



## RUNNING OUR SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN



### Prescot Primary On Track

Four years ago we undertook a major overhaul in teaching and learning at Prescot Primary School. We removed the practice of grouping our children by so called “ability.” This is where a pupil at Reception would be judged and placed in group irrespective of whether that pupil was just 4 years old or nearly 5 years old. We wanted to give all our pupils the chance to shine.

After much deliberation we decided we needed to change the way our pupils learn to read and write. We believe that children cannot fulfil their full potential in writing if they cannot read. We introduced Read Write Inc. to our school. All teachers and TAs have completed a programme of intensive training and receive regular professional development updates.

In the same year the Government changed the curriculum and “raised the bar.” This new standard would be tested from 2016. So we currently have only two years of this new data from year groups, who for their first five and six years at school were studying a different curriculum.

As the curriculum changed so did the way it was measured. Levels, which had been the heart of assessment in schools for over twenty years, were removed. Schools were left to their own devices to develop new systems. We worked with nationally recognised groups in developing our approach.

To continue our new approach to Reading and Writing we introduced a follow on programme to Read Write Inc. This programme known as Literacy and Language was introduced at Year 4 (Eagles). We are awaiting our first set of results. This year is the first year were all KS2 groups are on the programme.

We have implemented the above because we believed, and still do, that our pupils will benefit from these approaches. They will gain the core skills they need to thrive in an ever changing world. If this leads to better test scores, great but it is not the prime reason for their implementation. We made these changes at a time

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of great uncertainty and the easy route would have been to invest heavily in Year 6 and coach to the test. We believe our pupils deserve more than that. Schools should be far more than exam factories.

We have achieved a huge amount. Yes it's not perfect, yes it's not finished, and yes we want to improve further, don't all schools? But we have made huge progress and will continue to do so. The first cohort to benefit from the new changes will be current Year 2 (Unicorns.) They will take their KS2 SATs in 2022. This is much more than a quick fix and we believe we are on the right track.

## More than a number

Please remember Ofsted see our children as little more than a statistic. They do not see the community our school provides or the kind, generous, creative individuals they are. They judge schools on a very narrow set of data generated from KS2 SATs results. Indeed there is a growing feeling that schools in areas like ours are penalised by a system that values attainment over effort. Throughout their primary school education, children are put through a system based on high-stakes testing.

Surely learning is about more than getting a perfect score on a test? The Government's focus on testing children and collecting data forces teachers to 'teach to the test', leaving children with an experience of school which is so much worse than it could be. At Prescott Primary we believe that education can be far more than that. We want our children to love school, love learning and to leave us with a sense that they can not only survive in the real world but change it.

## Early Years

We believe that the success of any school is rooted in its Early Years. This is the time we can have our greatest impact and reduce the need for intervention further on in the school. Two years ago we embarked on a programme (at a time of diminishing budgets) that increased our staffing ratio to at least the equivalent of private settings. More skilled staff, means more high quality interactions for our children. This coupled with precision teaching of phonics through Read Write Inc. is showing great promise. "Children attaining a good level of development has been broadly in line with expectations for the age group."

Our Early Years learning environment consists of "large, bright, well-resourced classrooms and outdoor learning and play areas which celebrate children's work and stimulates their interests." We pride ourselves in ensuring our children recognise their achievements and our learning environment reflects their needs and interests. "Staff have very high expectations" of our children and we are proud that our children were recognised for being "inquisitive," "cooperative" and who behave "sensibly and safely."

**"Children get off to a flying start."**

"They benefit from an engaging curriculum which stimulates their interests and ensures their rapid progress."



**"All aspects of the leadership and management of the early years provision, including teaching and children's behaviour and progress, are good. The early years leader and staff are trained well and have a firm understanding of how young children learn."**

## Reading is a Strength!



“Phonics is taught effectively. The school’s current focus on reading is generating a sense of excitement and rapidly improving pupils’ reading and comprehension skills.”

## Positive Parents

“Parents are very positive and are highly complimentary about the school. They say that their children are safe, well looked after and progressing well.” Thank you for your support. Everyone who works at our school appreciates this and we know the education of your children is a team effort.

## Proud Pupils

“Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. They behave well in class, like to find out new things with their peers and are skilled at using technology.”

We are proud of our pupils too. They are great ambassadors for the school, you and Prescott as a whole.

“In Prescott Primary School, pupils execute their responsibilities, including as reading champions and sports leaders, in earnest. They are determined to serve their school well and do their best.”

## Safe Children

Our safeguarding procedures are effective. “Staff are well trained and ensure all pupils are safe from harm. Effective systems are in place to record any concerns raised by staff. All concerns are reported quickly to appropriate authorities and parents as necessary.”

“Pupils know how to stay safe while online. Older pupils are aware of the potential dangers of surfing the internet. Pupils say they feel safe in school. They know that they can talk to any adult, secure in the knowledge that their concern will be taken seriously and dealt with swiftly.”

## Well behaved

“Leaders and teachers focus on developing pupils’ independence and freedom of choice. Pupils are attentive. Their good, considerate behaviour ensures that Prescott Primary School is a peaceful and purposeful place, where all enjoy learning. Most pupils are passionate about learning and want to do well.”

**“Pupils’ progress.....is heading in the right direction this year.... Year 6 pupils are furnished with the necessary skills and abilities for their learning in Year 7. ”**

## Technology

Technology has transformed how - and when - children can work together. We regularly find our pupils continuing to work on shared projects at home, often using the collaborative features of ICT. They co-operate to choose how best to present an idea, which app to use, music and image selections and how to tailor their product to the audience. Students must continually analyse and evaluate their shared work in order to get it right. This is learning without limits at its best.

This approach has gained international recognition with Prescott Primary School being awarded Apple Distinguished School status for the second time. Only 400 schools worldwide have received this award.

## Challenge

Our new approach to challenge is still developing but considering the year groups of 2016 and 2017 were not exposed to our new approach the figures are pleasing.

Combined 2016 and 2017 KS2 figures at the measurement of Greater Depth for reading are inline with National Average and above Knowsley, for Maths they are ahead of National and above Knowsley.

In 2017 at KS1 the combined Reading/Writing/Maths score at Greater Depth was significantly above the National Average and above Knowsley.

OFSTED announced they were treating writing scores in 2017 with "extreme caution." Our KS2 score at 2016 was exactly at the National Average.

We believe in more than just these scores and they are only one measure. However there must be an average and we are either in line or above this mark.

## Thank you

On behalf of the governing body I would like to say a huge thank you to all the pupils, parents, carers and staff of this great and unique school. We still have work to do and face significant challenge but this is not a task we approach with ignorance or fear. Our plans to keep improving will remain in place and with the support of our partners in Knowsley, Ignite and the Pathways to Success programme we will **remain on-track** and continue to improve.

Steve George - Headteacher

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"Prescot Primary School is a peaceful and purposeful place, where all enjoy learning."



"Apple Distinguished Schools are centres of leadership and educational excellence that demonstrate Apple's vision for learning with technology — and we believe they are some of the most innovative schools in the world."

Apple