

East Preston Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125919
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315356
Inspection date	30 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Standing
Headteacher	Claire New
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2004
School address	Lashmar Road East Preston Littlehampton BN16 1EZ
Telephone number	01903 773177
Fax number	01903 850747

Age group	4-7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the effectiveness of assessment and tracking systems in supporting pupils' progress; reception children's achievement in communication, language and literacy, especially in writing; and the achievement of higher attaining pupils in reading. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, analysis of school tracking and assessment data and discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, members of the governing body and pupils. The views of parents were gathered from the returns of the Ofsted and the school's own questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

East Preston is an average size infant school. The headteacher has been in post since September 2007. Attainment on entry has declined over the last few years and is slightly below expectations overall, with weaknesses in aspects of early literacy and personal and social skills. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A very small number speak English as an additional language. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Activemark and Healthy School awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well and their personal development is excellent. This is the result of consistently good teaching, high quality care and a rich, relevant and interesting curriculum, which enthuses and motivates pupils to work hard. A major reason for the school's success is the effective way in which staff and governors keep a close check on how well it is doing. They ensure that strategies are quickly put in place to address areas of concern. Parents are very appreciative of their work as is evident in the comment, 'lovely school, lovely teachers and a great new headteacher'. Over the past year, the school has succeeded in improving reception children's communication, language and literacy skills in both reading and writing. Effective action has also been taken to ensure that higher attaining pupils in other year groups make good progress in reading. This gives confidence that the school is well placed to improve further.

Progress is good from the Reception Year through to Year 2. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language do as well as their classmates. By the end of Year 2, standards are generally above average in reading, writing and mathematics. They are lower this year in reading and writing although they are still slightly above average. Nevertheless, this indicates good progress from when these pupils started school. The very good focus on improving reading skills this year means that more pupils than predicted are reaching above average levels in this aspect. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education and for their future lives.

Due to an excellent programme for personal, social and health education and especially good pastoral support, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils work and play very happily together and love coming to school. Attendance is above average. Behaviour is good. Given that many children starting in Reception find it difficult to behave well, this represents very good progress. Pupils' knowledge of how to keep healthy is excellent. For example, they are well aware of what should be in a 'healthy lunch box' and very much enjoy the rewards they receive if they bring one. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to school life through their work as 'eco monitors' and members of the school council. Links with a school in Sierra Leone enhance their understanding of world citizenship. This, together with a range of activities, such as a topic on Africa, supports their cultural development. Spiritual development is fostered effectively through the very well planned assemblies with excellent opportunities for reflection.

The good curriculum provides pupils with a range of exciting activities, which they say make lessons interesting and fun. They love the special days, visits and visitors and the many clubs they can attend. The school has forged successful partnerships with parents and other schools and agencies, which support pupils' learning well. Planning has improved this year to identify how pupils can build on and extend their skills as they move from class to class. This is beginning to enhance progress further, although the full effect of this is yet to be seen. The new programme to help pupils link sounds to letters and build words is very good and has made a major contribution to improved reading skills this year. Teachers plan interesting lessons with many practical activities, which engage pupils and motivate them to work hard. Day-to-day checks on pupils' progress are very good and pupils are confident that 'you get help when you are stuck'. In lessons, teachers intuitively recognise when pupils are ready to move on and set new tasks, which help them to improve. However, cautious assessment of pupils' work has limited the level of challenge in the targets set for their improvement. In addition, class teachers

have not had full access to the assessment information that shows pupils' progress over time. This has made it difficult for them to judge if progress was slowing or accelerating and to adjust programmes of work accordingly. Although there have been improvements in these areas, the full effect of this on pupils' progress is yet to be seen.

Care, support and guidance are good with some especially strong features. The school pays high regard to pupils' safety and welfare. Rigorous health and safety checks are in place and staff vetting and child protection arrangements fully comply with government guidelines. Pupils feel very safe and secure in school and recognise a number of ways in which to keep themselves safe. Pupils with specific learning or behavioural needs receive very good support. As one parent wrote, 'This is a very happy, secure and productive school environment.'

The new headteacher has demonstrated a very good capacity for driving improvement forward and her deputy gives very effective support. Leadership and management are good overall. Until this year, subject leaders were not sufficiently involved in monitoring and tracking pupils' progress, which limited their ability to contribute to school improvement. Although their expertise in this area has increased, the school acknowledges that still more needs to be done and this is a priority for development. Governors are well informed. Their recently reorganised committee structure and monitoring arrangements are building on the successful part they play in supporting school development.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Induction procedures are good and parents are delighted that their children settle into school well. Children are well taught and benefit from a wide range of practical and interesting activities. Achievement is good and, by the end of Reception, overall standards are slightly above those expected. The excellent new programme for teaching early reading and writing skills has resulted in the children making very good progress this year. Standards are above expectations in communication, language and literacy, as they are in personal and social development where independent learning skills are promoted especially well. Recent improvements to the accommodation and the associated curriculum developments are beginning to enhance learning further. However, these improvements are relatively new and the full impact on children's progress has yet to be seen. The provision is well led and managed with staff increasingly taking on responsibility for monitoring and tracking children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make full use of assessment information so that all teachers are involved in tracking progress, have an accurate view of how well pupils in their class are doing and are able to set challenging targets to help them to improve.

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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

1 May 2008

Inspection of East Preston Infant School, Littlehampton, BN16 1EZ

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and being so friendly and helpful. I particularly want to thank the school council members who gave up their lunchtime to talk to me. I think your school is good and I am delighted that you and your parents agree.

Here are some of the things that I found were good about the school.

- You are well taught, work hard and make good progress. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average.
- Staff take excellent care of you and you feel very safe and happy in school.
- Your personal development is excellent; you all get on very well together and behaviour is good; you do many things to help your school such as clearing up the playground litter.
- You enjoy the interesting activities teachers plan for you; the new outdoor area for reception children is excellent; I think it is good that the school is planning to have similar areas for the other classes.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard to help your school improve this year; I am very impressed with how much better you are doing in reading.

Here is what I have asked your school to improve.

- Make sure that staff check very carefully how well you are doing, so they can give you good advice on how to do your best.

I know you work hard and I hope you continue to do so.

Thank you again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

D Wilkinson Lead inspector