

West Borough Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118568
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	358387
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Helen Howard

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	394
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Barker
Headteacher	Andrew Crossley-Holland
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed 20 lessons taught by 16 teachers. They met with pupils, members of the governing body and various members of staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including its self-evaluation, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding of children and data about pupils' progress. Inspectors also considered the views of pupils, staff and the 125 parents and carers who returned the questionnaire.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress pupils make, especially in Key Stage 2.
- How consistent the quality of teaching is in all year groups.
- How well teachers are using assessment in lessons to let pupils know how well they are doing.
- How successfully leaders and managers are accelerating progress for all pupils.

Information about the school

West Borough Primary is larger than the average-sized school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A rising number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who have a statement of special educational needs, is well above average. These include pupils with moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems and autistic spectrum disorders. Pupils from a local special school attend a satellite unit on site and spend most of their time in mainstream classes in order to develop their social, language and learning skills. One in three pupils joins or leaves the school other than at the usual time. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend part-time in the Nursery and full-time in one of two Reception classes. A new children's centre opened on the school site in November 2010 and provides play sessions on behalf of the school. The school has a number of awards including Healthy School Status.

Since the middle of January 2011, an acting headteacher has led and managed the school in the absence of the substantive headteacher, who returns in September 2011.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

West Borough Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils, as it did at the last inspection. In recent years, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 fell below national expectations for pupils' age and pupils' achievement was not good enough. Solid evidence from the school's own analyses shows that current attainment is average. Importantly, progress, which was not improving fast enough, is improving at an accelerated rate and is at least satisfactory in all year groups.

Strengths of the school include its highly inclusive and harmonious ethos together with its strong pastoral support for all pupils which result in a caring and respectful community. As one pupil said, 'The teachers are very friendly here'. The school looks after its pupils well, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. As a result, some pupils make good personal progress. Pupils enjoy coming to school and show good attitudes to learning. They develop a strong sense of values and most take responsibility for their own actions. Pupils feel safe because safeguarding arrangements are good. Most have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle and this has resulted in the awarding of the 'Healthy Schools' status. Their behaviour is good both in lessons and during play times so that the school is calm and orderly. Good engagement with parents and carers ensures that they are well informed about their children's progress.

Pupils' work in the current Year 6 is close to national averages in English and mathematics. Some pupils, notably those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress because they receive effective individual support. The majority of pupils who join the school in Key Stage 2, however, are making slower progress than their peers in improving their literacy skills.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in a minority of lessons. In the better lessons, teachers make good use of assessment to inform their planning so that the needs of all pupils are met but this is not consistent across all classes. Teachers' assessment in lessons is not consistently used to inform pupils about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. The curriculum is beginning to offer opportunities for pupils to make links across subjects and provides adequate support for targeted pupils. The school works well with partners, including the local authority, to enhance and develop its provision.

Since the last inspection, school leaders and managers have supported teachers to improve their skills, developed a rigorous tracking system, implemented new monitoring procedures and changed the leadership structure so that middle leaders have more involvement in driving the school forward. Consequently, the pace of progress is accelerating, especially in mathematics. There is still work to be done to ensure that pupils' progress consistently builds year on year, particularly in the development of writing

