

# Parkwood

Sulby Avenue, Pallister Park, Middlesbrough, TS3 8RD

**Inspection dates** 14–15 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Students make good progress in English and mathematics. They apply these subjects well to all lessons, leading to good achievement in other subjects.
- Students make particularly good progress in their social and emotional development. This means they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. In outstanding lessons students benefit from very thought-provoking activities which constantly challenge their thinking and understanding.
- Systems to track students' progress are rigorous, highly effective and consistently applied across the school.
- Students' behaviour is good. They show high levels of commitment to their learning. Students value their excellent relationships with staff. They feel safe and happy and enjoy their life in a warm, friendly atmosphere.
- The visionary leadership of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher has improved many aspects of the school's performance since its last inspection. Together, with the skilled and effective contribution of the management committee, there is good capacity for continued improvement.
- The management of teaching is highly effective. This has ensured that teaching has improved and, as a result, students are making better progress than at the time of the last inspection.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. In some lessons teachers' questioning does not always enable students to show how much they know and understand.
- Expectations of students to comment in their books on what they now know and have learnt are not consistently high.
- Leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching does not focus well enough on checking teachers' questioning skills or take enough account of feedback from students.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons taught by four teachers and two higher-level teaching assistants. One of the observations was undertaken jointly with the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspector, with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, made a number of short visits to lessons to observe the quality of teachers' questioning and discussion with students on how to improve their work.
- The inspector listened to five students read.
- The inspector held discussions with the students, senior leaders, teachers, members of the management committee and two representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at the work of the school, including students' behaviour, and analysed documentation in relation to attendance, safeguarding and the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness. The school's system for checking on students' progress and work in students' books were also considered.
- There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for the inspector to be able to view. The inspector met a parent during the school day and reviewed the school's own parental survey.

## Inspection team

Ann Muxworthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Parkwood is a pupil referral unit for students in Key Stage 3. It provides individualised programmes of learning and support to young people who have a range of vulnerabilities and specific needs.
- Students are referred either because they are permanently excluded from mainstream school or because they are at risk of this happening. All students are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs relating to their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There are a small number of students who have been missing from education.
- Parkwood is part of the Complementary Education Service, which is the alternative provision for Middlesbrough, together with Oaktree and Ashdale schools.
- Boys significantly outnumber girls.
- A well above-average proportion of students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding. The pupil premium is additional funding for those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority. There are, however, very few that are looked after by the local authority.
- The staff provide a breakfast each morning for students.
- Most students are White British. A below-average proportion of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a similar proportion speak English as an additional language.

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

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching, so that students can learn exceptionally well by:
  - ensuring that all teachers' questioning supports students in explaining their understanding of their learning and what they need to do to improve
  - making sure all teachers have high expectations of students to give clear explanations of their learning in lessons and in written comments in their books
  - ensuring leaders take greater account of teachers' questioning skills and feedback from students when evaluating the quality of teaching.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- The majority of students arrive with skills and levels of understanding below those expected for their age. Good teaching and the highly effective arrangements for engaging and supporting students in lessons ensures that they achieve well across the curriculum subjects. For almost all students, there is considerable improvement in their attitudes, aspirations, willingness to learn and attendance.
- Even though students have below-average levels of attainment when they join the unit, many of those that remain for a significant period of time make up for lost ground and leave with levels of attainment close to national expectations. Students, including boys and girls, the few students that speak English as an additional language and those looked after by the local authority, make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Students who are at risk of exclusion from their mainstream school, who arrive in Years 7 to 9, are skilfully managed and most settle well, despite their often complex needs and circumstances. The supporting and caring approach from staff ensures that those students with anxiety and attendance problems settle happily and gain confidence. The abilities and needs of students are assessed accurately and quickly when they arrive. This ensures that effective and personalised programmes in literacy and numeracy are planned and provided.
- A significant minority of students make exceptional progress in English and mathematics. For the vast majority of students, gaps in their knowledge and understanding are narrowed quickly. This includes those students entitled to pupil premium funding. Teachers set these students very challenging targets and track their achievement extremely well. This demonstrates that the school successfully promotes equality of opportunity.
- The staff take pride in supporting students to be proficient readers in order to succeed in the classroom. Daily reading sessions and high-quality programmes of support ensures that students make rapid progress in improving their reading skills, often in a short period of time.
- Achievement in mathematics is good because there is a broad range of interesting subjects and topics with mathematics activities which capture students' interest well.
- The students enthusiastically talk about their work in lessons, a sign of how much they are enjoying their learning. However, not all teachers give students enough opportunities to explain their learning in more depth so that they are clear about how well their students understand their work.
- All of the parents in the school's survey agreed their children made good progress. One parent was keen to share her view with the inspection team, 'A great school, who have helped him a lot. They have got him back into learning. I now know he is a Level 6. I am so pleased.'

