

Prenton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103598
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	376933
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2012
Lead inspector	Steven Hill

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	391
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Parnell
Headteacher	Sandra Lloyd
Date of previous school inspection	11 December 2006
School address	Bramwell Avenue Prenton CH43 0RQ
Telephone number	0151 6082958
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Email address	schooloffice@prentonprimary.wirral.sch.uk

Registered childcare provision	Prenton Primary Out of School Club
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	30
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	January 2007



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Introduction

Inspection team

Steven Hill
Stephen Rowland
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Additional Inspector
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Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 20 lessons, including two joint observations with the headteacher, and visited the after-school club. Discussions were held with members of staff of the school and the leader of the childcare provision, groups of pupils and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, heard a number of younger pupils reading, and observed assembly and break-times. They examined a variety of documentation, including the school's own monitoring and evaluation of its work, the tracking of pupils' progress, case studies of pupils who have particular problems, and information about how pupils are kept safe. Samples of pupils' work were scrutinised in books and on display. Questionnaires were analysed from staff, pupils and from 148 parents and carers.

Information about the school

This is a large primary school, with two classes for each age group. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage, and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportions of pupils who are supported at School Action Plus and those with a statement of special educational needs, are above average. The school meets the current floor targets, which are the government's minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

There is a private pre-school and a children's centre on the same site. Neither is managed by the governing body, and both are inspected and reported upon separately. The governing body manages the registered childcare provided in a before- and after-school club, for its own pupils and for some children who attend the pre-school.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not outstanding because teaching has yet to become consistently excellent in order to make pupils' achievement outstanding and because attainment in mathematics is lower than in English.
- All groups of pupils make good progress. By Year 6, attainment is above average in reading and writing, and has improved over the last two years. The school has successfully increased pupils' progress in mathematics this year through improvements to teaching and the curriculum. Pupils now make good progress in mathematics lessons. However, there has not been time for this to make a full impact on pupils' attainment in mathematics in Year 6, which is still average.
- Teachers consistently encourage and enthuse pupils, so they work hard and are keen to learn. In the majority of lessons, the pace is brisk, tasks are demonstrated clearly to show pupils what to do, and teachers make good use of assessment information to match activities to pupils' needs. In a minority of lessons, one or other of these aspects is weaker, so progress is not as rapid. This issue has been accurately identified by senior managers, who are working successfully with colleagues to help them improve their practice.
- The school is a happy and harmonious community where pupils behave well and feel very safe. They are very positive about their learning and say that lessons are fun. Pupils have great confidence in the adults in the school, saying that they can always turn to them for help if they need it, either with their work or with personal worries. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school's leaders have maintained the strengths since the last inspection and have raised attainment and accelerated progress over the last two years. Strong teamwork and a common purpose are improving teaching and pupils' performance well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that all lessons have a good pace throughout
 - making sure that the level of challenge in activities is always matched to pupils' needs
 - more consistently demonstrating tasks for pupils so that they are clear about what is expected.
- Raise attainment in mathematics to equal that in reading and writing by:
 - consolidating the recent improvements made to progress in the subject through the improvements made to teaching and the curriculum in mathematics
 - increasing the effectiveness of homework in mathematics, particularly by helping parents and carers to support their children's efforts in the subject
 - increasing the use of collaborative work in mathematics lessons.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils achieve well regardless of their gender, background or abilities. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as that of their classmates because work is tightly matched to their specific needs, so that it is challenging, but manageable.

Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of development that vary from year to year but which are, overall, somewhat lower than that expected for their age. By the end of the Reception year (known to parents and carers in this local authority as 'Foundation 2'), good progress means that their attainment is a little above average. By the end of Key Stage 1, improved progress means that standards have been above average for the last two years, including in reading, although this was not the case previously.

