

Parkside Junior School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112678
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378537
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead inspector	Derek Aitken

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 of pupils on the school roll	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Ward
Headteacher	Christopher Mansell
Date of previous school inspection	09 December 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Derek Aitken

Additional inspector

Wendy Harrison

Additional inspector

Andrew Lagden

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 17 lessons taught by 15 teachers. Scrutinies of pupils' work in English were carried out. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They heard pupils read, observed the school's work, and looked at documents, including policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of pupils, self-evaluation records and assessment information. The inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires from 118 parents and carers, 96 pupils and 25 staff.

Information about the school

Parkside Junior is larger than most primary schools. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is above average. The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress. A before-school club – 'the morning club' – opened in school in November 2011. This is managed by the school's governing body and was observed as part of this inspection. The school has the Health Promoting Schools award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school, which has made improvements in key areas of its work since its last inspection. It has regained the trust and confidence of parents and carers, the vast majority of whom would have no hesitation in recommending it to a prospective parent or carer of a new entrant to the school.
- Pupils achieve well. Rates of progress accelerate as pupils move up the school. Both boys and girls leave the school at the end of Year 6 with attainment that is above average in both English and mathematics.
- Teaching is good overall. It has some outstanding elements, such as the precise questioning of individual pupils, which helps to move pupils on in their learning. Respectful relationships between staff and pupils promote a calm, purposeful atmosphere. Where teaching is occasionally satisfactory, pupils have fewer opportunities to discuss ideas as a class and develop independence. There are some inconsistencies in the use made of targets and marking to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils behave well and are courteous and friendly to visitors. They collaborate well with each other in lessons. Pupils, and their parents and carers, feel that the school is a safe place in which to learn.
- Some opportunities are missed in the curriculum for pupils to acquire greater independence and leadership skills and so enable them to contribute more fully to their learning and school development. Initiatives for pupils to acquire a wider appreciation of the lives of peoples of different backgrounds and faiths in the United Kingdom and abroad are at an early stage.
- Senior leaders, under the clear, purposeful direction of the headteacher, have strong aspirations for pupils' achievement. In the last few years leadership systems have strengthened and the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been tackled well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Share best practice in teaching to ensure all aspects are consistently good or better by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to participate in whole-class discussions

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- making best use of pupils' targets and marking to guide and support pupils in their learning.
- to enable them to take greater responsibility for shaping and extending their learning
- making best use of pupils' targets and marking to guide and support pupils in their learning.
- Enhance the quality of pupils' personal development and cultural awareness by:
 - providing pupils with more varied opportunities to participate constructively in the life of the school and thereby develop their leadership and collaborative skills more fully
 - providing pupils with more first-hand experiences of the lives of pupils from different faiths and backgrounds in the United Kingdom and abroad.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers are correct in their view that their children achieve well over time in the school. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3 is broadly average and is a little higher in reading and mathematics than writing. Pupils' attainment and rates of progress increase as they move through the school and especially so in Year 6 where pupils benefit from some outstanding teaching. Pupils' attainment by Year 6 is above average and they make better progress than their national peers, especially in mathematics. Attainment in Year 6 is slightly higher in mathematics than in English, where girls, as is commonly the case nationally, outperform boys in reading and writing. This gap is, however, reducing. Lower-attaining boys in Year 5 and Year 6 who require extra support with their reading are making accelerated progress. The quality of boys' writing has also improved, as they have responded positively to adaptations to the English curriculum which now includes more 'boy-friendly' topics, such as reptiles. By the end of Year 6, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the very few pupils who speak English as an additional language also attain at higher levels than their national peers. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are challenged well and also make good progress. For example, in mathematics lesson where teaching was highly effective, these pupils logically and confidently talked through a variety of mathematical operations before successfully resolving a series of tricky problems.

By Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading is above average. Pupils enjoy reading a wide selection of texts from different genres, several of which they have chosen for themselves. More-able pupils read fluently in lessons, confidently inferring meanings from context and drawing parallels with information derived from other books. Year 4 pupils demonstrate the capacity to scan short paragraphs of information to infer meaning and discriminate correctly between human and physical features of the environment. Pupils in Year 6 make good use of opportunities to develop higher-level skills, such as data-interpretation, in mathematics lessons. Pupils' good achievement prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

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Quality of teaching

Parents and carers rightly believe that pupils are taught well and their children fully agree. Teachers' good expectations for pupils' progress and behaviour foster very secure classroom relationships and pupils' moral and social development. The curriculum provides a good framework for the development of pupils' basic skills and teachers' planning. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils' prior attainment well to construct lessons carefully to meet the needs of all groups of learners. They question individual pupils closely to promote their learning. Pupils enjoy their work because lesson objectives are usually set in contexts which engage their interest and practical tasks provide regular opportunities for them to discuss their learning with each other.

Teaching assistants support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs very effectively. They clarify the teacher's instructions and model the correct use of vocabulary to direct pupils' thinking. Pupils with a statement of special educational need are individually supported and this helps them to stay engaged and improve the standard of their work.

