

The Anthony Roper Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118255
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	354519
Inspection dates	16–17 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stella Baggaley
Headteacher	Robert Straker
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 17 lessons and 14 teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, other staff with leadership responsibilities, the chair of the governing body and the school improvement partner. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documentation, including monitoring records, the school self-evaluation document, the school improvement plan, pupils' progress records and the safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires from 80 parents and carers were received and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well the school is working to narrow the gap between boys' and girls' performance in English
- how effectively the assessment of pupils' progress informs teaching and learning and ensures that all pupils make good progress
- the impact of curriculum innovation and cross-curricular work on pupils' learning, enjoyment and achievement
- the impact of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

The Anthony Roper is a larger than average primary school. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Their needs relate mainly to moderate learning or speech, language and communication difficulties. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in two Reception classes. There is a kindergarten and a pre-school on the school site that are managed by private providers and not included in this inspection. The school has National Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school of which pupils, parents and carers, staff and the governing body are rightly very proud. One parent wrote, 'The children have a sense of belonging and pride at being at Anthony Roper.' Pupils are great ambassadors for their school. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils care for each other and their environment. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. Cultural development through the arts is very good. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures through the curriculum but their understanding of the United Kingdom as a culturally diverse society is relatively weaker as they have limited direct experience of the multicultural aspects of their own society. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the need of regular exercise and a healthy balanced diet to keep fit and well which is recognised by the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. Good teaching and an outstanding, rich and vibrant curriculum inspire and motivate pupils to become independent and resourceful learners. By the time pupils leave school, their attainment is high and they achieve exceptionally well. There is some inconsistency in the effectiveness of the use of assessment for learning throughout the school when, on occasion, work is not precisely matched to the pupils' different abilities. As a result some, mainly more able pupils, do not always make the progress they are capable of.

The governing body is clearly committed to the school and to improving its effectiveness. However, it lacks rigour in more effectively monitoring the impact of all aspects of the school's work, particularly to ensure that procedures and policies are up to date, especially in relation to safeguarding. Members of the governing body are linked to class teachers and many visit the school regularly. The headteacher, with exceptional support from the deputy headteacher, works effectively to evaluate the strengths and areas for development in the school and to secure improvement. For example, a focus on practical and problem-solving activities in science has increased the proportion of pupils who are on track to gain higher levels in the subject by the end of Year 6. Writing has been an area of focus where the success of the school's work is evident in improved attainment. The school has very effectively improved the communication with parents and carers, which was the improvement point in the last inspection and its work with parents and carers contributes significantly to the school's success. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance pupils' understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society by giving them more opportunities to experience such diversity, including developing links

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with other culturally different schools.

- Ensure there is greater consistency in the use of assessment to more precisely pitch work at the right level for all pupils.
- Ensure that there is more rigour in the governing body's monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the school's work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils really enjoy learning and this, along with their very positive attitudes and excellent behaviour, make an important contribution to their outstanding achievement in English, mathematics and science. For example, in a mathematics lesson, Year 5 pupils demonstrated a great determination and persevered with a challenging activity to accurately measure angles. Pupils understood the purpose of their learning, which made it more meaningful, as it was linked effectively to their work in science on reflection of light. They very successfully acquire excellent personal attributes, such as the ability to negotiate, collaborate and empathise. For example, pupils worked very well in pairs using good information and communication technology skills to design a poster to promote a product and good collaboration enhanced their skills in using features of persuasive language. Pupils' artwork and design and technology projects are of a very high standard. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar good progress to others because their needs are identified at an early stage. They are supported very well and fully included in all aspects of school life.

Pupils feel safe and secure and say they can always talk to an adult if there is anything they are worried about. They participate enthusiastically in a range of sporting activities. Their commitment to walking to school has been promoted and encouraged by the school's nationally recognised 'Platinum Travel Plan'. Pupils take their responsibilities in class and around the school very seriously. They value their roles as prefects and house captains and are excellent role models for the younger pupils and effectively promote and encourage excellent behaviour and attitudes. The role that pupils play in the local community is particularly notable. They contribute to the monthly village magazine and write and publish a school newspaper which is well received by the community. Pupils participate in many local events, including meeting and talking with elderly residents. They enjoy being enterprising and take part in many fund-raising events and support global causes for example, Christian Aid and Children in Need, that help them develop an understanding of people who are less fortunate than they are.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers prepare their lessons very thoroughly and work hard to make them interesting and exciting for pupils. Themed and creative approaches to learning, including well-planned links across a range of subjects, are enhanced by a wide range of outstanding enrichment opportunities, including after-school clubs, trips and visitors. These activities very effectively broaden pupils' experiences and interests. One parent wrote, 'The staff are always very positive and motivated and put in a lot of effort to bring excitement and interest to the children's learning. After-school clubs run by the staff are excellent and really enthuse the children.'

