



# The Anthony Roper Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 118255  
**Local Authority** Kent  
**Inspection number** 291065  
**Inspection date** 8 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Helen Hutchings

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

|   |                    |                         |                  |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Primary            | <b>School address</b>   | High Street      |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community          |                         | Eynsford         |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4-11               |                         | Dartford DA4 0AA |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed              | <b>Telephone number</b> | 01322 863680     |
| <b>Number on roll (school)</b>            | 310                | <b>Fax number</b>       | 01322 861743     |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body | <b>Chair</b>            | Charles Sexton   |
|   |                    | <b>Headteacher</b>      | Robert Straker   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 1 February 2003    |                         |                  |

|                          |   |                                    |
|--------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This school is larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. Most children are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is lower than average. Many pupils attending the school come from distances well beyond the immediate village.

## **Key for inspection grades**

|         |              |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  |
| Grade 2 | Good         |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   |

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school where the effective provision of education, integrated care and extended services meets the needs of pupils very well. This is a school where each and every pupil really does matter. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They say that they feel safe and that bullying is not a problem. Pupils are extremely positive about their school. They enjoy the things they do and this is reflected in above-average attendance. They respond well within the whole-school community and enjoy taking responsibility for a range of activities, such as house captains or class prefects. Pupils think that their work in the school council gives them a genuine voice in influencing decisions which impact on school life. The 'green team' is particularly valued by pupils in keeping the school and site tidy. The consistently applied procedures are applied fairly across the school and make a major contribution to ensuring that pupils are able to learn within a calm classroom atmosphere. Pupils' achievement is outstanding. In their first years in the school children build up a love for learning and a strong basis for their future academic development, so that by the time they reach Year 6 they have made outstanding progress from their starting points. Pupils thrive on the success they experience in their work and develop a momentum in their learning. Teachers know their pupils very well and each pupil's attainment is monitored regularly and action taken if anyone is seen to be falling behind. Parents are overwhelmingly confident in what the school offers. As one parent wrote, 'I would like to commend the teachers and staff at the school'. However, a few parents do not feel that the school is systematic enough in seeking their views and that their suggestions do not influence decision-making sufficiently. Leadership and management are very effective in raising achievement and supporting all pupils. An exceptionally strong sense of teamwork means that adults and pupils alike are committed to achieving the highest possible standards. The high standards at the time of the last inspection have continued to rise faster than nationally. The key reasons for the school's success are effective teaching and learning that meet the full range of pupils' needs and a curriculum and other activities that meet the range of pupils' interests. These together with the very effective care, guidance and support and emphasis placed on nurturing pupils' personal, social and emotional skills motivate pupils' learning very well.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve communication and the partnership between school and parents.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Children enter the school with attainment which is broadly typical of children of this age and develop well so that most reach the standards expected by the end of the Foundation Stage, with some doing better than this. The school builds on this firm foundation to the point where, by the time they leave, progress is outstanding. It is reflected well in national test results where standards have been well above national

averages for the last five years. Progress from Year 2 to Year 6 has been in the top 10% of schools nationally for the last two years and is expected to be as high again once the 2006 data is made available. Almost all, including pupils with learning difficulties, reach the nationally expected levels. Results in science are marginally lower than in English and mathematics. However, the school has identified a relative weakness in pupils' skills of scientific enquiry and is rightly focusing on this as its major area for school improvement this year.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are happy at school. They enjoy the challenge provided for them in lessons and are highly motivated to do their best. Pupils reflected responsibly that the work they are given is challenging but not so challenging that they cannot do it. Pupils respond very well to the school's clear values and their behaviour is excellent. They say that bullying is rare and when occasional incidents do occur, they are dealt with quickly when reported to an adult. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils particularly enjoy contributing to their own and the wider community, whether in country dancing displays at the local fetes or in charity fundraising, such as 'Goats for Africa'. Pupils develop skills which prepare them very well for later life. For example, they develop an understanding of citizenship and democracy by voting for school council representatives. They are self-assured and mature learners, which enables them to approach the next stage of their education with confidence.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Pupils learn effectively within very calm and purposeful classrooms. Teachers and pupils have very high expectations for learning and pupils reflect that 'sometimes teachers make it fun with games' and that 'if you don't understand what you are doing, teachers help you'. Planning for lessons is structured very well so that pupils' learning is taken forward from a clear understanding of what they already know and can do. Pupils benefit from some specialist teaching and from working in ability groups in the older classes, which will now be extended to some aspects of teaching in younger year groups. This is one example of the school's measured approach to taking on new initiatives, by trialling a new approach and then evaluating its effectiveness to ensure that it is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

