

INSPECTION REPORT

PARK WOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Deanwood Drive, Gillingham

LEA area: Medway

Unique reference number: 118471

Headteacher: Mike Collins

Reporting inspector: R Peter J McGregor
3525

Dates of inspection: 9 and 11 July 2003

Inspection number: 259997

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Junior
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Deanwood Drive Rainham Gillingham Kent
Postcode:	ME8 9LP
Telephone number:	01634 234699
Fax number:	01634 360623
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B J Hargan
Date of previous inspection:	May 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
3525	R Peter J McGregor	Registered inspector
9454	Deborah Pepper	Lay inspector
30244	Roger Tapley	Team inspector
23674	Wendy Simmons	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

e-Qualitas Ltd
Langshaw
Pastens Road
Oxted
Surrey
RH8 0RE

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	12
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	17
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	18

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Park Wood Junior School provides education for pupils from the age of seven to eleven. It is bigger than other primary schools with 280 full-time pupils. About two-thirds of pupils transfer to high schools and one-third to selective schools. There are more boys than girls, mainly in the classes of older pupils. About five per cent of the pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, from a range of different countries. For a small number of pupils, about three per cent, English is not their mother tongue; this is a larger proportion than in most schools. A very small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs, about twenty-two per cent, is similar to that found nationally. Needs are mainly specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural, and speech and communication issues. A below average number of pupils have Statements of special educational needs. Just over five percent of pupils take free school meals, a figure below the national average of eighteen per cent. Judgements made in this report about national test results, taken in Year 6, sometimes refer to similar schools. These are schools with up to and including eight per cent of the pupils taking free school meals. Last year about ten per cent of pupils left or joined the school other than at the start or end of the school year, a broadly average figure for mobility. Pupils of a full range of ability attend the school. Overall, standards on entry, as measured by the pupils' end of Year 2 tests in English and mathematics, are above average, with much higher standards in maths than English, particularly at the higher levels. The area around the school is socially and economically mixed with private and housing association properties, and the socio-economic mix of pupils on entry is above average overall. The school is fully staffed and ten of the twelve teachers have been there for more than two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Park Wood Junior is a very good school with some excellent features. The vision for the school is to provide an excellent education for pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, and all that is taking place is helping to realise this. Pupils' achievements, particularly in maths and science are very good and they are good in English. In national tests taken at the age of eleven, standards in 2002 were well above the national average. Teaching is very effective and pupils greatly enjoy their education. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and they become very mature and sensible young people. The curriculum is very good and the provision of clubs, activities and visits excellent. Parents appreciate the quality of education provided for their children and the highly effective improvements made in all areas of school life since the last inspection. The quality of leadership provided by the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy, is outstanding, and school management systems are very successful in all areas. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' achievements are very good and their national test results are well above average
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good
- Pupils find the curriculum interesting and enjoyable and it covers a very good and wide range of activities and subjects
- Staff are caring and very supportive; pupils know they are valued and respected and, as a result, they thrive
- Parents are kept very well informed and involved and appreciate what is provided for their children
- Very high quality, strong leadership and thorough and very effective management have resulted in excellent improvements since the last inspection