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skills and in using and applying mathematical skills in a range of activities. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and it has effective plans to address its weaknesses, demonstrating satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvements.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - developing clear year-on-year progression of writing skills through Key Stages 1 and 2
 - providing opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge in a range of other activities
 - accelerating the attainment of literacy skills for pupils who join the school in Key Stage 2.
- Raise the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by July 2012 by:
 - ensuring that activities are consistently planned to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Improve the effective use of assessment to raise attainment by:
 - ensuring that pupils know their target levels
 - using assessment in lessons consistently to give detailed information to pupils about what they need to do to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children start school with skills and abilities that are below age-related expectations and by the time they leave school, they have made satisfactory progress overall and attainment is broadly average. Average attainment in the current Years 5 and 6 was confirmed in the work seen in pupils' books. Progress in writing remains weaker, especially in Key Stage 2 and the school is addressing this as a whole-school focus. Pupils enjoy coming to school and almost all parents and carers agree. The quality of learning and the progress that pupils make in lessons is satisfactory overall, as is achievement. In half of the lessons seen achievement was good. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, the well prepared and appropriately matched work sustained pupils' high levels of interest and prompted discussions about probability. As a result, pupils made good progress in using mathematical language. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall and some make good progress due to the very effective support given to them in lessons by teaching assistants. Pupils acquire basic skills and can apply these in a range of subjects. They acquire good skills in the use of information and communication technology. Pupils work particularly well in pairs and in group work. They enjoy speaking tasks and enthusiastically take part in discussions.

A minority of pupils are concerned about behaviour in school. Inspectors found behaviour in lessons and around the school to be good and that staff have high expectations of pupils. A small number of pupils have emotional or behavioural difficulties and staff are skilful in managing their needs so that learning is not disrupted. The use of approaches that encourage pupils to manage conflicts themselves is helping them to take

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responsibility for their own actions. One parent commented that, 'The school operates a reward system for good behaviour and this encourages the children to behave well'.

Pupils are proud of the contribution they make in school and enjoy planning events to raise money for a variety of charitable organisations. They enjoy taking up positions of responsibility. They are reflective about the world around them and are encouraged to celebrate diversity in cultures and religions. As a result, the extent to which they contribute to the school and wider community and their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development are strengths of the school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

A higher proportion of good teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6 although teaching remains variable in lessons in other year groups. Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive. Secure subject knowledge and effective use of data help teachers to plan activities to match the needs of pupils but this is not consistent in all lessons. In a minority of lessons, effective open questioning enables pupils to reflect on their own learning and the use of interactive whiteboards is effective in providing visual support for pupils. A whole-school focus on planning for progression in mathematics this year has resulted in pupils making better progress; however, planning for progress in writing skills is not as well embedded at this stage. Data are used effectively to identify pupils who are underperforming and the meetings about pupils' progress are successful in enabling staff

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to plan activities to accelerate progress and to review the impact of actions taken. There is good evidence to show that most pupils who are targeted for support in this way are making good progress. Data are not consistently used by teachers to set specific targets and to use marking and feedback to guide pupils on how to improve their work.

The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to make links across a range of subjects. For example, lessons in Year 6 on a crime scene investigation linked elements of scientific research with a literacy task that required pupils to explore the use of questioning techniques. Pupils, who may otherwise have been reluctant to write, were motivated by the imaginative linking of the tasks. The curriculum is enhanced by strong partnerships that provide additional opportunities for pupils including the regular use of visiting speakers. For example, pupils in Year 2 enjoyed a presentation and role play about Florence Nightingale with the opportunity to examine and discuss medical artefacts.

The school knows its pupils well and supports them very effectively. The environment is welcoming and the pastoral support for pupils is good. They are well informed about their moves between years and key stages. In Year 6, there is very effective guidance and support for the move to secondary school and most pupils and parents and carers agree. Carefully targeted support for pupils who may otherwise be vulnerable ensures that they are included in all aspects of school life.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher has been successful in creating a shared vision for improvement which is enthusiastically embraced by staff. The leadership team has revised its roles and responsibilities so that middle leaders are more involved in monitoring and driving improvements. The structure is providing a renewed focus on learning and on the impact of actions taken to improve progress. Pupils' progress is accelerating and their overall achievement is now satisfactory. More rigorous systems for planning and tracking progress ensure that pupils' underperformance is quickly identified and remedied.

