

The Anthony Roper Primary School

High Street, Eynsford, Kent, DA4 0AA

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The senior leadership team, well supported by the governing body, has successfully built on the strengths identified by the school's previous inspection and tackled the relative weaknesses.
- School leaders check regularly on pupils' progress throughout the school. This has enabled them to identify and address areas where teaching needed to be improved and thereby to raise pupils' achievement.
- Leaders have adapted the curriculum so that it promotes pupils' achievement and their well-being effectively. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to develop their different talents and interests.
- The school makes extremely good use of the extra money it receives to promote pupils' participation, and to raise their attainment, in sporting and physical activities.
- Governors have improved considerably their knowledge of the school's performance and their ability to hold school leaders to account. This has helped them to support leaders effectively in improving the quality of teaching.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They live up to the school's high expectations of them and are keen to learn.
- Pupils feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe in school. They have few concerns about bullying because they say that it is rare and is dealt with effectively by staff.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan work which is well matched to pupils' different needs and abilities. They explain activities clearly and make sure that pupils know what to do to reach their targets.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points and achieve well in a range of different subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in the Reception classes benefit from consistently good teaching and stimulating activities. This enables them to make a positive start to their formal education.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders are not all contributing as effectively as they could to the improvement of teaching.
- Pupils do not always benefit from sufficient opportunities to respond to teachers' feedback on their work.
- Teachers do not always check pupils' learning thoroughly enough during lessons or adapt activities if pupils are not making sufficiently rapid progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons. Six of these observations took place jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspectors also made shorter visits to a number of other lessons and activities. They attended two assemblies, examined samples of pupils’ written work together with school leaders, and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils, the Chair and two other members of the governing body, as well as members of staff, and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors also held informal discussions with a number of parents.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including the school’s information on pupils’ attainment and progress, and records of attendance. They examined safeguarding procedures, as well as the school’s self-evaluation, its processes for monitoring staff’s performance and setting targets for teachers, and planning documents.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took account of 113 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, as well as the results of the school’s own most recent survey of parents’ views, and a number of letters and messages from parents. They also considered 41 questionnaires completed by members of the teaching and support staff.

