

Park Mead Primary School

Park Drive, Cranleigh, Surrey, GU6 7BH

Inspection dates 2–3 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because they do not all make enough progress in Years 1 to 4, especially in English.
- Teaching is not consistently challenging enough to ensure that all pupils, especially the more able, make good progress.
- The sounds letters make (phonics) are not always taught accurately, and pupils are not given enough help to improve their writing quickly.
- The leadership and management of teaching requires improvement because members of the governing body, and teachers responsible for looking after subjects or key stages, have not had enough opportunity to check that teaching and learning are always good enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Children learn quickly in the Reception classes because teachers provide them with interesting and relevant activities that support rapid learning.
- Teaching is consistently good in Years 5 and 6, where learning builds well on what pupils have already learned and pupils understand how they can improve their work.
- Pupils behave well, are kind and friendly, and say that they feel safe at school.
- The school provides good support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, enabling them to become responsible and considerate.
- Parents and carers are pleased with the school. They are especially pleased that members of staff are friendly and welcoming.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 22 lessons, with nine lessons being observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors took into account 75 responses to the online Parent View survey, a letter from a parent, and held informal discussions with a sample of parents and carers.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in 34 staff questionnaires.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kalwaljit Singh

Additional Inspector

Lee Selby

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- About one in 25 pupils has special educational needs and is supported through school action. This proportion is much lower than the national average. A further 10% of pupils are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, which is broadly average.
- Approximately a sixth of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (additional money provided by the government for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and the children of service families). This is broadly the national average. The school has no pupils from service families.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better, by:
 - making sure that all pupils, especially the more able, are always set work which fully challenges them
 - ensuring teachers adapt their approach within lessons when it is clear that pupils are ready to move on or their interest is waning.
- Increase pupils' progress in English, by:
 - ensuring teachers always pronounce the sounds letters make correctly so that pupils have better support with their reading in Years 1 and 2
 - making sure that pupils are given good support and clearer guidance on how to improve their writing.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring subject leaders, key stage leaders and governors keep a close eye on the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because not all pupils make enough progress between Years 1 and 4. Pupils, especially the more able, are not consistently expected to produce work of a high enough standard. For example, in some lessons, pupils complete the work they have been given too quickly and their learning is not extended.
- Attainment is above average by the end of Year 6, but pupils do better in mathematics than in English. In English, pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not make enough progress in learning about the sounds letters make (phonics). Pupils are given too many tasks that practise sounds they already know rather than moving on to new learning.
- Across the school, pupils' writing is not well enough developed. While handwriting is improving well, pupils are not improving the punctuation and content of their writing quickly enough because teachers are too willing to accept what pupils have done without challenging them to make it better.
- Attainment on entry to the school varies. This year, most children joined the Reception Year working within the levels expected for their age. Children make good progress in the Reception classes in all areas of learning. They become confident and independent, enabling them to make choices about their learning when working indoors or outside. Occasionally, more-able children could be challenged further, especially when writing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do not make as much progress as they should over time, although recent additional support is starting to have a positive impact because work is more closely matched to the needs of individual pupils.
- In 2012, there was no attainment gap for pupils in receipt of the pupil premium in Year 6 in English and mathematics and other pupils. However, the progress of these pupils is inconsistent across the school and attainment gaps remain in some year groups in both subjects.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good enough because teachers do not always expect pupils to complete work that has sufficient challenge. In addition, they do not change activities when it is obvious that pupils are ready to move on. Pupils are pleased with teaching, but a few say that they would like harder work.
- Teaching is more successful in mathematics than in English. In mathematics, pupils are given clear guidance on what they need to learn next and time is dedicated to practising skills when pupils find them difficult. In contrast, teachers provide limited guidance on how pupils can improve their writing and, when advice is given, they do not ensure that pupils take immediate action to improve their work.
- In Years 1 and 2, not all teachers pronounce sounds that letters make accurately and this does not set a good enough example for the pupils when they are learning to read. The school has recently adjusted teaching groups for phonics sessions so that pupils of similar ability are taught together. Despite this, work is not always sufficiently challenging for all pupils within each teaching group.
- There are examples of good teaching across the school, with the best teaching being in the Reception classes and Years 5 and 6. In the Reception classes, practical activities help children to want to learn. For example, children enjoyed learning about ordering numbers by playing races. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are involved in checking how well they are doing, and this helps them to know how to improve.
- All teachers foster good relationships with their pupils and manage behaviour well. They provide a good range of activities to engage the pupils' interest, and involve pupils well through paired work during discussions. For example, in mathematics in Year 2, pupils enjoyed helping each other when programming the 'bee-bots' to change direction.

