

# West Borough Primary School

Greenway, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8TL

## Inspection dates

20–21 June 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The high aspirations of the headteacher are shared by staff and governors. This has led to rapid and significant improvements in teaching, learning and assessment, pupils' personal development and pupils' achievements.
- Leaders' very clear understanding of every aspect of the school ensures that they hold an exceptionally accurate picture of the school's strengths and priorities. They use training extremely well to address any weakness swiftly.
- The highly knowledgeable governing body is a considerable strength. Governors use their skills very effectively to hold school leaders fully to account for the impact of the actions they take.
- Throughout the school, from their different starting points, pupils make good progress. Standards are above average in English and mathematics.
- Children in the early years make excellent progress in a highly stimulating learning environment. The setting is expertly led by a very able and reflective leader.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Leaders recognise the individual needs of pupils quickly and identify tailored provision to accelerate and embed learning.
- Pupils enjoy their school life, especially the opportunities they have to learn through a variety of engaging activities across the core and wider curriculum.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are friendly, polite and respectful. They feel safe in their school and have built very trusting relationships with staff.
- Pupils' personal development is exceptional because the school provides very strong support and well-balanced opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use their good subject knowledge to develop pupils' learning in a wide range of subjects. However, pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by teachers' questioning, and explanations sometimes repeat what pupils already know.
- Teaching is typically purposeful. However, there are times when teachers do not closely monitor to check that planned tasks are stretching pupils. When this happens, learning slows.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
  - teachers' questioning consistently provides sufficient challenge
  - teachers monitor pupils' learning more closely and increase the challenge swiftly, when pupils are ready
  - teachers move discussions and explanations on when pupils have grasped what is being taught.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The high calibre of the headteacher and senior leaders ensures that there is a clear, consistent focus on continual improvement. Leaders have been relentless in their successful efforts to ensure that pupils are taught well. They have acted decisively to establish a culture of very high expectations and high-quality support for pupils. One parent commented: 'From breakfast club to the senior management they have all shown compassion and understanding to enable him to progress really well. A fantastic, happy school which I feel comes from a fantastic leadership team.'
- The leadership of teaching is highly effective. Senior and middle leaders use well-focused observations and in-depth scrutiny of a range of information to evaluate the impact of teaching on learning accurately and thoroughly. They provide very helpful and clear guidance to staff on how they could improve their teaching. Middle leaders make an important contribution by working with staff to refine their teaching skills through coaching and specific training. Training is continual and linked exceptionally well to individual staff targets and leaders' accurately chosen priorities for school improvement.
- English and mathematics subject leaders, and the leader responsible for special educational needs, are clear about the strengths and development points in their particular areas of responsibility. They are knowledgeable and closely monitor the achievement of pupils. They ensure that their areas of responsibility are continually developing and improving, evidenced by higher outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders monitor pupils' progress closely and swiftly identify where extra support is needed, providing it immediately. This ensures that pupils make good progress. Teachers, alongside subject leaders, are held closely to account for pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum offers a broad range of subjects that are taught effectively. Whole-school cross-curricular projects forge links between different areas of learning, generate excitement and prompt pupils to apply their skills in different situations. Leaders' design of the curriculum provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils develop a very secure understanding of the values that are central to being a responsible citizen in modern Britain. Leaders weave these seamlessly into pupils' understanding of the school's values and use every opportunity to illustrate them by pointing out when adults' or pupils' words or actions are good examples. For example, when a pupil showed a high degree of empathy in response to another pupil's feelings about a difficulty, this was recognised very quickly by their teacher and celebrated.
- The school uses its special educational needs funding effectively. School leaders ensure that the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified very quickly. Bespoke support is put in place to enable these pupils to make good progress from their various starting points, as well as meeting any well-being needs.
- Pupil premium funding is also spent very effectively, predominantly to provide extra teaching for disadvantaged pupils. Funding is also used to ensure that these pupils

experience opportunities they might otherwise not have, such as music lessons. Senior leaders work closely alongside the governors with responsibility for disadvantaged pupils to check pupils' work and achievements. This focus is ensuring that not only are differences diminishing between disadvantaged pupils and others but, in many cases, disadvantaged pupils are making better progress in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as in foundation subjects such as history.

- Pupils and staff gain from the excellent use of the additional funding for primary school sports. Staff learn new skills and techniques. One parent acknowledged the efforts of staff, saying of one member of staff, 'He goes out of his way to introduce new sports and encourages the children to be fit and healthy.' Pupils fully understand the importance of exercise for a healthy life and participate enthusiastically, whether competing against another school, attending a sports festival or joining a school sports club. Leaders carry out careful analysis of pupils' participation in sports and use this information to make sure that pupils who would like to are able to join in.
- The local authority has guided school leaders and governors effectively when support has been required. Leaders have shared their expertise with other schools locally and more widely. For example, the leader of the early years provision has supported schools with planning an effective curriculum for Reception children.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors share a very strong ambition to promote the school's core values of 'equality, responsibility, respect, resilience and challenge'. They routinely and thoroughly challenge school leaders about the progress of different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Governors use the very detailed and clear assessment information they receive exceptionally well in order to see the 'big picture', alongside the more precise details of the progress and achievement of small groups of pupils.
- Governors are extremely knowledgeable about the impact of additional funding, such as the pupil premium. They explore the effect that this funding has on pupils' achievement, health and well-being, and ensure that these additional monies are used wisely. For example, the special educational needs governor ensures that additional funding for this group of pupils results in more rapid progress.
- Governors regularly visit the school to see the provision for themselves, gain greater insight into how the school functions and evaluate how successful it is being in developing the learning of all pupils. This helps them to robustly challenge school leaders and each other.
- Governors choose their own training extremely carefully based on the priorities in the school improvement plan and self-evaluation. They have received training in, for example, safer recruitment and the analysis of pupils' attainment and progress information. This training helps them to discharge their statutory duties very effectively and understand fully the strategies for improving pupils' achievement.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- A very strong safeguarding culture exists within the school. The culture of care and protection extends beyond that of fulfilling statutory requirements. Leaders are committed to successfully identifying and addressing the safety and well-being needs of all pupils.
- Rigorous checks are made on staff and volunteers before they work alongside pupils. The single central record meets statutory requirements.
- Policies and processes to ensure that safeguarding is effective are robust and well established. Staff receive regular training in line with the latest guidance, and thorough, detailed safeguarding records are kept.
- The school carefully manages any concern raised and deals with external agencies effectively to ensure that they are appropriately responsive to pupils' needs. Interventions are timely and outcomes are closely monitored.
- Staff have a good understanding of how pupils may be vulnerable and know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's safety or welfare. All staff are acutely aware of the difficulties faced by some pupils and their families, and work closely with parents to help ensure that pupils are kept safe.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers have a good overview of what pupils should learn in all subjects and plan interesting lessons which pupils enjoy. Teachers usually explain and demonstrate how to carry out tasks clearly. Pupils say that this helps them to understand what they have to do.
- Teachers have established excellent relationships with pupils so that support and guidance is very effective. They know the pupils exceptionally well and encourage them to contribute to lessons through open dialogue. As a result, pupils want to learn.
- Teaching assistants are highly effective in their support of those pupils who start to fall behind, helping them to improve their learning.
- Teachers provide a good range of engaging writing tasks that immediately capture pupils' attention and interest. Teachers promote skills such as the use of punctuation and grammar well. Pupils cover a range of styles and purposes for writing so their skills are developed progressively. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they are consistently applying their skills to both short and extended writing tasks.
- Pupils are making good progress in mathematics, particularly in developing their calculation strategies and mathematical reasoning. Pupils who need help to further strengthen their language skills to enable them to reason mathematically and deepen their thinking are supported well.
- Reading is taught effectively. Phonics is taught and reinforced at every opportunity, with the younger pupils particularly. Lower-attaining pupils develop useful strategies, which help them to tackle 'tricky' words and correct themselves when they make mistakes. The school's approach to teaching more advanced reading skills, such as inference, is making a significant difference to improving pupils' understanding of what they read.

- Teachers' planning enables pupils to make good progress. Teachers in the same year group benefit from sharing ideas with one another. Activities for the most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, offer a good level of challenge. This is because learning opportunities for this group of pupils focus accurately on what pupils need to learn next. However, some questions in lessons do not put pupils' thinking under close enough scrutiny. There are also times when class discussions and explanations repeat what pupils already know, and this slows progress.
- Teachers typically have the same high expectations of pupils across the different curriculum areas. The rate of progress slows when teachers do not monitor pupils' learning closely and act on the information swiftly enough. This means that sometimes tasks do not meet pupils' needs and put their skills to the test.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have high levels of confidence which are very well balanced with an acknowledgement that everyone makes mistakes. They learn very quickly from mistakes because this approach is sensitively, but deliberately, used by all staff.
- Pupils advocate fairness and respect throughout the school. Pupils are exceptionally well mannered and polite to each other and to all staff. Those who join the school at different times of the school year settle in quickly and are made very welcome.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes benefit their learning. From a young age, they learn the importance of resilience and begin to understand how to persevere when learning is difficult. This creates the foundations for their positive approach to learning. It also ensures that pupils see themselves as learners and use this to help them choose and tackle tasks that will challenge them.
- The inclusion team, family liaison officer and behaviour manager, together with school leaders, have created a safe place for pupils where they can talk about how they feel. Staff are skilled at helping pupils to understand and manage their emotions, and to take responsibility. Through this dedicated provision and the inclusive caring culture in the school, pupils are helped to build their self-esteem.
- Parents and staff state that pupils are safe. Pupils, similarly, confirm that they feel very well looked after and secure in school. Pupils are well informed about keeping themselves safe when on bicycles, when crossing roads and when online. They know about the potential dangers of social media. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying and told inspectors that instances of bullying are extremely rare.
- Pupils enthuse about the wide range of sporting and wider opportunities the school offers, including after-school clubs. They are very proud of their achievements, for example pupils talk enthusiastically about doing well in a range of sporting competitions and during the academic days organised by a nearby secondary school. Pupils are equally proud of the responsibilities they have as play leaders and school council members.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour is good in classrooms and outside during breaktimes. Incidents of low-level disruption are extremely rare. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent, with pupils responding to instructions quickly, which enables them to learn effectively.
- Evidence in the school's logs shows that there are few significant behavioural or racist incidents. In the rare incidents, staff have taken effective action and recorded information appropriately. Adults support those pupils who require additional help to make positive behaviour choices well.
- Playtimes and lunchtimes are very well organised. Pupils have many activities that they can take part in and numerous areas of quiet and shade. Teaching assistants ensure that pupils are safe, supervising thoroughly the many areas of the field and playground.
- Leaders have taken strong, effective action to improve the attendance of some pupils. Historically, absence has been an issue, so leaders work collaboratively with local authority agencies to secure good attendance. Leaders have focused on challenging families to improve the attendance of their children and have provided support for those in difficult circumstances. As a result, the number of pupils who miss school is reducing.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils achieve well and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. In 2016, the proportions of pupils who achieved and exceeded the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 were higher than seen nationally. Work in pupils' books indicates that almost all pupils in both key stage 1 and key stage 2 are working at the expected standard for their age.
- In 2016, the progress made by pupils from the end of key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 was rapid, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils currently in school are making good progress from their starting points in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their individual starting points. This is because their needs are accurately identified and they are provided with appropriate support to help them overcome their difficulties. This well-focused support is closely monitored by leaders to ensure that the interventions of teachers and other adults are impacting positively.
- The most able pupils make rapid progress from their starting points. The evidence gathered during the inspection confirms that these pupils are typically moved on in their learning as soon as they are ready to do so, and are challenged through a wide variety of engaging tasks.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress, with the great majority meeting or exceeding age-related expectations in phonics, reading and mathematics. Outcomes for

the most able disadvantaged are good. This group progress quickly and attain above the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Early years provision

