

# Inspection of Preston Primary School

Mill Lane, Preston, Canterbury, Kent CT3 1HB

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Inspection dates: 24 and 25 June 2025

The quality of education **Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Outstanding**

Early years provision **Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Preston pupils are great ambassadors for their exceptional school. They are incredibly happy to come to the school where, they say, 'we have so much fun'. Pupils thrive and grow as well-rounded, articulate and confident individuals. All pupils are challenged and supported to meet the very high expectations for their academic as well as their personal achievement. Pupils excel in meeting these expectations. They are exceedingly well prepared for the future as mature, thoughtful and caring citizens.

The school's 'RICH' values encourage pupils to be respectful, inclusive, creative and hardworking. These values drive everything that the school does and are upheld and demonstrated extremely well by pupils and staff. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They have very positive attitudes to learning and demonstrate high levels of determination and resilience.

There is a very strong culture of care and kindness and pupils flourish socially and emotionally. There are extremely positive and trusting relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere, with a 'buzz' of learning and excitement. For example, in the Kookaburra class, children demonstrated what they are learning about bees from a visitor to school.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school's excellence is centred around its ambitious, innovative and inspiring curriculum. It is extremely carefully considered and structured from Reception to Year 6 and so caters exceptionally well for the mixed-age classes. The curriculum is as ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as it is for all others. Staff challenge and support pupils effectively so that everyone has access to the full curriculum. Effective and tailored adaptations ensure success for all pupils. Children in Reception get off to a great start. They develop strong foundations on which to build future learning. They have excellent opportunities to develop their character, independence and resilience. This continues throughout the school.

Highly skilled teachers deliver lessons with interesting, exciting activities, which help pupils become reflective learners. For example, they provide pupils with opportunities to plan, create, answer probing questions from teachers, who check their understanding, and evaluate their own learning. These activities lead up to 'flourish days', where pupils choose how to demonstrate what they know using their own personal strengths. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about, 'the freedom we're given to make good choices'. Pupils become confident and independent learners, who are secure in their subject-specific knowledge and skills. Teachers revisit prior learning, which supports pupils in making connections across the curriculum and deepening their learning.

Reading has high priority across the school. As soon as they start in Reception, children are taught the sounds that letters make. Staff teach phonics very well, so children quickly learn the skills to develop their early reading and writing. Pupils who need additional help are identified swiftly and receive very effective support, straightaway, to help them catch

up. A love of reading is promoted exceptionally well. Pupils develop as confident, fluent readers with the skills to access and research the wider curriculum. Pupils read increasingly challenging, high-quality texts.

Pupils' excellent attitudes are evident at work and at play. They work together extremely well, constantly demonstrating the RICH values. Pupils behave impeccably, in classrooms and throughout the school. They are extremely polite and friendly. The school is a place where pupils want to be, consequently, they attend well.

Provision for pupils' personal development is exceptional. Pupils understand different faiths, cultures and beliefs and show great respect for everyone in the school and wider community. The school excels at providing pupils with a wide range of activities as well as clubs, visits and visitors to school. These experiences, including many leadership opportunities, further enrich pupils' lives and aspirations for the future. Pupils have a really strong voice in the school. They know their opinions are valued and taken seriously and that they have opportunities to influence the direction of the work of the school.

The school builds positive and successful partnerships with parents, who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and its leadership. The strong staff team are proud to work at the school. They appreciate how the school considers their well-being and their workload. Governors have a deep understanding of the school and provide both support and challenge to leaders. Highly effective leadership ensures that the school goes from strength to strength. Leaders draw on high-quality research in their successful work to ensure that staff and pupils achieve their very best. All the decisions made are clearly in the very best interests of the pupils. There is no complacency but an unwavering determination to build on current successes.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and](#)

[protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

|                                            |                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 118401                                                                   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Kent                                                                     |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10379796                                                                 |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                                                  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                                                                |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11                                                                  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                                    |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 123                                                                      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                                                       |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Edward O'Connor                                                          |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Helen Clements                                                           |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.prestonprimary.org.uk">www.prestonprimary.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 1 February 2024, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005               |

## Information about this school

- Preston Primary School is federated with Wingham Primary School. The headteacher at Preston is also the executive headteacher for both schools.
- The school provides breakfast and after-school provision.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other members of the school's senior leadership team, curriculum leaders and other staff.
- An inspector met with the chair and the vice-chair of the governing body.
- An inspector held a telephone conversation with the school's improvement adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons and at lunch and playtimes, in formal and informal groups.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and talked to them about their learning in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including its own evaluation of its performance and its development plan.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments as well as speaking to some parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and considered the school's own recent pupil survey.

## Inspection team

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Margaret Coussins, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Sam French                        | Ofsted Inspector |

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