

23rd October 2017



Mrs J Walker
Headteacher
The Prescott School
Knowsley Park Lane
Prescot
Merseyside
L34 3NB

Assessment Dates: 9th & 10th October 2017

Summary

The Prescott School has a strong commitment to being an inclusive school which was palpably evident from all sources of evidence gathered during this assessment. The school's ethos of high aspiration, support and challenge underpins this commitment and is one that is widely held across all stakeholders.

The welcome I received was warm and all interactions throughout the two-day assessment were equally positive. I sat with the senior team on the first morning in the large atrium and watched as every student who walked through the entrance was greeted. This was a common practice and occurs every day without fail.

The Headteacher has a clear vision for the school and she is active and highly visible in leading by example. She is highly respected by students, parents, staff and governors and she is quick to acknowledge the loyal support of her hardworking staff and governors in supporting her to provide a highly positive and inclusive provision.

The school has a largely white British population with almost 60% of the students in receipt of the Student Premium as well as a larger than average number of students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. There is also a large proportion of in year transfers to this increasingly popular school. The school is at the heart of its community which has high levels of profound disadvantage and challenge.

The school opened in 2009 into a brand-new facility under the PFI initiative following the closure of the two predecessor schools. In 2013 the school took in 242 children from a closing school in special measures including 88 into Year 11. In August 2016 the school converted to an academy and joined The Heath Family Multi Academy Trust. The mission and vision of The Heath Family (NW) is focused on raising the standards of aspiration and achievement for all students, encompassing innovative approaches to curriculum, teaching and learning, and by being part of a local and regional strategy to increase choice and diversity in education.

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The school is very well resourced and there is an abundance of space in break out areas which are surrounded by suited classrooms. The fabric of the building is in very good order and is clearly well maintained and respected. There are dedicated, specialist areas for subjects and a well-equipped sensory room. Outside, the school has ample grounds and is well served by its three MUGAs and various other playing spaces.

Walking around the school at break and lunchtimes and during my visits to classrooms, it was evident that this is a very calm and purposeful school. The behaviour of the students was very good and in classrooms they were engaged in all of the lessons I visited. Students I spoke to were very positive about the school and in particular the respectful relationships they have with the adults in their school. There is an extensive programme of extra-curricular provision which the school works very hard to ensure that there are no barriers to prevent all children accessing some aspect.

Support for children with SEND is exceptional and the pastoral system is very strong, providing the necessary security for the students to be able to succeed. There is a developing system allowing greater student voice and opportunities for student leadership. The PSHCE curriculum is very well planned and makes a valuable contribution to promoting positive values amongst the students.

Improving student progress lies at the heart of all policies and practices at The Prescott School. Over recent years, there has been steady improvement with the subsequent narrowing of attainment gaps with comparative national figures. The Prescott School has taken a significant number of students into the school from a variety of areas, schools and other providers. These students are mostly successfully integrated into the school community, however, their low starting points on entry does impact on outcomes in Year 11. For those students who access five years of education at the school there is a much better profile of achievement, with both progress and attainment much closer to national levels.

The school has quite rightly focused on maintaining high academic targets for all students. In key stage 3 there is significant evidence that the work completed to improve outcomes, such as a focus on literacy, reading and numeracy are having a positive impact with increased numbers hitting high, aspirational targets.

The quality of teaching at the school has improved steadily over time through a supportive yet challenging programme of quality assurance. Staff at the school value the professional development and support which they receive, and they plan well for lessons. There are specialist teachers for SEND and a very strong and skillful team of teaching assistants.

Parents I spoke to were very positive about their experience of the school. They are supportive and appreciative of all that the school does, and they feel valued as partners in supporting their children as they flourish at school. One parent described how her child, now in Year 11, joined the school just twelve months ago being on the verge of exclusion at the previous school. The Prescott School “has turned her around” and she is happy and now has ambition. Another parent of a child with additional needs spoke of the way in which the school worked with the family to support the child and went the “extra mile” to ensure success.

Governors are supportive of the school's leadership but are able to question the Headteacher and other leaders about improvements and steps that need to be taken to improve further. They have a realistic view of the school's position and work hard to assist the leadership move the school forward.