At the end of Key Stage 2, recent attainment has been broadly average overall, but improving. This represents good progress for many pupils, because of their relatively low prior attainment. Attainment has improved successively for three years in reading and writing, to be above average. The quality of handwriting is a strength throughout the school. Attainment in mathematics is average. Pupils are now making good progress in mathematics because of improvements in teaching and the curriculum over the current year. Some good use is made of collaborative work in mathematics, although the school has correctly identified the need to extend this.

Reception (Foundation 2) children learn well, both in teacher led situations and when choosing their own activities. They made good progress in consolidating their understanding of addition as they listened attentively to the teacher's clear explanations of how to use a giant number line, contributing their answers thoughtfully. Pupils work conscientiously, seen when pupils in Year 1 wrote facts about India independently and thoughtfully, as the adults worked with other groups in the room. They also work very effectively in pairs or groups, seen when pupils in Year 6 collaborated well to sort out how their ideas about how to interpret line graphs, making good progress in their understanding.

Parents and carers are rightly positive about their children's progress, and many give them good support at home, particularly with their reading. The school has identified that many do not feel as confident in how to help their children with their mathematics homework, and plans are in place to improve this.

Quality of teaching

Teachers' positive relationships with pupils, together with their high expectations, ensure good behaviour, and a purposeful working ethos in lessons that underpins good progress. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to generate interest, and often to model tasks for pupils to show them exactly what is required. At times, this is not done clearly enough, and pupils can take some time to understand what to do. A major strength of many lessons is the way adults monitor pupils' ongoing progress, intervening to address any misconceptions, as well as challenging pupils to improve their work. Teachers often plan different work to meet pupils' varying abilities, ensuring that challenge is at the right level. This contributes particularly to the good teaching of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs. Activities are often carefully tailored to their social as well as academic needs. Good use is made of skilled teaching assistants to provide both support and challenge so that these pupils make good progress. Occasionally, the match of work to needs is not accurate enough, so some pupils are given work that is too hard or too easy for them. Most lessons have a fast pace, and pupils are actively involved so that they are engaged and enthusiastic. In the occasional satisfactory lesson, the pace slows when pupils have to sit and listen for too long without active participation. Reading is taught well throughout the school, with a good emphasis on phonics (how sounds in words relate to how they are written). Pupils use their phonics skills well to write independently from an early age. Parents and carers are rightly positive about the quality of teaching. Pupils like and respect their teachers, a group of Year 6 pupils agreeing that among the best things in school were 'great teachers.'

Teachers consistently promote pupils' personal development well. Good use is made of collaborative work, particularly in English, to actively involve pupils, to help them sort out their ideas, and to improve their oral skills. This was exemplified in an outstanding lesson in religious education. Pupils in Year 6 discussed the implications of moral and social choices, thoughtfully sharing their feelings, because they responded to the teacher's lively explanations and sensitive questioning. The teacher drew well on incidents in her own life to illustrate important moral points, gaining pupils' avid attention and developing their spiritual, moral and social understanding very effectively.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Boys and girls have positive relationships with each other and with adults. They work and play together amicably. They enjoy school and value the friendships they make. They are tolerant of each other's foibles, realise that a few of their classmates sometimes find it hard to conform, but say that the adults make sure that their learning and safety are never compromised. Pupils say that behaviour is good, are confident that the adults will quickly address any issues, and that they would be happy to talk to the adults about any problems. Parents and carers are also, rightly, positive about behaviour. Similarly, pupils are convinced that any incidents of bullying will be quickly addressed. They take an active part in combating bullying, saying that it is rare and that, 'We don't tolerate it'. They regularly discuss such issues in class and in assemblies, including in regular anti-bullying weeks, which give them a good understanding of different types of bullying and the potential

consequences. Pupils are cheerful, friendly and polite. They are keen to fulfil the adults' high expectations, and show a good understanding of the complexities of moral choices, and of right and wrong. They have a good understanding of, and respect for, the variety of beliefs and cultures in this country and around the world. They rightly agree with their parents and carers that the school is a safe place to be, and know how to contribute to their own and their classmates' safety by their behaviour. They have a particularly good understanding of how to use the internet safely, and of its potential dangers. They are considerate of each other's feelings, and older pupils are kind and helpful to younger ones, as was observed particularly in the after-school club.