Leaders are taking effective steps to improve the quality of teaching and this is having a positive impact on progress and attainment by Year 6. Members of the governing body know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are taking effective steps to address areas for improvement. The new structure of the governing body ensures that there is more focus on the impact of actions on pupils' learning and governors have a better understanding of data to inform future priorities. The school promotes equal opportunities well and tackles discrimination effectively. Pupils from a special school satellite unit are very successfully included in all lessons because partnerships between

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staff from both schools are strong. Gaps between groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to underachievement are closing. The school engagement with parents and carers is good and there are very effective partnerships, including with the local authority, which underpin many aspects of the school's improvement in progress. The school's safeguarding practices are good. Child protection procedures are strong and comprehensive risk assessments are in place. Pupils' understanding of their local community is good but is not as well developed with regard to the national and global community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

From a starting point which is below national expectations for their ages, children have made satisfactory progress by the time they move to Key Stage 1. This is a result of well-organised arrangements for entry to the Nursery and strong links with parents and carers. The school is forging good links with the new children's centre on the school's site and this has increased opportunities for the school to engage with families. The children's centre also offers additional play opportunities for young children and these are well attended. There is a clear focus on identifying the gaps in the children's personal and social development, writing and calculating. However, gaps remain in writing and opportunities are limited for children to explore strategies to solve simple mathematical problems. Relationships between adults and children are positive which strongly contribute to the calm atmosphere and ensure that learning is effective. Staff interact well with the children, which makes learning fun. For example, in role-play about holidays, the teaching assistant took on the role of a customer in a seaside shop and was instrumental in facilitating the children's use of imaginative language and play. Regular phonic sessions are enabling the children to develop awareness of the links between letters and sounds. Behaviour is good. Children play collaboratively and enjoy each other's company, although opportunities are

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sometimes missed for children to engage in independent play outside. Their health is promoted well. Purposeful exploration of other cultures is increasing children's understanding of the wider world. Planning is improving and a range of activities is sustaining children's interest. Leaders and managers work well together as a team to keep children safe and make regular assessments to track children's progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

More than a third of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, a response rate which is in line with national averages. The overwhelming majority are happy with their children's experiences in school and this view is confirmed in recent school surveys of parents' and carers' views. One parent summed it up by saying: 'I would definitely recommend this school to others.' Parents and carers are confident that their children are safe and feel that their children are well prepared for the future.

A very small minority of parents and carers felt that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that pupils behave well and that where a small number of pupils have emotional or behavioural difficulties, these are managed very effectively by staff. A very small minority of parents and carers felt that their children's needs were not met. Inspectors found that pupils with additional needs made satisfactory progress overall and that some children with special educational needs and/or disabilities made good progress as a result of effective provision.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Borough Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 125 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 394 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	79	63	42	34	4	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	78	62	45	36	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	70	56	49	39	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	49	57	46	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	62	50	60	48	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	60	48	59	47	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	60	48	55	44	9	7	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	57	46	58	46	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	55	44	63	50	6	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	38	60	48	10	8	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	35	73	58	4	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	62	50	56	45	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	77	62	44	35	4	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



25 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Borough Primary School, Maidstone, ME16 8QH

You may remember that three inspectors came to visit your school recently. Thank you for your warm welcome. We very much enjoyed our visit and I am writing to tell you what we found out.

West Borough provides you with a satisfactory education and it is improving. We could see how much you enjoy your learning. A lot of you told us that lessons were fun. You told us how safe you feel and how you trust the adults in school. We think the school cares for you well. We thought that you behaved very well and showed that you were ready for learning in lessons. You work well together and enjoy working in pairs and small groups.

You told us how much you enjoy taking on responsibilities in school and we were impressed with your fund raising and peer mediation.

We have asked the school to do three things that will help to make it even better.

- Raise your attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - improving on your writing skills each year
 - using your mathematical skills in other activities
 - helping some of you who start school in Key Stage 2 to catch up with literacy skills
- Make sure that the work for all of you is at the right level.
- Help you to know your targets and how you can improve your work

You can help by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Helen Howard

Lead inspector

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