The school has forged strong and productive links with many organisations in order to support its work. Notably, the networks and partnerships created to support SEND and CEIAG are excellent. Charitable work is a key part of school life and staff and students have worked hard to raise significant amounts of money for worthy causes. A good example is the work of the STEM Café, working to raise funds for schools in Romania to enable it to purchase equipment for science. The school works closely with its community and makes a valuable contribution to promoting cohesion within it. The school benefits from having a local Safer Schools Police Officer on site two days per week, with whom they work very closely.

I am of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark.

I also recommend that the school consider applying for Centre of Excellence, which I would fully endorse. This would be subject to the inclusion within its plans of the appropriate areas for development and the completion of the Centre of Excellence documentation. If the school chooses to pursue this status and it were to be awarded the school would be subject to annual review from this point forwards.

Assessor: Barry Carney

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:



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Joe McCann MBA NPQH
Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd



Element 1 – The Inclusion Values and Practices of the School

The school is committed to inclusion. This commitment comes directly from the leadership of the Headteacher and is fully supported by Governors and staff. There is a good understanding of what inclusion means in its widest sense and all policies and practices and future plans are designed to ensure it is tangible and is effective. The school is open to its community, in that it welcomes all children irrespective of their particular learning or behavioural needs and they make sure they identify specific needs and put things in place to meet those needs.

There is effective leadership, management and organisation of inclusive practice. Although areas such as SEND are well organised, there is an understanding that inclusion means all pupils, no matter what the barriers to learning are. There is also an understanding that inclusion is about staff as well as students and all need to be included if they are to support children appropriately. Provision for students with SEN needs is well planned and organised. Similarly, pastoral care and support for vulnerable children and families is a priority.

Strengths:-

- Inclusion is central to the school's vision and purpose and this sets the framework in which all work takes place in this warm and welcoming school.
- The leadership of the Headteacher, the senior leaders and SEND Leader ensures that all children are fully supported to attain to their full potential.
- Individuals are valued at this school and the very happy, caring atmosphere is immediately evident.
- The school is very careful to ensure that all students feel they are valued.
- There is a sense of common purpose amongst staff, who have the students' best interests at heart and they work very hard to meet their diverse needs.
- Parents speak very highly of the school and they are involved in the life of the school in many ways.
- Excellent transition practices are in place for students entering the school, for those transferring from year to year and for post-16.
- There is a consistent approach to behaviour management resulting in high standards of learning behaviour throughout the school.
- There is a thorough system of data analysis and meetings with parents ensure that all students' needs are identified and that any students who are not progressing as expected are highlighted and targeted for appropriate interventions.



IQM Self-Evaluation Report



- The needs of students in receipt of the Pupil Premium are carefully tracked. The school is very sensitive in supporting the pupils who qualify for this funding as well as for all vulnerable children.

Areas for development:-

- There are no significant areas for development.



Element 2 – The Learning Environment, Resources and ICT

The learning environment is appropriate and well equipped. There is an impressive array of specialist equipment and resources particularly for those students with SEND. Examples include the Relax Kids programme, KOOTH online, Lexia, adjustable tables, talking scale in food technology and many, many more.

The school has provided dedicated space for a great deal of pastoral, nurture and counselling work. All areas of the school are accessible and there are two lifts at each end of the school to assist with this. Signage is clear with colour-coded wayfinding and braille.

Strengths:-

- The school's learning environment is very well thought out with excellent learning spaces which are continually being enhanced. Display is very good and clearly demonstrates the school's inclusive and aspirational ethos.
- Corridors and other spaces are bright and very positive environments, including interesting and engaging displays.
- Each classroom has an interactive white board and there is access to dedicated computer rooms as well as laptops in mobile units.
- The school's website is informative, engaging and interactive. It is a resource that is used by all members of the school's community.
- Achievement is celebrated in many ways, including through assemblies, display and certificates.
- Teaching Assistants provide excellent support for pupils in the classroom or in intervention groups.
- The school is fortunate to have a house, Tan Y Graig, located in Wales provided by the Endowment Trustees which provides outstanding outdoor opportunities for all.

Areas for development:-

- Consider introducing a Memorial/Sensory Garden to complement the existing sensory room.



Element 3 - Learning Attitudes, Values and Personal Development

There is a culture of diversity and equality throughout the school and all students and staff are supported regardless of race, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief.