What could be improved

No significant areas for improvement were identified by the team.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the time of the last inspection, standards were found to be average and progress satisfactory, with the need for some improvement. In all areas, including information and communication technology (ICT) which was a key issue for improvement in 1998, standards are now much higher and all pupils, whatever their abilities, achieve very well. The quality of teaching was satisfactory and also a key issue for improvement in 1998. The quality is now very good. To bring about improvements in the roles of subject co-ordinators was a third issue, particularly their work in monitoring and evaluating. Here also very good improvement has been made. Subject and year co-ordinators are now very effective. The school improvement plan was not a useful, high-quality document and various statutory requirements were not met five years ago. For example, information was missing from the governors' annual report and some risk assessments were not carried out. All these problems have been successfully corrected and the information available for pupils, parents and teachers is now very good. In all other reported areas looked at during this inspection, for example the care provided, the quality of the curriculum, and school administration, what is provided today is much better than five years ago. The school was judged to be sound and improving in 1998 and leadership good, with the potential to bring about further improvement. The outstanding leadership provided and very effective management over the past five years – working to the clear vision for the school – have led to excellent change and progress, and work is already in hand to bring about further improvements.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	C	B	D
Mathematics	B	B	A	A
Science	A	A	A	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Year 6 pupils attained well above average standards in the 2002 national tests in maths and science and above average standards in English. When pupils enter the school in Year 3, their standards are quite a lot higher in maths and science than in English, and so pupils had made similarly good progress in all three core subjects as they moved through the school. Both boys and girls were very successful in the national assessments, with girls achieving particularly highly in maths. Current standards seen during the inspection are similarly high. Pupils' work in all aspects of maths and science is well above average, with a very good proportion of high-level work. Standards in English are above average and staff and pupils are striving to make further improvements. Pupils' spoken English, although generally of a good quality, is not always as accurate or as extensive as it might be. Reading and writing standards are above average. Boys and girls are making similar progress and work is challenging for high and low attaining pupils alike, as well as those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue. In other subjects sampled during the inspection, art, geography, ICT, religious education, music, history, personal, health and social education (PHSE) and physical education,

standards were above or well above expectations and learning and achievements good or better. Overall, standards are well above average and achievement very good.

The trend in national test results in the school over the past five years is above the national trend of improvement. The school has exceeded its targets for English and maths by a substantial margin for the past two years and is likely to do so again this year. Considering how very successful the school has been in recent years it may be appropriate to review, and increase, the targets for the coming year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive. Pupils are very involved in school life. Many attend clubs and activities and volunteer to take responsibilities. They enjoy lessons and virtually all look forward to coming to school. They take pride in their work and want to achieve the highest possible standards.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. In all lessons seen, behaviour was good or better and very good or excellent in most. Around the school and the large site at break and lunchtimes, behaviour is as good as in the classrooms. Pupils are aware of what is and is not acceptable conduct and work to these rules. Very few incidents of serious misbehaviour occur and when they do they are dealt with very effectively
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils develop positive attitudes to work and play at an early stage in their school lives. They settle quickly in lessons and assemblies. Most talk sensibly to one another and work together well in groups. Older pupils take responsibility for their younger colleagues through a buddy system and many are keen to represent their class on the school council. Relationships between pupils and with staff are very good indeed.
Attendance	Above average and good. The headteacher's checks on the few latecomers as they enter the school grounds, finding the reason for their lack of punctuality, have a very good effect on pupils' punctuality. The school's checks on absence are effective and efficient.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 - 6
Quality of teaching	Very Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The overall quality of teaching is very good, and this, with the very good curriculum planning and pupils' approach to learning, is a key contributory cause of the pupils' success in attaining high standards. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are very successfully implemented, and in English and maths the quality of teaching observed was very good overall. The quality in all lessons seen was never less than sound and often very good. Strengths observed included: teachers' thorough and useful lesson planning; learning intentions for lessons shared with pupils; well-structured lessons with clear beginnings, middles and ends; very good management of pupils' behaviour; and high expectations of what pupils could achieve.

Teachers mark pupils' work very thoroughly in the main, pointing out mistakes in grammar and spelling. A high quality of presentation is expected in all written work. Many opportunities are provided in a range of subjects for pupils to read and to write at length. This promotion of literacy is common for pupils of all abilities and backgrounds. The only area where some pupils make slower progress is in the acquisition of speaking and listening skills, where their base point is at a lower level and teaching has not been as successful. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to reinforce their numeracy skills.

ICT lessons are well taught and so pupils have good computer skills. They are confident in using them, but full use is not made of computers based in classrooms.

