of how young children learn and they organise work that excites and interests them. Throughout the school excellent relationships between adults and pupils are key factors in its success. Teachers assess pupils' progress carefully in order to plan work that accurately reflects their learning needs. The excellent use of interactive whiteboards stimulates pupils and makes learning interesting for them. Opportunities to work together in pairs and groups successfully develop pupils' understanding. Teaching assistants work in close partnership with teachers and make a very

positive contribution to the learning in the school. A high priority is given to building pupils' self-esteem and confidence. This results in them becoming very effective learners. Pupils are attentive and keen to do well, and they work hard. Parents are understandably very pleased with the teaching in the school and with their children's achievements.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Curriculum provision is excellent, as recognised through the various awards the school has achieved. Pupils experience a rich, stimulating diet that meets all of their needs very well. Throughout the school a strong emphasis is given to the basic skills but these are delivered in exciting and innovative ways. For example, 'Enterprise Week' enables pupils to plan their own businesses, making excellent links with the world of work. Learning is enriched and made more relevant through a wide range of visits to places of interest, together with contributions from visitors to school. The strong emphasis given to personal, social, and health education and citizenship is reflected in the pupils' outstanding personal development. There are impressive out- of-school opportunities provided through very good links with local community groups as well as after-school clubs. These add an exciting dimension to learning. Pupils comment favourably on the growing number of out-of-school clubs and on the excellent resources for information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils have regular opportunities to use ICT independently to support their work and regard it very much as a tool for learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, support and guidance are outstanding. Parents value the high level of care provided by all staff which contributes strongly to pupils' progress, enjoyment and well-being. Very careful attention is paid to all health and safety issues, and child protection procedures are in place. Pupils rightly feel safe at school, and are comfortable about confiding in staff if the need arises. Excellent induction procedures help pupils to quickly settle into school, and effective transition arrangements contribute to their smooth transfer into secondary school. Pupils particularly value the clear academic guidance they are given through their individual targets and teachers' marking of their work, which helps them understand what they need to do to make their work better. Pupils' performance is carefully monitored in order to plan extra support for any identified as underachieving.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management underpin the school's success. Determined and effective leadership motivates staff, who are enthusiastic and committed. The resultant strong team approach ensures that all staff carry out their responsibilities very effectively. They work hard to provide an education of the highest quality for pupils and are quick to tackle any weaknesses that are spotted, such as the need to improve writing. Equal opportunity is promoted very well, with great care taken to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential. School improvement planning is well organised and accurately focuses on the right priorities. Strong links with the local community successfully enhance the learning opportunities presented to pupils. The governors are committed and knowledgeable. They have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are supportive and challenging in just the right

measure. Based on its current track record of improvement the school has an excellent capacity for continued success.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Prestbury C of E Primary School, Prestbury, SK10 4JJ

As you know, I visited your school recently to find out if your school is giving you the education you should receive.

Thank you very much for making me so welcome. I really enjoyed talking to you and finding out about what you enjoyed doing. It is important for you to know that your school is outstanding.

Some of the things that really stood out were:

- how well you do in English, mathematics, science and ICT
- how keen you are to take on responsibilities, help to make decisions about your school and care about one another, including your friends in your partner school in South Africa
- your behaviour and attitude to work, which are outstanding
- the headteacher and all the staff take excellent care of you all and teach you so well
- the welcome you give to everyone who visits your school.

Your results are excellent, but I think some of your writing could be even better. You can help your teachers by listening carefully when they tell you what you need to do to improve.

Thank you for helping me so much with the inspection. You told me how proud you are of your school and I can understand why. I hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers.