



# Park Way Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 118302  
**Local Authority** Kent  
**Inspection number** 291084  
**Inspection dates** 1–2 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Derek Watts

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>	Park Way
<b>School category</b>	Community		Maidstone
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		ME15 7AH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01622 753651
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	223	<b>Fax number</b>	01622 682878
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	John Baker
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Dhanecha
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 July 2001		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
4–11	1–2 November 2006	291084

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Park Way Primary is an average size school. Most of the pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. Children enter Reception with below expected knowledge and skills. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal starting and leaving points is higher than average. During the past few years, the school has experienced staffing changes and difficulties. The senior leadership team and teaching force are now more settled.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

Park Way is successfully promoting pupils' personal development but pupils have not made sufficient academic progress during the past three years, particularly in writing and science. The school's overall effectiveness is therefore inadequate but there are now positive signs that things are improving.

Satisfactory provision in Reception means that children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. National test results in Year 6 during the past three years indicate that standards are significantly below average. Pupils generally make better progress in mathematics. With a more settled leadership team and teaching force, there are indications that this underachievement is being checked. Teaching and learning are now satisfactory and improving. As a result, pupils now make at least satisfactory progress in lessons. However, in some lessons, challenge and pace are still not high enough. Where this is the case, the rate of learning slows. Improved assessment and target setting mean that teachers have a better understanding of how well pupils are doing and pupils have a clearer view of what they need to do to improve. Pupils' academic guidance is now satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory and the school is rightly increasing the range of writing opportunities and placing more emphasis on developing investigation skills in science.

Very good pastoral care and support contribute to pupils' good personal development and well-being. Pupils clearly enjoy school and show positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is good and the few pupils with challenging behaviour are well managed. Attendance is satisfactory and the school works hard to promote good attendance. Pupils readily take on important responsibilities around the school. They are reasonably well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and are now more focused on raising pupils' achievement and improving the quality of educational provision. The school has a better understanding of its performance. School improvement planning sets out appropriate priorities but indicators to check the success of the plan are not sufficiently sharp or measurable. Although the school has made inadequate improvements since the last inspection, recent improvements to assessment, teaching and learning demonstrate that the capacity for further improvement is satisfactory. Parents are generally satisfied with the education provided.

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' progress particularly in writing and science.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement particularly in writing and science.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that all lessons are suitably challenging and that they maintain a brisk pace.

- Ensure that leadership and management remain focused on raising pupils' achievement and improving provision, and devise sharp indicators for the school improvement plan to measure success.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Pupils' progress over time has been unsatisfactory as a result of past weaknesses in assessment, teaching and learning. Children in Reception make satisfactory gains in all areas of learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress in reading and mathematics but there is underachievement in writing. Year 6 national test results during the past three years indicate that standards have been significantly below average. While progress in mathematics has been satisfactory, pupils have not made enough progress in English, particularly in writing, and in science from Years 3 to 6. National performance data show a three year steady decline in the progress pupils make in Years 3 to 6. Recent improvements to assessment, teaching and learning are beginning to tackle this underachievement. The school is extending opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills. In science more emphasis is being placed on pupils acquiring and applying investigative skills. While pupils are now making satisfactory progress in lessons, this has not been sustained long enough to make their long-term progress and their achievement adequate. Assessment and tracking indicate that pupils who receive most of their schooling at Park Way tend to reach higher standards than pupils who are there for shorter periods.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Moral and social development is a key strength of the school. Despite the school having a number of pupils with social and emotional needs, most behave well. Pupils are friendly, polite and helpful. They get on well with each other and any rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour are effectively dealt with. Pupils like their teachers and enjoy school. Most attend regularly although the small number of poor attenders means attendance levels are below average.

Pupils gain a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities both in school and beyond. Older pupils take their roles as peer mediators and playground buddies very seriously. Through the work of the school council, pupils have helped improve resources, especially for the playground, and fund raise for a range of charities. These aspects of their development ensure they make a positive contribution to the school and wider community. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to eat healthily and are keen to take part in the many sporting opportunities offered. They feel very safe and secure in school and have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Underachievement in basic literacy and numeracy skills means that pupils have not been sufficiently well prepared for their economic well being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Lessons seen and the study of pupils' work show that teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. Teacher changes in the past have led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, pupils have not achieved as well as they should particularly in writing and science. Lessons are generally well planned and pupils have a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn. Teachers have established good relationships with pupils and this, together with good class management, results in good behaviour. Teachers' clear explanations, questioning and demonstrations promote learning well. In some lessons, the levels of challenge and pace are still not high enough. Where this happens, the rate of learning slows.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Recent developments particularly in English and science mean that the curriculum meets the needs of pupils of different ability and ensures they build on and extend their skills and knowledge. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy and pupils are provided with satisfactory opportunities to use these skills in other subjects. There is a range of suitable intervention programmes to support pupils whose progress is slow. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and contributes to pupils' good personal development. A rich range of experiences including visits, visitors and clubs enhances learning and encourages good attitudes. The school is exploring interesting and imaginative ways to inspire enthusiasm for writing. Although raising achievement in writing is a key priority for the school, the celebration of pupils' writing through classroom displays is limited.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of care is very good. The school's robust systems to ensure pupils' protection, health and safety are rigorously applied at all times. Both pupils and their parents recognise that the school is a very safe and happy place to be. Effective liaison with other agencies, such as the speech therapist and family liaison officer, enhances the level of care and support. Guidance and support for pupils' personal development are good. This is reflected in their good behaviour and growing confidence and responsibility. Academic guidance has improved and is now satisfactory but these improvements are too recent to have had a significant impact on raising pupils' achievement. Pupils' individual targets are helping to improve progress although not all teachers give sufficient day-to-day guidance in their marking on how pupils could do better.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leaders and managers have been successful in promoting pupils' personal development. However, they have not been sufficiently effective in the past in promoting good pupil achievement. Staffing changes and difficulties have contributed to underachievement. The senior leadership team and the teaching force are working hard together and showing a clear commitment to raising achievement and improving educational provision.

Effective monitoring and development of teaching by senior leaders and the local authority have led to recent improvements to teaching. In particular, shortcomings in practice are followed up to check they are remedied. Better assessment and tracking systems mean that the school knows how well each individual is progressing. While these positive changes are too recent to have a significant impact on pupils' achievement, there are signs that pupils' learning in lessons is satisfactory. The role of subject leaders of English, mathematics and science is being extended so that they are more involved in the monitoring and development of their subjects.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's successes, such as in the pupils' personal development and the positive school atmosphere. They are now better informed about pupils' achievement and are keen for pupils to make more progress. Sharper success criteria in the school improvement plan would enable them to check how well the school is progressing in raising achievement and improving provision.





## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### 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>	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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?	Yes

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

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found out. There are a number of strengths in the school but there are a few things that the school needs to improve. There are signs that things are getting better. We do not think that you are doing as well as you should in writing and science. In order to make sure that things continue to get better, we have decided to give the school a 'Notice to Improve'. This means that an inspector will visit the school to check the school's progress.

These things were strengths of the school

- You clearly enjoy school and the extra activities you take part in.
- Most of you behave well and you are friendly, helpful and polite.
- You get on well with other pupils and adults.
- The staff provide very good care and support for you so that you are safe and secure.
- Your parents are generally pleased with the school.

These are the things the school has been asked to improve

- Many of you could make more progress, particularly in writing and science.
- Sometimes your teachers could challenge you more and this would help you to make more progress.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors should check really closely the success of all the improvements they make.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. We wish you all the best for the future