Pupils with special educational needs are usually very well supported by their class teachers, and their learning support assistants when available. This is also true for the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Pupils listen very well, concentrate hard, are obedient and co-operate very well with one another. They know what they are good at and what they must do to improve. A few of the most able can be a little over confident at times, but virtually all pupils are hard-working, very effective learners, who want to enjoy their education and do well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are very well planned for, with detailed schemes of work. Arranging classes according to their prior learning and capabilities for the teaching of maths (and science in Year 6) is very successful. The curriculum is enhanced by many extra-curricular activities and a very good PHSE and citizenship programme. Pupils benefit from well-planned visits and interesting visitors, taking part in the 'Healthy Schools' initiative, a 'Learning to Learn' project run by a university, and attending some lessons in a local secondary school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into their classes and effectively supported by their teachers and support staff. Pupils' individual education plans are known and followed. Requirements for pupils with Statements are met.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Staff know the few pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue, very few of whom are at an early stage of learning English, and work closely with them. Specialist support provided for those at an early stage is very helpful.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good, and good for cultural development. Pupils' personal development has a very high priority. Staff, through the examples they set personally, enable pupils to gain a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. The way activities, assemblies and lessons are organised helps pupils to develop socially. The culture of the local area is studied and valued. The faiths and cultures of the pupils in the school are celebrated. Staff work very hard at combating any form of racism. Times are found for reflection and ways of improving pupils' feeling of self-worth.
How well the school cares	Excellent. Pupils like the house system with points allocated for effort and achievement. Anti-bullying procedures are rigorously implemented and any

for its pupils	bullying dealt with quickly and thoroughly. All policies and systems for pupils' welfare are well known by staff and are followed, including those for child protection. Staff show respect for the views of pupils. Senior staff respond to pupils' concerns, often raised through their school council, such as the current issue of the lack of privacy in the toilets and the attitude to the pupils of some catering staff not employed by the school. The school's assessment and target setting arrangements are very good.
----------------	--

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Outstanding leadership of the headteacher, supported by the deputy, subject and year co-ordinators. Management is very good and effective. Very useful systems are in place to help the school to run smoothly. The school has policies for important areas of school life and these are known and worked to. Subject and year co-ordinators have a very clear idea of their roles, working to the vision for the school. They know they are supported and trusted to take responsibility for their areas. The quality and amount of training is very high. The headteacher works very hard to understand the needs of parents and the local community. School administration is very efficient and effective. Communication is excellent.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. Governors are well intentioned, supportive, and aware of the school's strengths and future points for improvement. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met and visit the school regularly. The headteacher's reports are thoroughly checked and questions asked to ensure points are understood and clear. Governors tend not to initiate but to respond to information they receive.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. Very effective use is made of test result data to help improve standards. Co-ordinators and senior managers look at pupils' work and discuss it with them, looking for ways to improve further their understanding and knowledge. Teachers' planning is reviewed, lessons are observed, and helpful feedback is given on how to improve. Priorities in the school development plan are the focus points for improvement for all. Staff work together very well, following the lead of the headteacher, achieving an excellent balance of criticism and support of one another.
The strategic use of resources	Very effective. The school development plan is a useful document showing how money will be spent once essential expenditure has been allocated. A programme for improving the quality of accommodation has resulted in a very good, clean working environment. Staff are sufficient in number and well qualified, and resources for learning are good and well used.

The headteacher and his staff are very effective in providing the best value they can for the community the school serves. The pupils' academic performance is compared with that of other schools locally and nationally, as the school works to improve pupils' achievements. Parents are consulted about possible changes and involved in school life. Money is spent with care to ensure good use of the available resources

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations are high • Their children like school • Their children make good progress • Behaviour is good • Teaching is good • Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress • They feel comfortable about asking questions • The school is well led and managed • The school helps their children to become mature and sensible • A good range of activities is provided outside of lessons 	<p>Parents' questionnaire responses did not identify any significant areas to be improved</p>

The inspection team evidence supports the parents' very positive views about the school. A small minority of parents indicated that the school does not work closely with them, but the inspectors found the reverse to be the case, with regular informal and formal contacts, the open door policy of the headteacher, and occasions such as subject evenings for literacy and numeracy to keep parents informed about curriculum innovations. A few parents have found that homework is not always set consistently and a little evidence was found to support this, although some excellent and useful homework is set, particularly in maths. Several parents commented on the inappropriate manner in which a few outside-contracted catering staff speak to their children, a situation which school management is trying to resolve with the contractor concerned.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils' achievements are very good and their national test results are well above average.