Teaching is often skilful, motivating and enthusiastic and benefits from teachers' good subject knowledge. Provision to support more able pupils through group work is successfully developing them as writers and improving their writing skills. Pupils, especially boys, benefit enormously from opportunities to talk through their ideas and learn how they can use different features of writing to best suit a particular purpose and this helps to narrow the gap in attainment between boys and girls. Teachers manage their classrooms well and teaching assistants provide skilled and generally well-targeted support. There is a good pace to learning in many lessons and teachers very imaginatively bring subjects alive. There are good systems for assessing pupils' learning and, generally, good use is made of assessment information to plan the next stages in learning. However, there are still occasions when work in class lessons is not pitched at the right level, particularly for more able pupils and this can slow the progress they make. Parents and carers, and pupils agree that the school looks after them well. The needs of vulnerable pupils are very well met and greatly enhanced with excellent links

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with other agencies to provide well-targeted support.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The highly inclusive ethos of the school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn and develop as well-rounded individuals without fear of discrimination. It ensures that all pupils have every chance to take part in all of its activities and, as a result, all groups of pupils achieve exceptionally well. The school works outstandingly well with parents and carers. Great efforts are made to help them support their children's learning, for example through curriculum evenings, such as one to share the school's approach to teaching calculation. Communication with parents has been improved and in response to requests from parents and carers, the school now operates a parent mail system to ensure a flow of information between home and school. Community cohesion is good. Leaders have developed the school as a very cohesive community in which pupils show tolerance and respect for others. There are strong links with the local community. The introduction of French has given pupils a taste of another European culture and some pupils have exchanged letters with pupils in an African school. However, opportunities for pupils to have direct contact with pupils from different cultures and backgrounds in this country are at an early stage of partnership development. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and ensure that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. However, these procedures are not monitored and reviewed by the governing body with sufficient rigour.

There is a strong sense of shared responsibility and commitment among all staff, which is fostered by good leadership and effective management from the headteacher and deputy headteacher who work as a complementary team and ensure that the school is ambitious despite a secure pattern over the years of high attainment. Self-evaluation is effective and efficient. The monitoring of teaching is thorough and has led to improvements being made, as leaders are very knowledgeable in their subject areas as well as effective in their leadership roles. For example, the focus training and guidance for mental mathematics and practical scientific work have improved the provision in both of these areas, leading to improved attainment.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children clearly enjoy learning and their achievement is good. There are excellent links with parents and carers and the pre-school groups on the school site and this means there is a smooth transition into school that helps children to settle happily and quickly get used to routines. The 'bring a dad to school day' during the inspection was very well attended. As well as being, as one father said, 'Great fun, worth a day off work', it also provided, as another commented, 'A fantastic opportunity to find out what they are learning and helps us to help our children to learn'. From their starting points that are at expected levels for their age, children make good progress and exceed the goals for all areas of their learning by the time they move into Year 1. Linking sounds and letters was correctly identified as the relatively weaker area in children's progress and training for all staff has led to more consistency in teaching. As a result, current assessment data indicate that children's attainment in this area of learning has improved. There are very positive, trusting relationships with adults and activities are well planned for the range of children's abilities.

Assessment of progress is carried out very thoroughly and used to inform teachers' planning although planning is not currently shared across the classes. There is a good balance of activities directed by adults and those where children make their own choices. This helps children to develop confidence and independence. One parent wrote that, 'A shy, disinterested child is now brimming with enthusiasm, keen to go to school and really speaking out and trying.' Teaching is good and support staff make a good contribution to children's learning. The outside area supports a good range of physical activities and is used well as an effective learning area by both classes. Very recent new leadership is already beginning to have an impact as seen in the plans to ensure a

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smoother transition for children as they move into Key Stage 1 and extending the opportunities for promoting boys’ literacy skills.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers who returned the questionnaire say that their children enjoy coming to school. Most are happy with their children's experience at school and all of them feel that the school keeps their children safe. The main concern from a few parents and carers was whether the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour but inspectors found that pupils' behaviour was outstanding and that they respond well to the school's effective behaviour policies. The inspectors fully support parents' and carers' positive views of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Anthony Roper Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 80 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 320 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	80	14	18	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	54	68	26	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	46	36	45	7	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	45	37	46	6	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	44	55	31	39	5	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	50	35	44	4	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	60	29	36	3	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	42	53	29	36	5	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	56	29	36	5	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	44	26	33	11	14	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	45	36	45	5	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	46	58	29	36	5	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	69	20	25	5	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Anthony Roper Primary School, Eynsford, DA4 0AA

I am writing to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school and for talking to us about your work. You are right to enjoy coming to Anthony Roper because it is a good school and many things are outstanding.

Your excellent behaviour and your very positive attitudes to learning help you make good progress. By the time you leave, you do exceptionally well in your English, mathematics and science. Well done for this! Your headteacher and all the teachers work very hard to make learning in lessons interesting and make sure that there are lots of excellent extra activities for you to do. We were very impressed with how well you know how to stay fit and healthy and with all the things you do to help the school and the local community. We were very pleased to see the way you all get on so well together and the fact that you care and respect each other in your work and play.

These are the things the school needs to do to get even better:

- help you to understand more about the world around you by giving you more opportunities to meet pupils from different backgrounds to your own
- make sure that all teachers use the assessments they make on your learning to plan work that is just right for you all
- make sure that the governing body makes more careful checks on all the work the school does, particularly to check all the things the school does to keep you feeling safe.

We were very impressed with your exceptionally good artwork and design and technology work displayed around the school. Thank you again for helping us and for making our visit to your school so enjoyable.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead inspector

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