

Park Gate Primary School

Northmore Road, Park Gate, Southampton, SO31 6LS

Inspection dates 22–23 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- It benefits considerably from the very effective leadership of the headteacher who is well supported by senior leaders, resulting in strengths seen at the last inspection being built on well.
- Achievement is good and attainment rising, with increasing proportions of pupils reaching the expected and higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Effective monitoring and support of teaching ensure that teaching is good, sometimes outstanding. Pupils and their parents fully recognise its positive impact on learning.
- Teaching of the sounds letters make in words (phonics) is exceptionally good and the excellent start younger pupils make helps the majority of Year 6 pupils reach higher levels in reading.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour and excellent attitudes to school significantly support their learning. The school is a very happy and safe place to be.
- Comprehensive systems for checking the impact of the school's work on pupils' progress provide a very clear picture as to how well the school is doing. Good development planning ensures that emerging weaknesses are swiftly identified and addressed.
- Teamwork amongst staff and members of the governing body is very strong. Members are well informed and hold staff to account well, especially with regard to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Parents are very appreciative of the school, praising it in many aspects. In return, they support its work especially well, particularly through homework.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There has not been enough challenge to help a few pupils capable of doing better to reach their full potential.
- Marking does not always indicate how well pupils have done, nor how they can improve.
- In a small minority of lessons, activities do not sufficiently target all abilities. Not all staff regularly monitor and adjust activities during lessons to ensure pupils make the progress they are capable of.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, including a joint observation with the headteacher. The inspection team made a number of other short visits to lessons, heard a sample of pupils read and scrutinised pupils' written work.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff including senior and middle managers. A representative of the local authority was also spoken to.
- Inspectors took account of the 79 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school were also spoken to.
- They observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents including the school's records on current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to planning and monitoring and safeguarding were also looked at.

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bryan Meyer

Additional Inspector

Christine Taylor

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Park Gate is larger than the average primary school, with two classes in each year group.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action and the proportion supported at school action plus or a statement of special educational needs are all below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, additional government funding, is well below average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection there has been a large number of staff changes mainly due to promotion.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on and extend ways to raise attainment, especially through:
 - providing specific support for pupils whose attainment is just below average to help ensure they achieve that target
 - increasing the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in national tests by raising their level of challenge
 - giving pupils clear targets on what they need to do to reach the next level.
- Raise the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
 - lessons have a range of activities planned to meet the full ability range in each class
 - throughout lessons pupils' progress is regularly checked and their tasks adjusted to ensure maximum progress
 - marking consistently indicates what pupils have achieved and what they need to improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- At all stages most pupils make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. Parents are very pleased with the progress their children make.
- A few pupils capable of doing better do not reach their full potential because they are not fully challenged to make the best of their abilities.
- Children's skills on entry to Reception are at the level expected. By the time they enter Year 1 their attainment is slightly above average, securely so in early reading skills.
- Year 1 pupils perform better than nationally in the phonics screening test and most Year 2 pupils read well and with enjoyment. Their overall attainment is above average.
- Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading is well above average. Pupils read widely, with really good understanding, most exceeding the levels expected for their age.
- Year 2 pupils' handwriting, spelling and punctuation are good, as is their use of adjectives in their writing. Attainment is securely above average by Year 6. Pupils write confidently in a range of formats such as poetry or letters. They use language effectively; for example, building tension through effective vocabulary and connectives or varying sentence starters enliven their work.
- By Year 2 pupils' good understanding of place value ensures most are very secure at adding and subtracting numbers up to 100.
- By Year 6, attainment in mathematics is above average and pupils' calculations are usually accurate. Pupils work confidently with decimals, fractions or percentages and negative numbers, including when working with measures or handling data.
- Pupils apply their skills well in solving mathematical problems set by the teacher, but until recently had fewer opportunities for mathematical challenges that really stretch them.'
- The school's strong determination to promote equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination ensures a range of additional support is in place for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils from other ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. As a result, they achieve as well as their classmates.
- Pupil premium funding is effectively allocated to provide extra teacher hours, special group work or support for socially or emotionally vulnerable pupils. This ensures pupils who receive it are closing the attainment gap with their classmates well, as measured by their average point scores in Year 6 assessments, exceptionally so in mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Strong monitoring and support of teaching help maintain the quality despite recent staff changes. Parents agree teaching is good and provides very effective support for homework.
- Teachers' and classroom assistants' good subject knowledge ensures pupils quickly acquire new skills and concepts in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Lessons are generally well planned, although on a very small minority of occasions the learning intentions do not fully meet the range of ability. In outstanding lessons activities closely meet the needs of individual pupils and target those on the cusp of moving on to a higher level.
- Greater attention is now paid to setting really demanding activities to help more pupils exceed the levels expected for their age, but the full impact on their achievement is not yet evident.
- Pupils are very keen to listen, want to do well and exhibit a strong determination and resilience, making a major contribution to their learning.
- During lessons most adults monitor learning well although, occasionally, when pupils work independently their progress is not checked nor are tasks adjusted to ensure progress is good throughout the activity.
- Teachers are very skilled at using questioning or discussion to tease out pupils' understanding. Pupils themselves also become skilled at doing this in paired or group work.