The quality of teaching and learning is very good.

1. Pupils' very good achievements and well above average attainment are closely linked to the quality of teaching and the positive attitudes to learning in the school. In mathematics and science, the way the classes are organised has a significant impact on pupils' successes. Pupils are taught in mixed-ability class groups for most subjects but in mathematics, in all years, they are grouped according to how successful they have been in the past. In science, in Year 6, groups are also based on prior learning. Work is carefully matched to pupils' prior learning in most lessons and teachers know the requirements of the national assessments very well indeed. This professional approach to teaching and learning enables the pupils to attain very good test results and achieve very well in all subjects
2. The firm, rigorous approach of most of the staff ensures that pupils feel secure and work hard. In lessons, and more generally around the school, a culture has been established where learning is valued by both boys and girls. Constructive and helpful competition exists between pupils, and individuals strive to achieve, working to agendas for improvement agreed with their teachers. Substantial amounts of homework are set, particularly in mathematics, and the best quality reinforces what pupils have learnt in lessons. One or two parents still have some concerns about the range and quality of homework set for different groups of pupils but the school is continually working to balance the expectations of parents with pupils' attitudes and needs.
3. Expectations are high in all areas of school life. Lessons start on time, as the school day does, and opportunities to learn are very well used. For example, a class of older pupils often start the day reading their selected books, taking turns to read aloud to the teacher. In an observed session, pupils' concentration was very high and everyone knew that this was not just time to fill during registration, but a learning opportunity that should be used effectively. Questions and explanations ensured that all pupils improved their reading skills and knowledge.
4. The structure of most subject sessions is built around the three-part lesson recommended in the national numeracy and literacy strategies. Learning intentions are shared with pupils and they are questioned on what they know already before starting on new work. Questions are matched carefully to individuals, ensuring each pupil is valued and learns from the exchanges. Middle parts of lessons invariably include activities that engage pupils' interest. Teachers and support staff focus on the needs of specific groups, whilst keeping an eye on the rest of the class. Groups are always arranged in ways that staff believe will be the most fruitful, in terms of the progress pupils will make. In the very best lessons, where learning is of the highest order, well-structured summaries at the end of lessons are used to assess pupils' understanding of what has been learnt, to reinforce important messages and to clarify points where individuals are muddled. These sessions often take ten or so minutes, involve all the class, and enable the lesson to finish at the expected time.
5. In a very successful Year 6 English lesson, pupils revised language conventions and grammatical features of poetry. The excellent initial explanations captured the attention and interest of the entire class. Few understood rhyming patterns, and terms such as 'poetic licence' and 'alliteration', when these were first introduced but, by the end of the lesson, all had a good knowledge. The use of the pupils' limericks maintained their interest, and the outstanding quality of the teacher's own reading aloud, captivated the class. An overhead projector was used most effectively to focus the attention of the class. During some very successful group work, where almost all worked collaboratively, one pupil had a disagreement with a colleague and was not as involved as he should have been. He was moved to sit by himself with the comment "I am moving you because you produce a good standard of work when you work on your own". This gave the pupil the confidence to succeed and he did. The teachers' very

demanding style and strict application of the school's behaviour code was appreciated by all in the class. Pupils with special educational needs were given additional support by the class teacher and high attainers were further challenged by assessing each other's work. Pupils of all abilities made very good progress.

6. In an equally effective mathematics lesson for a class of the highest attainers in Year 6, the learning intentions had been written on the board before the start. Work on percentages and ratios was very cleverly reinforced by relating the number work to VAT and income tax calculations, and to conversions of holiday money into different currencies. The mental mathematics work, with some jotting down of key parts, was extremely demanding for all. Most pupils got the answers right, including examples such as 17.5% VAT on £150 and 15% of £37.50. Speed and accuracy were needed and standards were very high. Pupils were excited by the challenges and were very keen to share the strategies they had used to work out their answers. Because all the class were high attainers (all were expected to attain level 5 in the National Curriculum tests), the pace was rapid and expectations extremely high. Pupils were not asked to work in silence, but often did, only speaking to each other when advice or explanation was needed. Groups of the fastest workers spent some time in the ICT suite tracking their selected portfolio of shares. Excel spreadsheets, tables within Word and calculator work were all of a much higher standard than that expected of pupils of their ages. Pupils made decisions on purchases and sales depending upon their interpretations and forecasts using company data. Relevant and interesting examples reinforced number skills and group discussions were excellent. Support from the teacher and teaching assistant were of high quality. ICT skills were of as high a standard as the mathematics.

