

# West Borough Primary School

Greenway, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8QH

## Inspection dates

20–21 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not consistently good throughout the school.
- Teachers do not always plan activities which enable pupils to be challenged. The middle-ability and more-able pupils find the work too easy.
- Pupils do not apply their understanding of basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics successfully across all the subjects they study.
- Pupils' achievement is not good because, although attainment has increased during the past year, not enough pupils reach or exceed the levels expected for their age at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Expectation of progress in Years 2 and 3 is not high enough and this results in a slower pace and limited learning by the pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are well taught in the Nursery and Reception classes and so make good progress.
- Behaviour is good and pupils generally cooperate well in lessons and around the school. Pupils enjoy school and feel safe.
- Parents, carers and staff are very positive about the school and say the school is well led and managed.
- The headteacher, the senior leadership team and the governors have a clear vision for the school. The school is improving because staff now understand what they need to do to improve the quality of teaching and achievement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 33 full and part lessons, of which two were joint observations, and learning walks with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and met with a group of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers from 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and met some parents and carers informally at the start of the school day.
- The views of 29 staff who returned questionnaires were taken into account.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the school’s own self-evaluation; the school’s development plan; the school’s data for tracking pupils’ progress; work in pupils’ books; monitoring files; minutes of the governing body meetings; and the documentation relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Pervina Saunders, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Alastair McMeckan	Additional inspector
Carol Vant	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average size primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is below that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is slightly lower than the national figure.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is similar to that found nationally, whereas the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than the national figure. These pupils mostly have behavioural, emotional, language and communication difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of service families. There are no children of service families in the school.
- The school provides a base for autistic pupils and this is managed by a local special school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection there have been staff changes in the leadership team.
- The school is working collaboratively with other local schools.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better throughout the school by:
  - improving marking so that pupils are clear about how they can improve their work and have regular planned opportunities to respond
  - developing effective questioning which challenges pupils' thinking, in particular the more-able pupils
  - improving the pace of teaching and expectation of progress in Year 2 and Year 3
  - having higher expectations of presentation in written work.
- Accelerate progress so that the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding national expectations in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is increased by:
  - ensuring all teachers plan activities which enable middle-ability and more-able pupils to make good progress
  - enabling pupils to develop and apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Progress is variable throughout the school and requires improvement. Progress is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Not all middle-ability pupils make expected progress and too few able pupils reach the higher levels of attainment because they do not make rapid progress.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and supported by the pupil premium are generally performing less well than pupils not eligible for the pupil premium in school. Their average points score is four terms below that of all pupils nationally and their peers in school in English and mathematics. During the past year these pupils have been provided with extra support and interventions and the gap is steadily beginning to close. Pupils looked after by the local authority generally make progress expected for their age.
- The number of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds that letters make) screening check was low. The school has reviewed its phonics programme and improved the teaching of phonics. School data indicate that more pupils this year are attaining the expected standard.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has increased over time, in particular last year, and is now broadly in line with the national average in reading and mathematics. Attainment has improved for writing too, due to the focus on writing during the past year, but it is still below the national average. This improvement has been mainly due to the good teaching in Year 6 and the interventions introduced to accelerate progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well because effective review meetings lead to focused support from skilled teaching assistants. The support is appropriately linked to pupils' individual needs.
- Pupils from minority ethnic heritages and those who speak English as an additional language are achieving well compared to their peers, because they try hard and are helped to understand the tasks set.
- Boys are performing as well as girls where the teaching is effective because they are motivated to learn. The school has introduced curriculum themes which interest the boys, such as the Arctic, and so they are engaging more in their learning.
- Children joining the Nursery have skills and abilities below the levels typically seen for their age in most areas, and in particular in language and communication. They make good progress during their time in the Nursery and in the Reception Year. They then enter Year 1 with attainment, over time, which is around that expected for their age but is still below their expected age level in language and communication.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable across the school, particularly in Years 2 and 3 where pupils are not given tasks that enable them to develop their understanding.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations and so the activities they plan to meet the needs of the different pupils do not enable them to make good progress.
- Middle-ability pupils and more-able pupils are not always challenged through effective questioning to develop their thinking and so they do not make rapid progress.
- Where teaching is weaker the pace of the lesson is too slow. Pupils are slow to start their work and so do not complete the task. There is too much use made of worksheets and not enough use made of practical resources to support the needs of pupils. Pupils' learning is not always supported through effective modelling by the teacher and the tasks are not altered when pupils find the work too easy or too hard. Pupils are not clear about what they are learning; boys in

particular lose interest, become disengaged and then make little progress.

- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs but they are not always used well to support learning in whole-class sessions.
- Pupils' work is marked and marking indicates what the pupils can do to improve their work. However, the pupils are not given enough guidance or time to practise what they need to develop.
- Pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills are being developed during English and mathematics lessons but pupils are not applying these skills successfully across the other subjects.
- Pupils do not take pride in presenting their work, especially their topic work. It is too often rushed and untidy, with poor handwriting.
- Where teaching is strong teachers have high expectations of all pupils and the pace is brisk. Pupils are provided with challenging activities which motivate them to learn and want to succeed. They become totally immersed in their learning and are clear about what they are trying to achieve. An example of this was in a Year 6 lesson when the pupils watched a video clip of the Arctic and then formulated good questions to ask the teaching assistant who pretended to be the Arctic explorer. The information they gained through watching the video and the opportunity to question 'the Arctic explorer' enabled them to write their own detailed diaries.
- Teaching is strong in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The environment is well organised and stimulating. Activities planned are linked to children's interests and assessments. The children are keen to engage in the challenging activities planned for them both inside and outside the classroom. They are enabled to develop writing and problem solving skills through a range of activities. For example in one activity where children were trying to solve a problem of a toy dog in a tree the adult used good questioning to explore the children's ideas.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they generally listen well in lessons.
- The school's records of behaviour and observations during the inspection found that most pupils are generally polite and well mannered.
- Pupils have good relationships with each other, regardless of age, gender and ethnic heritage, and play well together during break and lunchtimes. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are fully included during playtimes. The zoned areas at lunchtime are used effectively by pupils and they say, 'It is great; we have lots of places to go.' They move between the varied indoor and outdoor activities without fuss. They have a strong sense of fairness and wait to join in activities sensibly. This ensures there is equality of opportunity for all pupils and that there is no discrimination.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying and know how to stay safe. A large proportion of parents and carers that responded to the parent questionnaire said that their child is happy in school and feels safe. Most parents and carers also felt that bullying was well dealt with. All staff that responded to the staff questionnaire said that behaviour was good and bullying was dealt with effectively.
- There are a number of pupils with emotional and social issues and their behaviour is consistently well managed. Fixed-term exclusions are above the national average but have reduced by 0.63% during the past year.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance has improved over time. Persistent absences are also reducing. Some of the pupil premium money has been used by the family liaison officer to sponsor breakfast club places and this has helped to improve attendance, so that it is now in line with the national average.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher has instilled enthusiasm and ambition and she is focused on improving teaching and learning. She consistently communicates high expectations and has been successful in establishing good behaviour management strategies.
- Progress has been made since the last inspection and the quality of teaching is improving. Standards in writing are rising. Staff changes, however, have limited the impact on pupils' progress. Staff morale is high and the school has capacity to improve further.
- The headteacher has made changes to the senior leadership. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and the senior leadership team is now knowledgeable and focused on improving teaching and achievement. Regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching are taking place together with tracking of pupils' progress.
- Leadership is now shared among all leaders and staff take their responsibilities very seriously. For example, the early years leader has supported nursery and reception staff effectively to create a learning environment for children which is creative and has high expectations.
- Middle leaders, some of whom are inexperienced, are very enthusiastic about their role. They have been provided with good training opportunities and are beginning to take responsibility for monitoring and evaluating their subjects. They have identified priorities in their subjects and have contributed to the school's accurate evaluation of its work.
- The school's curriculum provides a range of experiences and contributes to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- The school has developed positive relationships with parents and carers who feel the school is well led and managed.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are fully in place. Staff and governors are appropriately vetted and receive child protection training. Members of the governing body have carried out safer recruitment training.
- The local authority has provided intensive support in the past and is now providing lighter guidance. This has helped the school to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is very experienced and knowledgeable. Governors know the school well and have a good understanding of the achievement of the pupils compared with achievement nationally. They know how the pupil premium has been allocated and are aware they need to follow up on its impact on improving pupils' performance. Governors understand about the quality of teaching and know how performance management of teaching links to salary progression. They are aware of how underperformance of teachers can affect the progress pupils make and so ask challenging questions about this. Governors have attended a range of training following an audit of their skills. Training has particularly helped them to understand data about pupils' progress and attendance. They are knowledgeable about the finances of the school and how to get best value for money.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118568
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	405786
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	397
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tim Barker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ashley Crittenden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22–23 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01622 726391
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