

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: The Anthony Roper Primary School

High Street, Eynsford, Dartford, Kent DA4 0AA

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 November 2024

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that aspects of the school's work may not be as strong as at the time of the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where pupils are happy. One pupil commented, reflecting the views of many, 'I love it here. It is amazing'. Pupils attend school regularly. They enjoy learning and benefit from the wide range of opportunities the school provides. A strong sense of community pervades the school. Pupils told the lead inspector about the many friends they have made. Pupils are positive ambassadors of the school and go out of their way to help their peers without being asked. Academically, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because the curriculum is not as developed as it could be. The school does not ensure that learning is well adapted to meet pupils' individual needs.

The school values, such as creativity and teamwork, are woven deeply into the fabric of the school. Children learn about these values from Reception onwards. 'Values days' throughout the year provide a constant reminder of what it means to be a pupil here. As a result, pupils behave well and demonstrate high levels of respect. At playtimes, pupils play together well. They have opportunities to develop their interests, including in sport, reading and art.

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

Over the last few years, the school has revamped the curriculum to ensure that it is broad and offers pupils variety, including carefully planned trips and events. The overall curriculum is well thought through. The school has considered the broad content it wants pupils to learn from Reception to Year 6. However, the school does not consistently identify the most important knowledge and skills teachers must teach in each of the

subjects and when. As a result, pupils' learning across subjects beyond English and mathematics is not as strong as it should be.

Teachers receive training and support so that they know how to teach the full range of subjects. As a result, they are secure in their subject-specific knowledge. There are some inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is delivered. Where it is strong, staff are skilled at explaining new content and checking that pupils have successfully grasped the learning. They make sure that learning is tailored to individual needs. However, sometimes teaching moves pupils on to new learning when pupils have not fully understood what has been taught. Some pupils struggle with their learning because they do not receive effective support. Consequently, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

The school identifies pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Staff know these pupils well. However, these pupils do not receive consistently the support they need with their learning. This means that too many pupils struggle to make progress through the curriculum.

The teaching of reading is effective. The phonics programme sets out what children will learn and when. Staff follow the school's consistent approach to teaching phonics. The books pupils take home are carefully matched to the sounds that pupils learn in class. Regular checks on how well pupils sound out and blend help the school to provide timely and effective support to those who need it. As a result, pupils learn to read confidently and fluently. They enjoy reading and have developed a love of reading because of the emphasis the school has placed on it.

Pupils' personal development is a strength. Pupils learn a great deal about many important topics. They learn about different religions, equalities and diversity. This prepares them well for the future. Pupils make a difference beyond the school. For example, they help others at the local community centre by playing games, helping to serve food and teaching older people computing. The school's head boy and head girl, together with the school council and class prefects, are heavily involved in supporting the school community.

Children in the early years get off to a strong start. They settle in quickly and make new friends. The adults who work with them are caring and help children become more independent and confident. Children play together, take turns and are keen to help each other. For example, children collect logs and help each other to make a campfire during their outdoor learning.

The school's leaders, governors and the local authority have an accurate view of what is working well at the school and what more they need to do to improve it. Staff are proud to work at the school and speak highly of the support their colleagues give.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The most important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in subjects beyond English and mathematics lacks specificity. This means that there is not a sharp enough focus on what it is that pupils should learn and when. As a result, pupils do not develop detailed knowledge and skills in all areas of the curriculum. The school must continue its work on identifying the most important content pupils need to learn and when.
- Teaching does not support pupils with SEND consistently well. As a result, these pupils develop gaps in learning and their progress through the curriculum is slowed. The school must ensure that staff have the knowledge and expertise they need to support pupils with SEND effectively.
- There are some inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is delivered. This means that teaching sometimes moves pupils on to new learning when they have not fully understood what they have been taught. The school must ensure that staff know how to check pupils' understanding and tackle misconceptions effectively.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in July 2015.

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 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

Unique reference number	118255
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341471
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	262
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joanne Lewington
Headteacher	Adam Nicholls
Website	www.anthony-roper.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and chair of the governing body have both taken up their posts since the school's last inspection in June 2019.
- The school offers breakfast club and after-school clubs.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held a wide range of meetings during the inspection. These included discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders. The inspector spoke to several staff during the inspection.

- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector considered the views of staff through Ofsted’s staff survey and of parents and carers through responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspector also gathered the views of staff and pupils through meetings and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their work and looked at samples of pupils’ work with leaders.

Inspection team

Shaun Jarvis, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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