7. The quality of teaching and learning were equally effective in a wide range of subjects. An example of excellent practice was seen in a Year 4 music lesson.

Last lesson on a hot Friday afternoon, a mixed ability class performed their composition 'rainforest sounds, rainforest conversations', as part of their rainforest topic. Under the enthusiastic direction of their very knowledgeable teacher, mixed ability and mixed gender pairs of pupils each chose a rainforest sound to represent in musical composition ("like the Carnival of the Animals", reminded the teacher). Some chose animals - spiders, piranha, monkeys - others the sound of wind or trees. The teacher wrote the order of the 'score' chosen by pupils on the board, using pictures of each sound (for example monkeys), followed by a picture of feet representing the linking drum rhythm. Selecting tuned and untuned percussion, each pair was absorbed in discussing and practising their 'conversation', using different rhythms, pitch and dynamics. Following pupil and teacher evaluation, some conversations were rewritten and new instruments selected. The class teacher set high standards for pupils' composition skills and demonstrated different ways of using the instruments. In the final performances, pupils played their parts with care and attention, listened well to each other and achieved high standards of music making. In the final evaluation pupils said, "Everyone tried their best."

8. ICT, number, writing and reading skills are frequently reinforced in a range of lessons. Pupils benefit from constructive corrections to their writing, use of the computer network and opportunities to read and solve number problems. Pupils use inappropriate colloquial language at times, however, that goes unchecked in the playground, and occasionally in the classroom. The school's current focus on making further improvements in English is timely. Staff are working hard to bring the standards in all aspects of English up to those in mathematics and science, albeit from a significantly lower base point of the pupils on entry to the school.
9. A few lessons were not as effective as the majority, usually because planning was too ambitious with too much included in the time available. The main learning intentions became obscured and little time was left for an effective pulling together of what had been learnt at the end of the lesson.
10. The very good quality of teaching and learning apparent in many observed lessons enabled boys to achieve as well as the girls, and for high and low attainers, the gifted and talented and those with special educational needs to excel. Scrutiny of pupils' written work shows that high standards are maintained over time. Work is detailed, showing thorough planning, and is usually carefully marked

and very well presented. Year teams meet frequently to iron out problems and to learn from one another – although some inconsistencies do still creep in. The outcome of this quality of planning and teaching is the very good achievement of pupils of all abilities and their high attainment in national tests.

Pupils find the curriculum interesting and enjoyable and it covers a very good and wide range of activities and subjects