## Outstanding

- The early years leader ensures that, from the moment they come to school, children are known by all staff so that everyone understands individual children's learning and welfare needs, enabling them to settle quickly. She plans the curriculum with precision and creativity, making simple objects into excellent tools for learning. One parent, representing the views of many others, told inspectors, 'I love it.'
- The majority of children start in the Reception classes with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age, especially their early language and communication skills. Leaders are very alert to this and teachers make sure that the environment is alive with challenging learning opportunities. Adults model very positive behaviours and offer plenty of encouragement. Consequently, children behave exceptionally well and make outstanding progress. By the end of the Reception Year, most children have reached a good level of development and are fully prepared for moving into Year 1.
- The use of the pupil premium funding in the early years is very effective. Disadvantaged children progress very rapidly as a result of specific support for phonics and speech and language development, as well as tailored help with their individual learning needs.
- Outstanding teaching, timely support and intervention when children choose their own learning activities build on children's prior learning extremely well. During one typical session, there was a hive of purposeful activity. Among the many things on offer, children played in the water area, tackling an adventure trail for water as it flowed in different ways dependent on which 'valves' were open. Children were enthralled and totally absorbed, trying to solve the problem of 'which valve was doing what'.
- Teachers and other staff seek to continually develop children's communication, language and numeracy skills. For example, they extend and model speaking and number skills in many activities, where and when it is appropriate. Teachers check and annotate children's learning journals to ensure good coverage of all areas of learning. These annotations are highly evaluative and children's next steps in learning are very clearly identified.
- The school makes every effort to ensure that transition arrangements are helpful, informative and effective. Parents are viewed as an essential part of their children's development and parents say that their views and input are valued. One parent, describing their experience, said: 'She has settled in well with the help of the excellent teaching staff in her class and has made brilliant progress. We are particularly pleased with the school's emphasis on the core values including diversity, embracing challenge and kindness to each other. These are strongly upheld by the school.'
- Children concentrate very well and for long periods. They persevere, whether learning a new skill for the first time or consolidating their existing knowledge. For example, one child who was reading a challenging text showed no sign of giving up. The teaching assistant expertly supported her by giving 'clues' that meant she had to draw on her learning, and this helped her to make good progress.



- Staff take every opportunity to develop children's personal qualities. This encourages children to be very considerate of others and extremely caring. For example, one child became a 'Super Hero Bumblebee Saver'. He wanted to help and care for a bee that looked unwell. Under the 'Hero's guidance', he and the teaching assistant made sure the bee was safely away from the other children and given some honey.

## School details

Unique reference number	118568
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10032853

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	451
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Barker
Headteacher	Ashley Crittenden
Telephone number	01622 726391
Website	<a href="http://www.west-borough.kent.sch.uk/">www.west-borough.kent.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@west-borough.kent.sch.uk">headteacher@west-borough.kent.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	19–20 March 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is an above-average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average.
- Children attend the Nursery part time and the two Reception classes full time.
- There is an on-site breakfast club managed by the governing body, and an after-school club which is not managed by the governing body and is inspected separately.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. The inspectors also examined pupils' work in books, considered test and assessment information and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour, and the school's procedures, at the beginning and end of the school day, at lunchtimes and breaktimes, and when pupils were moving about the school site.
- Meetings were held with pupils, school leaders, governors and a local authority adviser.
- There were 44 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and 49 free-text comments. The inspectors noted these and also spoke with parents, pupils and staff during the inspection.
- A number of school documents were examined. These included information about pupils' achievement, evaluations of the school's performance and statements. Records relating to governance, staff performance management and the quality of teaching, external advice, behaviour, attendance, safety and safeguarding were also scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Clementina Aina	Ofsted Inspector
David Meades	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

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