

# Parkside School

## Independent school standard inspection report

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## **Purpose and scope of the inspection**

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## **Information about the school**

Parkside School is a secondary day school, located in a residential area of Nuneaton, Warwickshire. It is owned by The Collegiate Centre for Values Education for Life, a privately owned non-profit-making limited company. The school provides education for male and female students aged 11 to 18 years who experience behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. All have statements of special educational needs and are placed at the school by local authorities. There are currently 11 students on roll, almost all in Key Stage 4, of whom one attends part-time. The school opened in October 2011 and this is its first full Ofsted inspection.

The school aims to 're-engage young people in education, to encourage students to become positive citizens, to reduce levels of offending behaviour and to develop a sense of respect and empathy for others'.

## **Evaluation of the school**

Parkside provides a satisfactory quality of education and is increasingly successful in meeting its aims. It meets the majority of the regulatory requirements. The curriculum is good and combines a suitable emphasis on the academic and personal development of students. Satisfactory teaching and assessment enable students to make satisfactory progress in their learning, including success in a range of external accreditation. The majority of students demonstrate good improvements in their personal development, including their behaviour and attitudes to school. Arrangements for their welfare health and safety, including safeguarding, are good.

## **Quality of education**

The curriculum is good. The activities provided for students cover all the required areas of learning, but some subjects, such as science and information and communication technology (ICT), do not provide as thorough an experience as others. The content and structure of the curriculum are kept under continuous review and a number of improvements have been introduced recently. There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics in which all students are entered for external qualifications, including entry level awards and

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents).

functional skills certificates up to levels equivalent to GCSE. Practical science forms a popular part of the curriculum and this is currently being organised into a logical scheme of work with the opportunity for external certification. ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) courses have been introduced this year, and these enable students to achieve further awards at bronze, silver and gold levels, based on students' individual interests and the skills required to prepare for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Individual students are currently working with interest on themes such as the environment, technology and expressive arts. The school has a clear commitment to the development of the whole person and meets this aim through relevant activities in personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE), and the development of emotional literacy. All subjects of the curriculum, and the way in which they are taught, successfully mix academic learning with the development of social and emotional skills.

Students have limited access to information and communication technology (ICT) as the numbers of computers in the school is limited. However, good arrangements are made, on a timetabled basis, for students to use computers in the local library and firm plans are in place to increase provision in the school during this term. Students enjoy the regular games lessons which contribute to improved levels of skill, together with an emphasis on physical fitness. A taught art course provides good opportunities for creative and expressive experiences, as a result of which some students are preparing for GCSE examinations in the subject. All students are supported in preparing for the transition from school to further education or employment, with suitable careers education and interviews with advisers in the local careers service. Additional courses provide useful certification in practical skills such as first aid, and workplace safety. These opportunities are appreciated by students. Off-site work experience is provided on an individual basis, dependent on students' expressed interests and readiness. The school is developing a range of suitable contacts with external providers and students talk with appreciation about the experiences they have had, for example, working in the construction industry.

The quality of teaching and assessment is satisfactory. There are a number of strengths in the teaching but the school's approach to assessment has been revised this year and is not yet providing sufficient, precise information about what students can do and still need to learn in core subjects. Students are taught, mostly on a one-to-one basis, by learning mentors. Relationships between staff and students are excellent and students comment on how staff 'give them space' when they are frustrated or anxious, enabling them to 'chill out' and return quickly to effective learning. Students concentrate well in lessons which are broken down into short, focused subject sections. A variety of resources are used to support learning but these do not include sufficient colourful, vibrant visual resources to stimulate interest and engagement. Staff are skilled at recognising when concentration is waning and re-directing learning so that time is used productively. Very good account is taken of the requirements set out in students' statements of special educational needs. Individual education plans, based on these requirements, are regularly reviewed and adjusted. This process provides a good structure for planning the next steps in learning for individual students, but staff are not sufficiently familiar with the language of National Curriculum levels to be able to assess and plan as precisely as

is required. As a result, learning is not always sufficiently challenging or focused on the most appropriate targets for improvement. These requirements have been identified in the school's development plan and a good programme of staff development, supported by a curriculum development group, is having a positive impact on staff levels of expertise and confidence.

As a result of satisfactory teaching and the breadth available in the curriculum, students make satisfactory progress. The students who left the school last year achieved a variety of certificates at entry level and levels 1 and 2 in the National Qualifications Framework. The current students have all achieved some early success as they prepare for similar certification. While the majority of students are working at levels below average for their ages, school data demonstrate that during their time all have made at least satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress from their starting points on joining the school.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Students recognise that they enter the school with disrupted previous experience as a result of their unwillingness to cooperate and behave appropriately. They are mostly reflective about their previous experience and identify how the style of relationships at Parkside allows them to develop respect and cooperation. Behaviour in lessons is good and students take their work seriously. They appreciate the 'space' they are given and the calm manner in which staff deal with any incidents. One parent wrote, 'The work Parkside has done with my son has been invaluable – particularly in terms of his anger management, where there has been very real and considerable progress.' Students understand and can identify how the daily colour-coded points system encourages them to reflect on, and improve, their work and behaviour. The school has good systems for recording students' progress in their personal development and these enable the school to evaluate its performance against its stated aims. Students improve their attendance during their time at the school. While overall attendance is below the national average, a number of students maintain attendance levels of over 90%.