11. National Curriculum subjects and religious education are catered for very well through the timetable of activities planned for each class. Planning for each subject is substantial and detailed, which helps to achieve a high degree of consistency across classes in each year group. Substantial blocks of time are often allocated to foundation subjects such as art and history – as much as a whole afternoon in some cases. These lessons generally work well when a good variety of activities are planned and the teaching quality is very good. Occasionally, however, the pace of work and level of interest can fall away in the second half of the period.
12. Extra-curricular activities are excellent and much appreciated by pupils and their parents. Teachers and coaches are committed to providing the pupils with a wide range of interesting and demanding clubs during lunchtimes and after school. School sports teams have been very successful for a number of years. Staff are aware of the value of these activities in getting to know pupils in different contexts and their importance in the personal development of each pupil involved. Excellent social and cultural opportunities stem from them, as they do from the school discos and visits that are arranged. Girls' and boys' football clubs are very popular, as well as the gymnastics club, attended by about 80 pupils over two sessions each week. Guitar, reading, ICT, design and technology, art, Kwik Cricket, dance and drama are some of the many other clubs that have been provided in the past year. Peripatetic music lessons are also popular. About half of the pupils are involved in one or more of these activities, and it is intended that more will be in future, not least as a result of the establishment of a school band.
13. The range of visits is similarly broad and adds an extra dimension to the pupils' education. Each year group has at least one substantial visit, including the Natural History Museum in London, a local zoo, HMS Belfast, Knole House, places of worship, and a residential visit to the Isle of Wight for Year 6 pupils. Those in Year 6 unable to join the residential visit, experience a good and equivalent range of activities based in the school. The staff work very hard to try to ensure equality of opportunity for all. A number of visitors are also welcomed to the school. A theatre company visits to assist with drugs and health education as part of the very interesting citizenship programme. The personal, health and social education (PHSE) programme, including the citizenship elements, is managed very well. It is planned for and taught in each class.
14. Curriculum planning to assist pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual education plans are detailed, with good, clear, achievable targets that staff and pupils understand and work to. These plans are reviewed termly and staff, parents and the pupils themselves are involved in the process. The school's target-setting process for all pupils is an important aspect of the drive to improve standards further. Strong and helpful curriculum links, both with the infant school on the same site, and with two of the secondary schools to which many pupils transfer, help to achieve continuity in learning for pupils, including high attainers and those who are gifted and talented.

Staff are caring and very supportive and pupils know they are valued and respected, and as a result they thrive

15. Pupils appreciate the firm but supportive approach of staff. They all know where they stand. When very occasional bullying or use of racist language occurs, communication with all the parties involved, and resolution of the problem, is rapid and thorough. The approach is not one of retribution, but of education and understanding, working to clear and rigorous policies. Pupils know they can turn to any member of staff for support and it will be provided. Older pupils learn to support their younger peers and relationships between boys and girls are mature and sensible. The outcome of this excellent care is very good behaviour and attitudes, and high levels of personal development.
16. The competitive house system is liked by the pupils, who work very hard to maximise the points they can win for their respective houses. Points can be allocated for effort and achievement in any aspect of school life. Competition between individuals and houses is not the be all and end all of the process; individual pupils learn to improve their own performance and how this has positive outcomes for others. They also learn the converse, that a lack of effort or silliness has consequences for others as well as themselves.
17. Debates and views expressed in the school council (from the elected representatives from each class) are taken seriously. In the playground, two enclosed, quiet seating areas have been built in response to the pupils' own ideas and designs. These are very effective and highly valued, not least because the pupils know that the school have carried out their requests. The current debate about the toilets, a significant concern for the more mature and older boys and girls, is proving difficult to solve. The doors and arrangements for access do not provide the privacy which pupils want and need, but resolving the problem will be expensive.
18. In the school dining room, each day, the headteacher has lunch with a selected group of pupils. These occasions provide the headteacher with an opportunity to discuss issues with the pupils and for them to talk to him about their interests. Music they have selected is played quietly in the background – the headteacher controls the volume of the music! Pupils say that events such as this show how much the staff care for them individually and value their views. There is a negative side to lunchtime, however, even with so many high quality and positive aspects. Pupils are worried about collecting their lunches from the canteen and about paying for their meals, because of the negative attitudes of a minority of catering staff. These staff are not employed by the school.

Parents are kept very well informed and involved and appreciate what is provided for their children

19. Questionnaires about the school returned by about forty percent of parents before the inspection expressed exceptionally positive views about the school. These were supported by a small number of written comments received, and by parents' and carers' observations at a meeting to discuss the school. All parents agreed that the school had high expectations in all areas of school life.
20. As well as the usual evenings when staff meet parents to discuss their children's progress and curriculum evenings, numerous visits and visitors and activities that take place give parents further opportunities to become involved and have informal discussions with staff. School reports on pupils' progress are very helpful to parents and to the pupils themselves. Documentation sent to parents, such as the prospectus, newsletters and the governors' annual report, are well written and informative. The newsletters include helpful reminders to parents about important events, and interesting cameos such as one describing a Year 5 technology visit to a local secondary school to use the specialist facilities to make biscuits. The school considers with great care how to communicate information effectively. For example, the word processing font used in documentation was decided after much research and discussion into how to make the print as easy as possible to read.
21. The headteacher meets parents and carers informally at the end of each school day, as children are collected. He knows the names of the pupils and works very hard to maintain contact with as many parents as possible