Inspection team

Robin Gaff, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Hilary Goddard	Additional Inspector
David Webster	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average.
- Children join the early years provision in one of the two Reception classes, where all the children attend full time.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is well below the national average. This is additional government funding provided for disadvantaged children who are looked after or known to be eligible for free school meals. In recent years, the number of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 has been very low.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There is a separately managed nursery on the school site. A breakfast club, run by an outside provider, operates each morning during term-time for school pupils.
- Since the school's last inspection, there have been a number of changes in staffing, which have resulted in several members of staff being promoted to leadership roles.
- The headteacher was appointed to her post in April 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that leaders at all levels are fully effective in developing and sharing good and outstanding practice in teaching.
- Increase the pace at which pupils make progress during lessons by ensuring that teachers always check pupils' learning regularly and thoroughly during lessons, so that they can adapt tasks which are not enabling pupils to make sustained progress.
- Make sure that teachers always give pupils sufficient opportunities to respond to written feedback on their work, so that they can check that pupils have used their comments to extend their learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's calm, thorough and level-headed approach to her role has enabled her to enhance the quality of teaching, leading to improvements in pupils' achievement. By promoting dedicated and enthusiastic teachers to leadership roles, she has, with the support of the governing body, made good use of the expertise available to the school.
- Leaders have succeeded in sharing their ambition for the school with members of the school's teaching and support staff. Together, they have created a cohesive, orderly and purposeful community in which good teaching is the norm and high standards of behaviour are expected and are met by pupils.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher carefully check on the effectiveness of teaching throughout the school by regularly and robustly assessing pupils' progress, examining samples of their work and observing lessons.
- School leaders have ensured that lesson activities are closely matched to pupils' needs and abilities. This was highlighted as an area for development by the previous inspection. Joint activities with inspectors, as well as the school's own reliable records of pupils' progress, confirm that senior leaders' judgement of the quality of teaching and learning is accurate.
- Senior leaders have made sure that relatively weaker practice, such as the teaching of reading, has been successfully addressed by providing additional training and support for teachers in the areas concerned. This has resulted in acceleration in pupils' progress, especially in reading in Key Stage 2, where standards have risen significantly over the last year.
- The headteacher establishes demanding targets for teachers which are closely related to improvements in pupils' achievement. Any pay rises are explicitly linked to teachers' success in meeting these targets.
- Subject leaders and those with responsibility for different stages of pupils' education are knowledgeable about their respective roles. They are all strongly committed to improving pupils' progress and enhancing their well-being. Not all leaders, however, play a full part in monitoring the quality of teaching and of pupils' work. This restricts their ability to improve teaching directly in the areas for which they are responsible, for example by enabling examples of outstanding practice to be shared by staff.
- Leaders make sure that the additional funding which the school receives for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively for their benefit. They do this, for example, by providing these pupils with extra teaching and also by enabling them to attend the breakfast club and extending their opportunities to take part in out-of-school activities.
- School leaders have made excellent use of the extra money provided by the government to raise the levels of pupils' participation in sporting and other physical activities, and their skills. Leaders have substantially increased the range of activities available to pupils, as well as teachers' capability and self-confidence in teaching physical education. This has resulted in a very high proportion of pupils taking part in after-school sport and increasingly high rates of success in inter-school competitions.
- Leaders also take care to ensure that the school's policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe, for example by making sure that all staff receive up-to-date training, are robust and meet current requirements.
- The local authority carefully monitors the school's performance and supports it effectively by, for example, verifying the accuracy of leaders' judgements on the quality of teaching, thereby contributing to improvements. It also enables teachers to attend courses to help them improve their practice.
- Leaders have modified the curriculum well in the light of new national developments and made sure that it enables those with different abilities to make good progress in their studies. This demonstrates the school's successful commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity. Leaders also ensure that pupils benefit from a variety of experiences, including trips, residential visits and events, which foster their interest and talents in, for example, drama, art and music.
- Pupils gain a good understanding of the range of faiths and traditions represented in the United Kingdom, including in communities that are different from their own, and elsewhere in the world. They also gain a good grounding in British institutions such as representative democracy, and the fundamental values of tolerance and respect for others' views. This shows that the school prepares pupils well for life in modern British society and its commitment to tackling any form of discrimination.
- Most parents express positive and, in several instances, extremely favourable views about the school. A very large majority of those who completed the Ofsted survey said they would recommend it to others. Some responses, as well as comments made by a few individual parents, show that a small minority do not agree that their concerns are heeded. Inspectors found, however, that school leaders have developed effective systems for communicating with parents, and for listening and responding to their views.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body's decision to change its committee structure following the school's previous inspection has helped it to gain a detailed and accurate view of the school's performance. It has also enhanced governors' ability to support school leaders and to hold them to account.
- Governors carefully examine pupils' results in national assessments and the school's records of their attainment. As a result, they are able to identify any discrepancies in the progress made by different groups of pupils and to ensure that school leaders are taking effective steps to address them.
- Governors, through their regular, well-focused visits to the school, their meetings with staff and the reports they receive, are well aware of the quality of teaching and know what leaders are doing to improve it still further. They also understand and fully endorse leaders' actions to tackle any weaker practice and to ensure that pay increases depend on teachers' progress towards meeting targets.
- Members of the governing body make sure that the school's finances are on a sound footing. They challenge school leaders to demonstrate how they are making good use of extra funding to support disadvantaged pupils and to increase pupils' participation in sporting and other physical activities.
- Governors regularly review the school's policies and processes for safeguarding pupils in order to ensure that they are up to date, effective and conform to government requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' responses to teachers' questions and their eager participation in classroom discussions demonstrate their positive attitudes to learning. This makes a good contribution to their progress.
- Pupils comply willingly and promptly with adults' instructions and requests. They say that behaviour in lessons is usually good and that when, occasionally, this is not the case, staff deal effectively with the individuals concerned.
- Outside the school buildings, and in corridors and other common areas, pupils behave sensibly and considerately towards others. Pupils from different backgrounds play harmoniously together. In assemblies, pupils enthusiastically applaud each other's achievements.
- Pupils have good opportunities to develop their leadership, social and communication skills by taking on positions of responsibility, for example as school council members, or as sports and house captains. They also learn to use their initiative in competing for the school's prestigious 'Duke of Eynsford' awards.
- School leaders have succeeded in improving the behaviour of the small number of pupils whose conduct has not met the school's expectations. As a result, no pupils have had to be excluded from school in recent years.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school and teachers and other adults look after them well. They know how to keep themselves and others safe when, for example using computers.
- Pupils learn about different kinds of bullying, such as cyber bullying and persistently unkind behaviour, but have few concerns about it. This is because they say that it only happens rarely and is dealt with effectively by staff should it occur.
- Leaders make sure that the school's premises are secure and that equipment is well maintained and safe for pupils to use. They also ensure that any potential risks, including those relating to school trips and visits, are carefully assessed and that appropriate action is taken to minimise them.
- Pupils' attendance has been consistently above average. Staff, working with parents and outside agencies when necessary, have reduced the absences of the very small minority of pupils whose attendance has been persistently low.
- Although not all parents are unreservedly positive about pupils' safety, inspectors found no evidence to suggest that any concerns about their safety in school are justified.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and at times outstanding. Teachers have made their classrooms into orderly and attractive areas, which stimulate and support pupils' interest in learning through, for example,

displays about the topics they are studying, and of their best work.