Leadership and management

The school's leaders successfully focus on improving teaching and hence raising pupils' achievement. Issues identified at the previous inspection have been dealt with well. Regular and rigorous monitoring of lessons clearly identifies strengths and weaknesses, and teachers are given helpful feedback that helps them improve their practice. This has led to more outstanding teaching, and less that is only satisfactory, since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment is monitored frequently and accurately. Information about individuals' progress is used well to identify any who are not doing as well as they could, and to provide extra help so that they catch up. Similarly, the overview of progress enables the accurate identification of general issues, which the staff then address well together. The issues identified by this inspection had already been accurately identified by the school, and they are being addressed. This good self-evaluation and strong teamwork demonstrate that the school is well placed to improve further. The clear picture of different pupils' progress also contributes to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to do well. A strong focus on pupils' personal development is successful in ensuring that they are happy in school and behave well. The childcare provision also makes a good contribution to the personal development of those who attend. The governing body has a clear view of strengths and weaknesses, provides good support to staff, and holds the school to account well for its performance. They have ensured that the school's safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

There is a good curriculum that contributes well to pupils' progress and enjoyment. A successful focus on literacy and numeracy is complemented by a broad curriculum in other subjects which has a strong international flavour. This contributes particularly well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A variety of good quality work around the school illustrates this, including work on life in India, some high quality models from design technology, and paintings in the styles of variety of artists, including Clarice Cliffe and Kandinsky. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, a good balance is drawn between child-chosen and teacher-directed activities, and good use is made of the outdoor areas.

The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

The school provides childcare for up to 30 children between three and 11 years of age in a before- and after-school club. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage who attend include some from the on-site pre-school provision, as well as some from the Reception (Foundation 2) classes in the school. Currently, ten such younger children attend the club.

Children enjoy the variety of activities provided and make good progress, particularly in their social development and their language skills. They learn to take responsibilities and to stay safe, behaving well and joining in activities happily. This is aided by the direction and interventions of skilled adults, and by the kindness and support of older children. Relationships with adults are good. The accommodation is bright and welcoming, and provides a safe and stimulating environment for play and learning. A good outdoor space is available in the setting's own garden. Good attention is paid to developing healthy lifestyles, through the reinforcement of hygiene, through active play, and through the provision of healthy snacks. The provision is well organised and meets requirements well. Welfare provision is good and children are kept safe. Staff are suitably qualified. There are good links with parents and carers, and with the school and pre-school, to ensure a coherent provision for children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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 for the registered provision	2

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



27 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Prenton Primary School, Prenton, CH43 0RQ

Thank you for all your help and your warm welcome when we visited your school. You told us that you enjoyed school, and we could see this was true. We found that you were well behaved, polite and friendly, and we were impressed by how well you all get along together.

Your school is giving you a good education. You make good progress because your teachers are good at helping you to learn, and you work hard in lessons. The teachers try hard to make sure that your work is just right for you, that lessons are fast moving, and they are usually very good at showing you just what you need to do. This happens in most lessons, which is why you are doing well. We have asked the teachers to make sure that all lessons are just as good, so that you do even better. You get plenty of interesting things to do, and you told us that lessons are fun. You are learning a lot about different people around the world. You have done better in English than in mathematics in the last few years, and your teachers are working hard to improve your mathematics skills this year. We have agreed with them that this should be an important priority for them until you catch up in mathematics to your high standards of reading and writing.

The adults are good at organising the school, and they keep a careful watch on how everyone is getting on, so that they can give extra help to anyone who needs it. They are keen to make the school even better, and I know you will be keen to help. You can do this by keeping up your hard work and good behaviour, especially in mathematics.

I hope you carry on enjoying life at Prenton.

Yours sincerely

Steven Hill
Lead inspector

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