- Teaching assistants provide valuable support for pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, when they are working in small groups.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' good attitudes towards learning and enjoyment of school are evident in their above-average attendance. They behave well most of the time and are keen to help each other on the playground and in class.
- Pupils, and parents and carers, agree that behaviour is good. Playtimes are amicable and pupils cooperate well with each other, for example during team games and when learning with a partner.
- The school promotes equal opportunities and has robust systems for tackling discrimination. Pupils talk with confidence about various types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and know what to do if they have any concerns. For example, the 'action station' provides an opportunity for them to report concerns anonymously when needed. 'Play buddies' are proud that they apply for this responsibility in writing and make pledges such as 'I will help people when they are hurt or whatever else.'
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and all the parents and carers who responded to the 'Parent View' survey agree. Pupils typically say, 'There is not really any bullying' and 'Teachers are good at sorting things out.' They have a good awareness of safety, as demonstrated in science in Year 6 when pupils knew to wear goggles and to stand back during an exciting experiment involving controlled explosions.
- Pupils respond well to the school's shared 'po-lights' values system and consequently demonstrate good manners and respect for others. They develop a good sense of belonging through 'celebration' assemblies where success is appreciated and rewarded.
- Occasionally in lessons, when work is mundane or too easy, pupils lose attentiveness and do not concentrate as well as they should. For example, in one class in Year 3, pupils had a simple drawing and caption writing activity that did not provide enough interest and challenge, leading to pupils chatting to their friends.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leaders have not taken swift enough action in the past to tackle the dip in pupils' progress, and new subject and key stage leaders have not been in role long enough to have been able to ensure that teaching and learning are consistently good.
- Nevertheless, leaders, including governors, have refocused their energies on pupils' progress and have demonstrated the capacity to improve in the recent developments seen in mathematics. Information on how well pupils are doing is being used more rigorously to identify pupils who are falling behind.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate, and this enables leaders to identify the right priorities for improvement. The monitoring of teachers' performance is more rigorous than in the past. Senior leaders are using a wider spread of information to check if teachers are doing well enough, and they are linking this to training and school development planning.
- Help for pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding includes one-to-one support, extra support in lessons and subsidising additional activities. Leaders are aware that the impact of this support is not yet consistently effective and are checking more closely that support is always good enough.
- The local authority increased the support for the school when the dip in progress became apparent and continues to provide appropriate support now that the school is improving.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Music, art and sport are strong features in supporting pupils to respect and care for others and appreciate the richness of cultural difference. Pupils develop a good understanding of values such as 'caring' in assemblies.

- The curriculum is not securing consistently good progress but does ensure that pupils leave school with skills in literacy and numeracy that prepare them for the next stage of education and later life. Links between subjects are being developed well and pupils benefit from a wealth of additional learning opportunities offered by clubs and educational visits.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Members of staff are trained to look after the pupils well and are checked for suitability for working in school.
- Communications with parents and carers have improved since the last inspection and they are positive about the school, especially the 'very friendly teachers and assistants' and the fact that it is 'like a big family'.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance requires improvement because the dip in progress, due to weaknesses in teaching, has not been monitored fully and tackled quickly enough. Governors have taken part in an external check on how well they are doing, and as a result are clear on what part they can play in improving the school and are ensuring that their training enables them to fulfil their responsibilities. They have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the provision for pupils and ask probing questions to support and challenge school leaders. It is too soon for them to be able to measure the impact they are now having on improving the school. Nevertheless, they know how the school compares with others and have a tight grip on spending, including the use of pupil premium funding. They are clear about how good teaching is rewarded and support the leadership team in securing improvement.

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	125293
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	412946

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	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian McDonald
Headteacher	Andy Clark
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 July 2010
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