- Teachers make sure that pupils understand and live up to their high expectations of work and behaviour. All teachers, including those who work part time, establish productive and purposeful relationships with pupils.
- Teachers give pupils tasks which meet their different needs, ensuring that they enable pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Teachers explain activities clearly and make sure that pupils know what they are intended to learn and how they will know that they have succeeded in doing so.
- Teachers do not always check pupils' learning and progress rigorously enough during lessons. This means that they are unable to adapt tasks when pupils find them easier or more difficult than they had anticipated.
- Teaching in a range of subjects, including mathematics, reading and writing, is effective and enables pupils to gain an increasingly secure grasp of each subject, make good progress and achieve well. This is because teachers themselves are expert in the subjects they teach and are enthusiastic about them.
- In mathematics, teachers make sure that pupils gain a good understanding of how to apply the skills they have learned, such as estimation, division and multiplication, to solve different types of problem. This includes problems that are expressed in words rather than numbers, and those that relate to real-life situations.
- Teachers in the Reception and Key Stage 1 classes ensure that pupils learn to recognise and reproduce accurately letters in different combinations, as well as progressively more complex words and constructions. In Key Stage 2, teachers succeed in enabling pupils to write confidently and correctly for different purposes, such as historical accounts, diary entries and poems.
- Many pupils said that their teachers had helped them a great deal to develop their reading skills, as well as a love of reading, by encouraging them to choose books that matched their particular interests.
- Teachers mark pupils' written work accurately and at regular intervals. They give pupils detailed feedback which enables pupils to know to what extent they have met their targets and what else they can do to improve their work.
- Inspectors saw examples of excellent marking where teachers had established a dialogue in which pupils responded in detail to teachers' comments and prompts. By correcting or extending their work, pupils showed that they had benefitted fully from teachers' comments. Leaders acknowledge, however, that this practice is not yet fully established throughout the school.
- A very large majority of the parents who responded to the Ofsted and most recent school surveys agreed that their children are well taught and that they make good progress.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' overall attainment, as indicated by their performance in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6, by the end of Key Stage 2 has risen steadily over the last few years. It was significantly above the national average in 2014, and the provisional results for 2015, as well as the quality of current Year 6 pupils' work, indicate that standards are continuing to rise. Their attainment demonstrates that pupils with different abilities and from a range of backgrounds achieve well, having made good progress from their various starting points. It also shows that pupils have been prepared well to begin the next phase of their education.
- The standards reached by Year 6 pupils this year in reading show a significant improvement on those achieved by the 2013/14 cohort. Their results in writing have also risen, so that, in these subjects as well as in mathematics, most pupils are now reaching or exceeding the levels expected for their age group at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 also make good progress and their attainment has risen over the last three years. This is because pupils are able to apply their grasp of phonics (the links between letters and sounds) and their developing number skills successfully in learning to read, write, measure and calculate accurately.
- Pupils' work in, for example, history, geography and science shows that their progress throughout the school in a range of subjects is good and sometimes excellent. Year 5 pupils' collages, inspired by Van Gogh's paintings of irises, showed their very strong technical ability, as well as their interest in the subject. This was typical of the high quality of pupils' art work on display in corridors and classrooms.
- Teachers make sure that the most-able pupils benefit from tasks which allow them to fulfil their potential. For example, in Year 6, the highest-attaining pupils' writing features confident and correct use of a range of punctuation, accurate spelling and appropriate use of sophisticated vocabulary.
- Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive the extra help they require in order to succeed. This includes, on occasion, assistance from outside professionals as well as effective small group work, and one-to-one and in-class

support. As result, these pupils achieve well.

- The very small number of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014 makes it inappropriate to compare their attainment and progress with that of other pupils in the school or pupils nationally. However, the school's own detailed records, as well as lesson observations and examples of pupils' work, show that disadvantaged pupils are making as much progress as their classmates. They also indicate that any gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils are closing.

The early years provision

is good

- Children in the Reception classes make good progress in their learning and development, having joined the school with levels of knowledge and skills which overall are typical of their age group. The proportion of children who reach good levels of development in literacy, mathematics and a range of other skills is above the national average, and has risen steadily over the last few years. The skills they develop and the knowledge they acquire indicate that the school prepares children well to start Key Stage 1.
- Staff liaise closely with parents and with other early years providers, including the on-site nursery, which most of the children have attended, to identify children's abilities and interests when they start school. Parents comment favourably on how quickly their children settle into school and on how happy they are there.
- Children develop good mathematical skills as, for example, they identify different shapes and count the number of sides. They are keen to show how well they can read words and short sentences. By the end of the year, they can form letters with increasing confidence and accuracy, for instance when writing short accounts of what they have enjoyed doing at home or at school.
- Staff establish good routines to ensure that children learn how to behave well and are safe. Children cooperate well together in taking turns to use equipment. They learn how to keep safe when, for example, they are working and playing in the school's recently established woodland area. Children explained clearly to the lead inspector exactly how high up the trees they could climb without endangering themselves, and why this was the case.
- Teachers' knowledge of children's interests and abilities, together with their careful assessment of children's progress, enables them to match activities closely to their different stages of development. They give children tasks which engage children's interest and help to develop their skills, as well as their curiosity and desire to learn. Occasionally, children's attention wanders and their learning slows because teachers do not adapt activities quickly enough to maintain their focus and interest.
- Early years leaders are very well aware of the particular characteristics of this age group. They have developed the classrooms and the outside areas so that they provide a safe, attractive and stimulating environment for the children. They have also ensured that children benefit from consistently good and sometimes outstanding teaching. Leaders show they are keen to improve the provision still further by, for example, encouraging staff to visit other schools and enabling them to attend relevant training courses.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	118255
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	448809

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	315
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanda Sayers
Headteacher	Lynda Newton
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 June 2010
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