There are good opportunities for students to take an active part in the school community, and increasingly in the wider local community. Students value their participation in the school's committee structure and understand their roles in monitoring behaviour, fairness and health and safety. A practical relationship has been developed with local elderly residents and students play their part in collections for various charitable causes. The school's provision for students' cultural development includes contributions from local public services, and visits to locations such as the local fire station. There are themes within the PSHEE curriculum which enable students to consider issues of diversity within the national and wider communities. Good plans are in place for cooperative and competitive activities with the company's multiculturally diverse school in Birmingham. The celebration of various festivals of faith are also identified in the school's calendar of planned activities. The school places a strong emphasis on the development of students as

responsible citizens and students recognise the impact that this has on their behaviour and attitudes.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students are good. The school has a systematic approach to the production and review of policies and procedures for the welfare of students. Staff are familiar with, and appropriately trained in, child protection, first aid and fire safety. Arrangements for safeguarding students during the absence of the substantive headteacher are thorough and appropriate. A much appreciated lunch is prepared for students each day and they are encouraged to take an active part in sporting activities. They are aware of the requirements for a healthy lifestyle, and are supported in tackling any personal challenges in improving their health. Arrangements for appropriate risk assessments within the premises and for off-site visits ensure students' safety, and high levels of staff supervision are maintained at all times. The school has prepared a suitable fire safety risk assessment and all routine checks on fire safety equipment and evacuations are regularly recorded. The effective implementation of policies for managing behaviour and preventing bullying is given a high priority and any serious incidents are rare and recorded appropriately.

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school has effective procedures to ensure the suitability of all staff and proprietors. A single central register of all checks is maintained to the required standard.

## **Premises and accommodation at the school**

The premises and accommodation provide a good environment for safe and effective learning. Classrooms are of an appropriate size to accommodate teaching groups of various sizes and there is sufficient space for practical activities, for example, art and science. There is sufficient outside space for play and recreation, including immediate access to an adjacent park. The number of washrooms, office spaces and a medical room for any student who may be ill, provide additional facilities to ensure the comfort of staff and students. The dining room and kitchen are of appropriate size to form a focal point for staff and students at lunch times. The premises are maintained in a satisfactory condition and there are suitable plans in place for some re-organisation and enhancement of teaching and leisure spaces.

## **Provision of information**

A good range of up-to-date information is provided for parents and carers. The schools' website includes access to all required school policies. Termly reports to parents and carers provide a suitable summary of attainment and progress in the various subjects studied, together with an evaluation of students' personal development. All required information about funding is provided for placing local authorities, and the school provides extensive information to support the review of students' statements of special educational needs.

## **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The school's policy and procedures for the management of any complaints meet statutory requirements.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.<sup>3</sup>

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- ensure that teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraph 3(d))
- ensure that there is a framework in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly, and that information from such assessment is utilised to plan teaching so that pupils can make progress (paragraph 3(g)).

## **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Implement plans for the systematic use of National Curriculum levels as the basis for the assessment and recording of students' progress.
- Increase the availability of computers to enable staff and students to extend the range of learning activities in lessons.
- Increase the range of stimulating visual resources to support learning.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made).

## Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education			✓	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs			✓	
How well pupils make progress in their learning			✓	

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary day school for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.		
<b>Date school opened</b>	25 October 2011		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 9	Girls: 1	Total: 10
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 10	Girls: 1	Total: 11
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£8,035 per term		
<b>Address of school</b>	Grove Road, Nuneaton CV10 8JX		
<b>Telephone number</b>	024 7632 6383		
<b>Email address</b>	parksidereception@btconnect.com		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Val Russell-Baker (Director of Schools)		
<b>Proprietor</b>	The Collegiate Centre for Values Education for Life		

**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.**



4 October 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of Parkside School, Nuneaton, CV10 8JX**

I would like to thank you for the way in which you helped to make my recent visit to your school a success. The inspection judged that Parkside provides you with a satisfactory quality of education. I was particularly impressed by the quality of relationships between students and learning mentors. The majority of you take your work seriously and you make good efforts to achieve your best. I was pleased to see that you are all studying for a number of awards, including valuable certificates in English, mathematics, PSHE and ASDAN. These will be of great help to you in finding college places or jobs when you leave school. You told me about how you appreciate the way in which staff help you to manage your anger and improve your behaviour. I was impressed with the patience shown by the staff and the positive way in which you respond to this.

There are a number of good things about your school, including the range of activities in your timetables, the way in which the school makes sure that you are safe and well cared for, and your behaviour during the inspection. I have asked the staff to make sure that they assess your work regularly in a way which provides clear information about what you have learned successfully and what you need to do next to improve in each of your subjects. I have also asked them to provide more colourful and interesting resources to add to those which you use already. I know the school is looking at ways to increase the number of computers in school and I have asked that this is done as quickly as possible.

You have an important part to play in helping the school to become even better. You can make sure your attendance is good, take your work seriously and provide your suggestions about how Parkside may improve your education. I would like to wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Young  
Lead Inspector