In the best lessons pupils make rapid progress because activities are well chosen to enable them to learn independently. For example, in an outstanding Year 6 lesson pupils had to justify their choice of staying in an ice hotel. They were required to provide convincing points of view, express their ideas clearly and critically evaluate counter-arguments in debate. All pupils were fully engaged and succeeded in making personal decisions based on constructive discussion. On a few occasions, teaching is only satisfactory and restricts pupils' progress and capacity to contribute to their learning. This occurs, for example, when teachers do not intervene sufficiently to summarise what pupils have learnt to enable the whole class to discuss ideas in depth and so extend their learning. While there is some outstanding practice in supporting pupils' learning through individual targets and marking, this is not a consistently exemplary feature of the school's work.

The curriculum has recently been modified to enhance pupils' appreciation of the arts and to offer them the opportunity to acquire technical skills and demonstrate perseverance, for example through whole-class violin tuition. There are, however, some gaps in planning for pupils' multi-cultural understanding. Consequently pupils' awareness of the lives and backgrounds of other peoples is imprecise.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' hardworking approach and good attitudes to their learning are important factors in their enjoyment of school and good achievement. Pupils adapt well to classroom routines in Year 3, make good friends quickly and soon demonstrate the capacity to settle to their tasks, even when not directly supervised by the teacher. Pupils in all years approach their work positively, by concentrating fully and paying close attention to the teacher. Good relationships between boys and girls enable them to work productively together and support each other's learning, for example in problem-solving tasks. A very large majority of pupils are self-reliant and require very

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little prompting to manage their own behaviour. This helps lessons to move at a good pace and enables teachers to focus on pupils who need intensive support for their learning.

The school's records of exclusions, which are rare, indicate that pupils respond well to the staff's guidance and expectations over time outside lessons. Pupils' questionnaires indicate that they feel safe in school. Pupils say that bullying of any kind is a rare event. They add that it is usually restricted to name-calling and they feel sure that they are well equipped with strategies to deal with it. They know who to ask if they have worries and are confident that adults can swiftly resolve their concerns. Parents and carers hold similar views. Pupils acquire a good understanding of factors that might endanger their personal safety as issues such as e-safety are covered in lessons.

Pupils contribute usefully to school life, as school councillors and as playground pals. Pupils' views are regularly sampled and used to inform the content of topics for study. Beyond this, opportunities for pupils to show initiative, develop a wider range of leadership skills and contribute actively to matters which affect their well-being are less fully developed. Over the last two years pupils' rates of attendance have climbed steadily from average to above average.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders, under the determined leadership of the headteacher, are ambitious for the school and work hard to secure improvement. Since the last inspection they have increased the rates of pupils' progress. They have improved the quality of teaching through training, redeployment of staff, decisive actions to combat underperformance and well-judged new appointments. The school's work is monitored well through an appropriate range of activities and development planning is firmly focused on reviewing the impact of actions and further raising pupils' academic achievement. Nonetheless, variation in a few aspects of teaching remains. Governors share leaders' strong aspirations for the school's success and work successfully with staff to enhance provision. They keep a close check on pupils' academic achievement, for example, through their innovative practice of attending the meetings teachers hold regularly to discuss pupils' progress. Accordingly, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

The curriculum is adapted well in almost all respects to meet the needs of all pupils and provide them with a good education. Leaders track pupils' progress efficiently. This enables them to identify groups of pupils or individuals who require extra support and to implement an effective range of interventions, including schemes designed to encourage lower-attaining boys to improve their reading skills. Non-academic outcomes are monitored less intensively. While pupils' moral and social development is developed well in lessons, some opportunities are missed to enhance and foster spiritual and cultural development in the wider curriculum.

Gaps in achievement between different groups are insignificant because the school

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effectively promotes equalities and tackles potential discrimination. For example, the successful work undertaken by the Child and Parent Support Officer is evidenced by demonstrable gains in the achievement, attitudes and attendance of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Pupils are cared for well. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. The morning club is growing in popularity and provides pupils with a constructive and enjoyable start to their day.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parkside Junior School, Ashbourne, DE6 1EJ

I would like to thank you for your help when the inspection team visited your school recently and for sharing your views with us, including through the questionnaires you completed. Yours is a good school and the following reasons are important in explaining why it is successful.

- You are taught well and this helps you to reach levels of attainment that are above average by the end of Year 6. You achieve well, especially in mathematics.
- You told us you feel safe and cared for by the staff. You play your part by behaving well. You have good relationships with each other and this adds to your enjoyment of lessons.
- The school is well led by the senior leaders. They keep a close check on your progress and step in quickly to help pupils who are having difficulties with their work.
- The school now provides a better education for pupils than it did when inspectors visited last time.

We have asked the staff to do the following things to help you achieve even better.

- Share excellent practice in teaching across the school to improve your independent learning skills. Make sure that teachers consistently make good use of your personal targets and marking to support your learning.
- Provide you with more chances to develop useful leadership skills. Give you more first-hand experiences to meet and learn about the lives of peoples of different backgrounds and faiths in the United Kingdom and abroad.

You can help by continuing to work hard and enjoy your learning.

Yours sincerely

Derek Aitken
Lead inspector

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