

Park Wood Junior School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	118471
Local Authority	Medway
Inspection number	312951
Inspection date	13 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Helen Hutchings

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bernard Hargan
Headteacher	Susan Russell
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2003
School address	Deanwood Drive Rainham Gillingham ME8 9LP
Telephone number	01634 234699
Fax number	01634 360623

Age group	7-11
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Amended Report Addendum

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, the curriculum, personal development and well-being, and care, guidance and support, gathering evidence from: national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, meetings held with members of staff and pupils, scrutiny of the school's documentation and pupils' work, observation of the school at work and analysis of the parents' responses to questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most junior schools. Two years ago, the school increased the number of classes in each year group, leading to the admission of a significant number of pupils after the normal point of entry. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. A lower than average proportion of pupils takes free school meals. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. A few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The current headteacher has been in post since January 2006. The school has recently been the recipient of the Inclusive School Quality Mark and Healthy School status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Park Wood Junior is a good school, with some outstanding features. It rightly prides itself on the high quality of its care, successfully meeting its aim to 'value and challenge every child'. The vast majority of parents appreciate the school's work. One comment summarised the views expressed by many, 'It's the little things that add up to make a happy school like Park Wood'. Parents value that their children are safe and cared for well and that the school has high expectations for pupils' academic achievement. There is no complacency in this school. Its own evaluation of its performance is similar to the inspection findings, although its judgements are modest in a few aspects. The school is setting increasingly challenging targets for performance and is achieving and sometimes exceeding these. Staff are led with insight by the headteacher and deputy headteacher to strive for further improvement and the school is well placed to achieve it.

Academic standards have been significantly above national averages in the end of Year 6 tests for the five years up to 2006, preparing pupils well for their secondary education and the world of work in the future. These standards represent good achievement in relation to pupils' starting points. Although results fell in the 2007 tests, pupils still achieved well. The higher than usual proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in the year group had made good gains during their time in the school. School tracking data show that pupils currently in the school are on course to reach the previously higher levels again.

Teachers undertake thorough analyses of pupils' performance as they move through the school and in the national tests. They use this information well and take prompt action when any weaknesses are identified. The most recent analysis has shown that, while pupils have very good subject knowledge, they do not always apply this well enough in new and different situations, for example when solving problems in mathematics and science. To improve this situation and respond to the different experiences and skills pupils gain during their infant years, teachers have reviewed the curriculum and have changed the way in which subjects are taught. The introduction of cross-curricular themes, linking aspects of many subjects, is resulting in a more relevant and effective curriculum. The new features of the curriculum are motivating pupils very well and are developing their enthusiasm to investigate things further for themselves. While the new curriculum has been carefully planned, the school recognises that further development and evaluation are needed to make sure that pupils consistently develop a broader range of skills, such as in making oral presentations and in their use of computers, whilst keeping achievement in subject knowledge good. Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum, which includes French for all ages.

Parents comment positively on recent developments and appreciate that the school has kept them well informed. One parent commented, 'My child has improved in his school work due to the enjoyable way it is taught'. Success is fostered and praised, for example in the Year 6 'graduation ceremony' marking the end of pupils' primary education. Marking is detailed and identifies precisely what pupils have achieved and how work could be improved.

Pupils' outstanding personal development is seen in their very positive approach to all school activities. They enthusiastically take part in a good number of extra-curricular activities, carefully planned to meet the wide range of pupils' interests. Sport is well represented but other quieter interests are also catered for. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility within the school and in so doing contribute well to their school community. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development is good. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are confident and have an excellent understanding of the impact of their actions. The respect they have for others' feelings means that when incidents occur, such as friends falling out or a group of pupils monopolising an area of the playground, they are resolved quickly. They move about outside and in the building safely. They have an excellent understanding of the principles of healthy living, know about the implications of their choices of food in the dining room and take plenty of exercise in the playground.

Good teaching results in a purposeful buzz in classrooms, with pupils engrossed in their tasks because they find them interesting and want to do well. Teachers and senior staff monitor pupils' progress frequently against the targets set and agreed with individuals. Pupils know what they have to do to reach the next level and appropriate action is taken if a pupil begins to fall behind. The school works closely with a range of external agencies and uses additional expertise very well to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, so that they generally make progress in line with their targets.

Pupils are exceptionally positive about their school and know that their views are listened to carefully. Even the youngest pupils gave their opinions confidently and enthusiastically, having settled into the school quickly. One parent commented that after the first day her child had said, 'That was the best day of my life!' Pupils have a genuine sense of being partners in the school's development because adults involve them in many ways. For example, governors sought the opinions of a representative group when appointing the headteacher last year. The school council canvassed the views of their classmates about healthy lunch options and which authors should be represented in the choice of new books for the library. This partnership extends to the classroom where pupils are encouraged to reflect on which activities they enjoy most and what helps them to learn well, giving teachers valuable feedback on the effectiveness of different approaches and placing learning at the heart of the school's work. Parents too feel involved and welcomed into the school.

Teamwork is the key to the school's success. Teachers work very well in teams to make learning interesting and effective. The governing body knows the school well, provides good challenge to its work and shares high aspirations for the school with the staff team. The systems for monitoring performance are rigorous and shrewd financial management has enabled a programme of improvement to accommodation to be undertaken.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the new curriculum consistently develops pupils' key skills such as in problem solving, making oral presentations and in using computers.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave me when I visited recently. I very much enjoyed meeting you and I said that I would let you know what I had found.

I agree with you that Park Wood Junior is a good school.

- You make good progress and mostly reach higher standards than other pupils of your age.
- You find lessons and new topics interesting, and in my short visit to your classrooms, this was clearly the case.
- You understand how you learn best and this helps you to work hard.
- The youngest pupils have settled well into school in their first two weeks.
- Teachers give you an interesting and exciting range of clubs and visits.
- You are very active at playtimes, particularly enjoying the space on the field and this helps to keep you healthy. You also make sensible choices about what to eat.
- Adults take outstandingly good care of you.
- You say that there is very little bullying and that you can always speak to an adult who will help to sort out problems if you are worried.
- The headteacher and the staff think very carefully about how well the school is doing and take action quickly if they think something needs improving.

I agree with your teachers about the most important thing to do next. This is to make sure that new topics help you to build a wide range of skills as you move up through the school. I know that your teachers will be asking for your ideas about the things that really interest you.

I know that you will continue to work hard to make your school and your parents proud of you. I wish you every success in the future.



14 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Park Wood Junior School, Rainham, ME8 9LP

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I know that you will continue to work hard to make your school and your parents proud of you. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Helen Hutchings
Lead inspector