Every student has equality of access to a high quality educational experience and support needed on an individual basis. All are given the opportunity to meet their potential.

Particular attention is given to the provision made for, and achievement of, different groups of students and any students who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

Prescot school works with a number of outside agencies to ensure appropriate support, guidance and challenge is available to students. These include agencies such as SHIELD, KOOTH, Listening ear, stronger families, MST and agencies who address issues of gang related activity.

Strengths:-

- Students are very clear on what is expected of them and they feel very well supported by it. There is a very positive, happy atmosphere in the school and there is mutual respect between staff and students.
- The school works very hard to create an environment where everyone can learn in an atmosphere of mutual support and respect. The school's inclusive values are reinforced during lessons and in extracurricular activities.
- Transition arrangements are very thorough and there is additional support for vulnerable children moving beyond secondary school.
- There is a wide range of extracurricular activities and clubs, which are very well attended by students. There are a variety of school trips, linked to the curriculum as well as those for rewards, which pupils are very pleased to attend.
- There is a well-structured current PHSE scheme of work in place and visiting speakers, for example specialists such as the Brooke advisory service, apprenticeship providers and theatre productions such as Chelsea's choice enhance this provision.
- The careers events organised for all year groups are highly effective. Provision is comprehensive and very well planned.

Areas for development:-

- Enhance student leadership opportunities as planned and also by investigating Step Up To Serve and the #iwill campaign.



Element 4 - Learner Progress and the Impact on Learning

There was a refreshing candour in discussions about progress and the challenges that the school faces. Senior leaders and other staff are realistic and yet retain an uncompromising drive to improve progress and attainment. They have worked hard to secure improvement and to minimise the impact of unsettling amalgamations over the past few years. Staff have never lost sight of their core purpose of providing the very best for their students.

Strengths:-

- The school is rigorous in tracking pupil progress: data is analysed, and progress meetings take place at least termly with a member of SLT. These meetings are used to discuss the progress of individuals and to put interventions in place for students where necessary.
- Students who are eligible for the Pupil Premium are tracked very carefully to ensure they are challenged appropriately, through differentiation in lessons.
- Children with learning needs are given support in lessons and in intervention groups.
- There is a very well managed and appropriate programme of Alternative Provision.
- Excellent transition arrangements are in place for children, including liaison with families of children before joining Year 7. Transition between years is also excellent as it is post 16.
- CPD for staff is an important feature and staff meetings include training and development for staff as well as sharing good practice opportunities.
- The celebration of pupil achievement is an excellent feature of this school.

Areas for development:-

- Ensure that the established focus on academic progress is maintained and that this results in improved outcomes for all groups.



Element 5 - Learning and Teaching (Monitoring)

The quality of teaching has improved steadily, and the school is working hard to continue to improve learning and outcomes for all through developing the quality of teaching. Each member of staff has a handbook/mark book which contains the most appropriate policies and procedures. This year, the school has moved to introduce Class Charts which is used to provide a very visual summary of each student as part of seating plans. SIMs is used to record and analyse data before it is imported into seating plans.

Strengths:-

- The school is thorough in monitoring all aspects of learning and teaching, to ensure a high degree of consistency of standards and approaches across the school.
- Lessons are planned with detailed differentiation and these are also monitored, and schemes of work indicate specific resources to be used.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants work together to ensure that there is an appropriate degree of challenge for all students.
- Teaching Assistants are fully engaged in lessons and work flexibly according to need. They also provide excellent support for pupils on a 1 to 1 or small group basis.
- Students are focused in their lessons and are engaged in learning. Behaviour is very good as is the learning ethos in all classrooms.
- CPD for staff is thorough and includes sharing of good practice opportunities, which staff find very helpful.
- Formal lesson observations take place by SLT and middle leaders provide support to teachers to enable them to improve their practice where necessary.
- Performance management is thorough, robust and developmental.

Areas for development:-

- Continue to use professional development to focus on pedagogy with reference to the Standards for Teachers' Professional Development. In particular, consider how to maintain a focus on learning outcomes which is underpinned by robust evidence and expertise.



Element 6 – Parents, Carers and Guardians

The parents that I met during my visit to the school were full of praise and support for the school. They commented on how the school invites them in to discuss concerns and were very positive about how these were dealt with. They praised the school for the support they had received in helping them understand their children's needs.