Teachers are confident in their use of national guidance and how to adopt those aspects which will have a positive impact on the needs of their pupils. The statutory curriculum is enriched well by the addition of modern languages and an emphasis on the arts. Specialist weeks such as the 'Enrichment Week' and residential visits give pupils interesting experiences to enhance their learning by linking subjects in a relevant context. As part of its preparations to achieve Healthy School status, the school is planning a more coherent approach to developing pupils' personal, social and emotional skills. The exceptionally broad programme of extra-curricular activities covering sport and the performing arts is well attended by pupils, including those that take place after school. The 'Fit Kids Clubs' are particularly well attended and are making a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of health-related issues.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils see that adults place a high priority on their safety and academic achievement. All adults take an interest in pupils as individuals and care for them very well. This means that pupils work and play together happily and successfully. The frequent and rigorous marking used by teachers gives pupils very good guidance on how to improve their work. Errors are pointed out and corrections made so that pupils understand precisely what they have to do to produce higher quality work. Achievement and effort are recognised and valued. Pupils know their targets and these are changed regularly when they have been achieved, keeping expectations high. Teachers keep good records of pupils' attainment and progress but the school is not using information technology systems as well as it could to manage the data.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Members of the senior management group are new to their current roles but have considerable experience of teaching in the school and have already been key contributors to improving standards over many years. They have quickly established areas for further improvement and know how to use the strengths of individuals to best effect. All are passionate about and successful in ensuring the highest possible provision for pupils in the school and training is in place for staff new to their posts. The governing body challenges the school very well as a 'critical friend' and has taken strategic decisions to secure the ongoing financial viability of the school whilst attempting to maintain costly buildings and make the environment as pleasant as possible within its resources. Few parents take up the opportunities to meet governors termly and some parents do not feel that their views are fully taken into account. However, the school plans to investigate how it can improve communication further. The staff have a strong sense of what works well because they monitor and evaluate

practice together. This means that the school is very well placed to improve standards further, particularly with an emerging pattern of an intake with more individual needs.

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## Inspection judgements

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | <b>School Overall</b> |
|---|-----------------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b> | 1   |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?  | 2   |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage  | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 1   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | 1   |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection   | Yes |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How well do learners achieve?</b>   | 1 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 1 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 1 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 1 |

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                           | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 1 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 1 |
| The attendance of learners  | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |

### The quality of provision

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>          | 1 |
| <b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b> | 1 |
| <b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>   | 1 |

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1   |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets   | 2   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 1   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 1   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 1   |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?  | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures?   | No  |
| Does this school require a notice to improve?  | No  |

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

- Thank you for the friendly welcome you all gave me when I visited the school recently. I really enjoyed my time with you and seeing you all in lessons, even if it was only for a short time. I promised the school council that I would let you know what I thought. I am pleased that you know you attend a really outstanding school.
- You do outstandingly well in tests because you work hard and understand the importance of this for the future. I was particularly pleased when you told me that you even enjoy doing homework.
- Your teachers mark your work very carefully and you learn even more when you do your corrections.
- Your behaviour is excellent and this makes lessons enjoyable. I was pleased that there were very few names on the 'strike charts'.
- You were all very busy and active at lunchtime and you are lucky to have such large playgrounds and so many clubs to attend after school.
- You told me that you feel safe in school. You also said that problems occur only occasionally but that an adult will sort it out quickly when you tell them about it.
- The school council is very busy on your behalf and members enjoy being able to take new things forward to make life better for you. The school council said that not much needs changing in the school and I agree. Mr Straker and the staff have planned some things for the future, such as finding more ways for your parents to let him and the governing body know their views about the school. You will probably not notice any difference, but your teachers will also be recording your progress in a different way to make sure that if you begin to fall behind they pick it up immediately. I hope that this will help you to make your work even better. With best wishes for the future,