

Preshute Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126349
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	315509
Inspection dates	20–21 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Susan Orpin

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	192
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joyce Smith
Headteacher	James Smith
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2003
School address	High Street Manton Marlborough SN8 4HH
Telephone number	01672 512754
Fax number	01672 512754

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Preshute CE Primary School is slightly smaller than average in size. Pupils are mainly White British. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. Many pupils come from socially advantaged backgrounds and few are eligible for free school meals. The school has gained the Gold Artsmark Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Preshute School provides pupils, who are confident and caring, with a satisfactory standard of education. The good care, guidance and support, combined with stimulating opportunities for pupils to use their imagination, result in excellent standards of behaviour and pupils who thoroughly enjoy being at school. This is reflected in their high levels of attendance. Partnership with parents is good, with almost all being highly supportive of the school and its work.

Achievement is satisfactory throughout the school, and standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Achievement in writing and information and communication technology (ICT) is improving because of actions to improve the way these aspects are taught. Pupils underachieve in science, so standards are average, showing little improvement in recent years.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers are enthusiastic and relationships are very good. Pupils are encouraged, managed well and are interested in their work. However, the purpose and planning of lessons is insufficiently precise at times and the pace of work too slow. Sometimes, pupils spend too much time listening and work does not fully challenge them, particularly some more able pupils. Teachers' assessment of pupils is satisfactory but sometimes information is not used to plan work. Pupils are not aware of specific learning targets in English or mathematics and are not always sufficiently clear about how to improve further. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by an exciting range of trips, visitors and extra-curricular activities. Planning in mathematics and science is not as strong as other subjects.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, reflected in the way they play and work together harmoniously, respecting each other's feelings. They are very safety conscious and readily contribute to the local and wider community. They undertake responsibilities with enthusiasm and confidently express their views and ideas.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There are high expectations for pupils' personal development through exciting and stimulating experiences and these are achieved well. The school's self-evaluation is realistic but underemphasises the need to improve pupils' achievement beyond its present satisfactory level. Monitoring systems are satisfactory, but are not always used well enough to inform the school's actions and improvements. However, school action has improved standards in writing and ICT. The senior management team is developing its role but too much strategic responsibility is being undertaken by the headteacher alone. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage so that by the time they join Year 1, they are exceeding the goals expected for their age across all areas of learning. Children have excellent attitudes towards learning and enjoy school because they are encouraged by staff and provided with a wide range of interesting activities. Their behaviour is outstanding. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are organised well, so pupils know what is expected from them, but at times, the pace of their learning is limited by insufficient adult intervention.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that lesson planning includes suitably challenging tasks to match pupils' differing needs.
- Develop the senior leadership team to play a more strategic role in school improvement.
- Rigorously monitor achievement and teaching to identify areas for development and ensure that subsequent action is taken.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are above average by Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children start the school with skills and experiences that are above those usually found for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They make satisfactory progress in the Reception class, so that by the time they join Year 1, most children are exceeding the goals expected for their age.

Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. Throughout the school, standards in reading are highest and are above average. Standards in writing and ICT have improved in recent years and are also above average. Standards in science are average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as their peers but some more able pupils are not achieving as well as they might because the work does not always challenge them enough.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school is a happy and harmonious community. Relationships are good and pupils feel valued. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they concentrate well on their tasks. Occasionally, their attention wanes because they have to listen for too long and are not actively involved in their learning. Pupils' enjoyment of school is excellent and they are keen to learn. Their attendance is well above average. One parent commented, 'My son seems to like everything about school.'

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils work together amicably, respect others' feelings and understand fair play. They take responsibility well, for example, as members of the school council or as 'buddies' for those who need extra support at break times.

Pupils are very aware of each other's safety in the cramped accommodation. They participate in physical activities enthusiastically and understand the importance of healthy eating. The school has a Healthy Schools Award. Pupils have a strong awareness of community and are keen fundraisers for many good causes. Their ability to work constructively with others and their satisfactory progress in literacy and numeracy mean that pupils are soundly prepared for their future. Pupils are able to organise their own equipment in lessons, but they do not always learn independently and are too reliant on the teacher.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Lessons in the Reception class are planned to provide a wide range of learning opportunities through interesting and stimulating activities, but sometimes opportunities for more challenge are missed through a lack of adult discussion with children about their activities. Throughout the school, teachers are enthusiastic. They interest their pupils effectively through a broad range of exciting activities. For example, pupils are encouraged to write about their adventures in an imaginary land that they cover in their drama lessons. Relationships are good and pupils are given much positive encouragement. Teachers use ICT well to help them provide clear explanations.