There is excellent communication with parents, which is enhanced by the welcoming, open ethos of the school. Any concerns expressed by parents/carers are acted upon swiftly and sensitively. The school goes out of its way to meet parents' needs through telephone calls home for both positive and room for improvement news.

Strengths:-

- The school's work with parents as partners is an excellent feature of the work of this school. The school staff take time to understand the individual needs of parents and seeks to help them wherever possible. Parents know that the school will listen to them and will provide advice and support for them.
- Parents' views are taken very seriously, so that they are able to effect changes in the school. Frequent parent surveys are analysed, and the results and further action are published and followed-through.
- Parents spoken to were very positive about the school's supportive and caring ethos. They value the attention the school gives to the individual needs of their children. They find communication with the school is excellent and the teachers are very approachable, enabling them to see a teacher when they need to.
- Parents also mentioned the sensitive way in which the school meets the individual needs of all children, including those with emotional needs and those with SEND.
- There is excellent communication with parents, which is enhanced by the welcoming, open ethos of the school. Any concerns expressed by parents/carers are acted upon swiftly and sensitively. The school goes out of its way to meet parents' needs.

Areas for development:-

- There are no significant areas for development.



Element 7 - Governing Body and Management

The Governing Body completed a skills audit prior to reconstitution to consider their skills and to identify any gaps in knowledge and experience and to recruit new members as part of succession planning. An agreed 'Code of Conduct', which places safeguarding and inclusive education at its core, was devised by all Governors, which identifies the principles of service. The Chair of Governors, Vice Chair and Leader of the Personnel and Finance Committee have a great deal of experience and use that to support and challenge the work of the school leaders and the staff. An Associate member is the Headteacher of a linked primary school and the Chair of Governors at another linked primary school is also a member of the Full Governing Body. The Headteacher of The Prescott School is also on the Governing Body of a linked Primary School. New Governors have brought their own skills and knowledge to the team and this has enhanced the work undertaken. On conversion in 2016 the MAT has provided additional training through membership of the NGA (GOLD) and the AIPs have supported Governors through bespoke training. The Scrutiny Panel of Governors works closely with staff and students to consider the work of the school and linked Governors attend school regularly and support school events. OFSTED recognise that governors are part of making the school an inclusive environment and recognise that training, and support of the governing body has enabled them to both support and challenge the leadership team in ensuring outcomes for students continue to improve.

Strengths:-

- The governing body is very involved in the life of the school: they provide appropriate support and challenge to the school and share its inclusive values and high aspirations for all students.
- Governors have high praise for the school and its work. Governors spoken to were very proud of the school's inclusive values and excellent, supportive work with children and their families.
- Governors work effectively with each governor having a specific area of responsibility on which to report to the whole team. They attend training for governors and seek support from external agencies.
- The governors feel able to support the school and are capable of challenge and being a 'critical friend', when necessary and appropriate, they are fully supportive of the school and the continuing drive to maintain high standards and improve further.
- Governors are vigilant regarding safeguarding, recognising its importance and regularly reviewing practice.

Areas for development:-

- There are no significant areas for development.



Element 8 - The School in the Community

In one form or another, the school has been a part of its community since 1544! In its current form, it has worked very hard to become a popular choice for parents and their children. The new Year 7 is oversubscribed and represents a doubling in numbers compared to previous years. This is a remarkable success and is attributable to many factors not least of which is the inclusive and aspirational ethos that permeates the school.

The school works with a multitude of different organisations and is highly regarded by all. The Local Authority Outreach Manager was especially positive in her support of the school's SEND provision and the qualities of the SENDCo in particular.

Strengths:-

- Students participate in a variety of clubs and after school activities and participate in a range of school trips to enhance their learning.
- The school welcomes a range of visitors into school for enrichment purposes and members of the community provide support for the school at events, such as assemblies, concerts and celebration events.
- Students undertake a variety of fundraising activities to support charities, for example, this year the STEM club organised a STEM Café to raise funds for schools in Romania. Their work with the Rotary Club has been used to good effect.
- The school has good links with other schools and in particular feeder primary schools and post-16 providers.
- The school's leadership and staff have an astute understanding of their community and have an unswerving dedication toward it.

Areas for development:-

- The school has a good deal of exemplary practice which it should begin to share more widely with other schools and through IQM.