Very high quality, strong leadership and thorough and very effective management have resulted in excellent improvements since the last inspection

22. The bedrock for the school's improvement over the past five years is the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, and the very good management of staff involved in the pupils' education. Tasks are delegated very effectively and progress evaluated thoroughly and professionally. The result is the very good quality education provided today,
23. The vision for the school is clearly stated, understood and acted upon. The school development plan is now a much better and more useful document identifying what the current and future priorities are. The school aims to provide high quality experiences, ensuring that all can work together with happiness and respect so that each pupil is successful. The aim is, in effect, excellence in all things. This is seen, for example, in the school's 'boy-friendly' approach to reading, introduced because of the national concern over underachievement by boys. At Park Wood, boys and girls are achieving equally well now. Since the last inspection, long-term strategies have been implemented to enable the school to attain its aims and they are bearing fruit in terms of pupils' attitudes and achievements.
24. School assemblies are carefully planned and very enjoyable times for pupils. All are collective acts of worship and much more besides. They are occasions when the whole school comes together to celebrate individuals' achievements, to learn of new ideas and to reflect on what is taking place in the school and the wider community. Parents reported specific examples that their children had relayed to them, such as the headteacher cutting his tie in half to indicate some changes are more permanent than others! During the inspection, a thought-provoking assembly compared the popularity of the latest Harry Potter novel and the Bible. At the end of each year, the leavers' assembly attended by their parents, is an occasion keenly anticipated by the whole school. The very strong school team spirit is apparent in assemblies.
25. The headteacher inspires confidence, and he in turn has great confidence in his staff and the pupils. Training and support are provided for all teachers and assistants to help them improve professionally and achieve highly. For example, the deputy headteacher has followed a programme of development that has enabled him to experience all aspects of leadership and management of the school. A guide given to supply teachers as they arrive at the school includes, amongst other important helpful information, the names of two pupils in the class being taught who are to be his/her helpers. The guide is excellent and shows how carefully managers have worked out the best way to help such staff be as successful as possible for the short time they are in the school.
26. Great personal warmth exists in the school, which is apparent in the way all are welcomed on arrival and the time given to individuals. There is also, however, a very helpful 'competitive edge', which supports a constant striving for further success.
27. All of these positive changes represent excellent improvement since the last report five years ago.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

28. No significant areas for improvement were identified by the team.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

29. Governors and senior managers will wish to continue to make improvements in the education provided as indicated in the school's development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	8	7	3	0	0	0
Percentage	5	42	37	16	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	280
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	59

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	46	44	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	35	39	46
	Girls	43	39	43
	Total	78	78	89
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (80)	87 (74)	99 (89)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	34	40	45
	Girls	42	42	44
	Total	76	82	89
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (82)	91 (77)	99 (86)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian

No of pupils on roll
265
3
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
1	

Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

1
2
6
2

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	25

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	146

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-3
----------------	--------

	£
Total income	784131
Total expenditure	691414
Expenditure per pupil	2469
Balance brought forward from previous year	92717
Balance carried forward to next year	73914

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	280
Number of questionnaires returned	113

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	39	5	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	62	3	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	45	17	1	1
The teaching is good.	54	44	1	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	48	8	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	39	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	48	8	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	53	43	3	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	39	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	34	3	2	0

Other issues raised by parents

Staff provide three occasions each year for parents to meet the class teachers of their children which are very much appreciated, as are the high quality reports they receive. Parents describe school assemblies as often wonderful, very enjoyable experiences for their children.

They feel that the school ethos of care and high expectations is let down by the conduct of a few catering staff (not employed by the school) at lunchtime. Their children find the poor relationships upsetting and the only unsatisfactory aspect of their school lives.