Sometimes, the planning of lessons is not sufficiently guided by precise objectives and at times, the pace of work is too slow. This means that pupils do not learn as much as they should. Occasionally, pupils spend too much time listening and are too dependent on the teacher rather than finding things out for themselves and working independently. Although teachers assess pupils' progress regularly, sometimes this information is not used enough to plan tasks to challenge pupils' differing needs, especially the more able. Teaching assistants make a good contribution through the help they give, particularly to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Exciting activities stimulate pupils' imagination, for example, the re-enactment of Plantagenet battles when pupils, dressed in authentic costumes, experienced the exhilaration of historical adventure. The school provides creative subjects well and has gained the Gold Artsmark Award. Diverse, challenging outdoor activities, such as orienteering, survival techniques, rock climbing and archery, provide experiences that help pupils develop skills and their environmental awareness. Provision in ICT is good and used by pupils for research. There are good programmes for personal, social and health education that help pupils become confident and caring. Opportunities in mathematics and science are less well planned than other subjects with too few opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills.

The range of enrichment activities is outstanding, including visits to the local mosque, Hungerford Castle, Oxenwood Outdoor Educational Centre, and visitors, such as a cartoonist, a Gambian King and the Lord Mayor of Marlborough. Consequently, pupils learn to be confident and work together, developing an enthusiasm for school. A wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities is well attended by pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel safe and one pupil commented, 'The teachers soon notice if you look unhappy and help you to sort things out'. Parents are justifiably confident that their children are well looked after. Child protection procedures are robust and regular health and safety checks are conducted so the school is a very safe place. Effective procedures help children settle when they start school and prepare Year 6 pupils for secondary education. Pupils benefit from good support and guidance for their personal development, reflected in their enthusiasm and behaviour.

Strong links with external agencies provide support for pupils when required. Pupils' academic guidance is satisfactory. They know what they are expected to learn and teachers often provide useful feedback through their marking. However, pupils are not aware of specific learning targets in English or mathematics and are not always sufficiently clear about how to improve their standards further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has a sound capacity for improvement. Self-evaluation is satisfactory and the identification of strengths and areas for development is realistic. However, there is too much emphasis on the above average standards that pupils reach rather than improving their satisfactory academic progress and achievement.

The school's use of targets is adequately challenging. Its targets are realistic and based on an analysis of pupils' attainment. In English, there is sufficient challenge for improvement to take place, although targets for mathematics and science have been less ambitious than those in English. The headteacher has high expectations for pupils' personal development and these are shared with staff and pupils. The school's success in helping pupils to develop into well balanced, kind and considerate individuals owes much to the commitment and positive role model provided by the headteacher.

Procedures for checking the school's performance are satisfactory but not always sufficiently rigorous. Consequently, while lessons are regularly observed, opportunities are sometimes missed to provide teachers with clear guidance on how to improve further. In addition, the analysis of data is not always sharp enough to focus the school's actions. Nevertheless, carefully judged initiatives have helped to improve aspects of the school's provision, for example, raising standards in writing and ICT through effective leadership and management.

At present, too much responsibility for monitoring the school's performance, and for setting and achieving its goals, rests on the headteacher's shoulders. The senior management team makes a satisfactory contribution to raising standards but has the potential to contribute more to strategic leadership and management.

The governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are committed and very supportive but do not challenge the school sufficiently to improve aspects of its performance.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

24 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Preshute Primary School, Manton, SN8 4HH

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school. We enjoyed talking to you and were very impressed by how friendly, polite and confident you are. Your school is giving you a satisfactory standard of education.

These are some of the other things we found out about your school:

- Your results in Year 2 and in Year 6 are above those of most other schools.
- You make satisfactory progress, but at times some of you could be given harder work to do.
- Your behaviour is excellent, as is your attendance and enjoyment of school.
- You are taught soundly, but some lessons do not challenge you enough.
- You benefit from a very exciting range of interesting topics, especially through trips and visitors to school.
- Adults at the school take good care of you, but you need to have clear targets in literacy and numeracy to help you improve your work.
- The school is led satisfactorily and the adults know what to do to improve it.

We found that some improvements are needed in three main areas and we have asked your teachers to work on these in the coming months:

- Improve lessons to make sure that the work you do is not too easy or too difficult.
- Make sure that senior teachers help the headteacher improve the school so you can learn more.
- Make more checks on the improvements being made to your lessons.

You can help by using every opportunity in lessons to think and learn on your own.

Yours sincerely

Sue Orpin Lead inspector

24 September 2007

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Lead inspector