- The quality of marking is variable. In English it makes clear what pupils have achieved and sets new targets for the next lesson. However, marking is less good in other subjects.
- The school has begun to use systems to help pupils recognise what they need to do to work towards each National Curriculum level in English and mathematics, but this is not yet fully established so it is more difficult for pupils to recognise how far they need to progress.
- Pupils at risk of underachieving, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who attract the pupil premium, are taught well both in class and in targeted group work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The school's very strong ethos, encapsulated in 'The Park Gate Way', and excellent behaviour management by staff are major factors in behaviour and safety remaining excellent over a considerable number of years. The school justly enjoys a high reputation in the community.
- Outstanding behaviour is uniformly seen both in lessons and around the school. Relationships with adults and between pupils are excellent. Pupils work exceptionally well together, are very polite, friendly and helpful and rarely have to be corrected by adults.
- Pupils and their parents report that bullying, mainly associated with name calling, is very rare and always dealt with swiftly and successfully. Consequently, pupils feel very safe, confident that adults always deal with their concerns, a strength which is fully validated by their parents.
- Pupils greatly enjoy school, enthusiastically taking part in a wide range of activities and are keen to make the very best of their time there. Attendance levels are above average, with very few poor or unpunctual attenders.
- Pupils have many opportunities to develop a strong sense of fairness, tolerance and respect which prepares them well for life in multicultural Britain.
- They are very secure about how to prevent risk, including cyber bullying when using the internet, and avoiding stranger danger.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's very strong skills in developing staff expertise, fully acknowledged by the local authority and used to good effect in supporting weaker schools, are clearly evident in the effectiveness of Park Gate's relatively new senior leadership team.
- Senior leaders' success in promoting good improvement is underpinned by a well devised management structure that ensures accountability and support across year groups and subjects.
- Evidence from the monitoring of teaching and pupils' work by both senior staff and subject leaders, and regular pupils' progress meetings, ensures that the school knows how well it is supporting the achievement of different groups.
- Effective plans are speedily put in place to tackle weaknesses, ensuring improvement areas from the last inspection have been fully addressed. Strategies are already in place to address current areas for improvement. The school is well placed to improve further.
- Strong management of teacher performance helps set whole school targets that are successfully raising achievement. Staff's strong commitment to professional development is supported well, including providing opportunities for working with outstanding practitioners.
- The regularly revised curriculum meets pupils' needs and interests well. Good programmes are in place to support pupils who need extra help and increasingly for those doing especially well.
- The excellent programme for pupils' personal, social and health education ensures pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively, especially the moral and social aspects.
- The regular updating of important training ensures safeguarding is very effective. Policies and

procedures, for example in relation to the vetting of staff and child protection, are consistently adhered to.

- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school, arranging effective training sessions in school when requested.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Very positive relationships between staff and governors allow a very good level of discussion to take place around aspects such as teacher performance and pupils' achievement. As a result, staff willingly respond to the challenging questions that governors ask. Consequently, not only do they hold the school to account well, but staff readily act on their suggestions. Governors are very thorough in carrying out their statutory duties such as regularly carrying out safety checks, tracking the impact pupil premium funding is having on achievement, monitoring teaching quality and ensuring that salary increases are well based on identified improvements in pupils' achievement or an area of responsibility held. Through links with different classes, governors are involved in a range of first hand monitoring and have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very committed to updating their own skills through training; for example, on analysing national data which help them identify how well the school is performing against other schools nationally.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	116033
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	403282

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	408
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard McMillan
Headteacher	Rebecca Kingsland
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 July 2008
Telephone number	01489 575444
Fax number	01489 573811
Email address	adminoffice@parkgate.hants.sch.uk

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