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching across the school is good. The school's monitoring of the quality of teaching shows that it has improved year on year following the last inspection.
- The majority of lessons move forward at a good pace and offer a broad range of activities that engage students well. Students enjoy their lessons enormously and show positive attitudes to learning. Staff ensure there is a personalised approach to learning. This gives students good opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning, working independently or with a partner.
- Reading and writing activities are extremely well planned and lead to good, and often better, progress for the majority of the students. One student proudly showed the inspector the book she could now read and contrasted this with the book she had read the previous term, acknowledging how much her reading had improved. The student was eager to take an even more challenging book home to read.

- The majority of teaching is characterised by high academic expectations for all students and of their good behaviour. However, not all teachers check carefully enough students' views on their learning in lessons or their written work to find out how well they understand their work.
- In some lessons teaching is inspiring and thought-provoking. This is because teachers and support staff are skilled at meeting the very diverse needs of all their students. Students say that their teachers challenge them to work hard and to reach higher levels of attainment.
- An example of outstanding teaching was seen in an English lesson, where students were working on personalised activities. The teacher and teaching assistant constantly used effective questioning to support students in explaining their understanding of the use of grammar and what they needed to do to improve. This engendered great confidence in the students to produce some excellent written work. Not all teachers, however, always adopt this approach and so students' understanding of their learning is occasionally not as good.
- All staff effectively meet all students' behavioural needs. Well trained staff consistently use very effective strategies to get students to start and finish their work. This was seen in a mathematics lesson where a student was initially resistant to engage. Through a calm, supportive approach by the teacher the student successfully completed his work on partitioning numbers and made good progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- School leaders' philosophy on emphasising positive behaviour is clearly reflected in the implementation of the behaviour policy. The consistent approach in managing students' behaviour among staff, along with positive staff role models and effective use of praise, contributes to students behaving well and feeling safe at all times. Students respond to the high expectations of them for managing their own behaviour.
- Students generally work hard. Although new arrivals occasionally show unwillingness to work in lessons, this is quickly addressed and soon they respect staff and the caring support they provide. In discussions, parents, staff and students all speak positively about the good standard of behaviour in school.
- The breakfast club provided by the staff ensures that the start of the day is happy and welcoming. Students help each other, play together and are polite and helpful to adults. Staff use this time to assess and manage the needs of individual students before the school day begins. This enables them to identify and provide the support they need.
- Conversations with students reveal that they feel safe and well looked after. Like their parents, they do not see bullying as an issue. They know how to avoid risk and danger. They are very aware of the school's policy on mobile phones and inappropriate comments in texts. Students speak confidently about how staff are always on hand to help them if they have a worry or are upset.
- The school works extremely diligently to improve attendance, which is now in line with similar schools. Highly effective work with specialist support agencies and families, as well as offering meaningful rewards to students, has contributed to this improved picture.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The dynamic leadership of both the headteacher and deputy headteacher has improved the unit significantly since the last inspection. Together with the management committee they provide a clear vision for continuous improvement, high expectations of staff and raising students' performance. The quality of teaching, students' attendance and achievement have all improved.
- The school has good systems for checking the effectiveness of its work, which are clear, concise and insightful. As a result, leaders are clear about the school's strengths and how to improve it further.
- The continuous and relentless focus by the leadership team on improving the quality of teaching has resulted in a significant improvement in the quality of lessons and students' achievement

since the last inspection. However, although leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching in lessons, they do not always check carefully enough the teachers' questioning skills or take enough account of the feedback from students when evaluating the quality of learning.

- Performance management arrangements are fully in place and outcomes linked to relevant in-service training. Teachers are fully aware that they must meet their performance targets, based primarily on students' progress, if they are to progress on the salary scale.
- School leaders' clear and explicit belief that every child should make as much academic progress as possible is reflected in the bespoke and personalised approaches taken to planning the curriculum, which is very well matched to the needs of all students.
- The good range of enrichment within the creative curriculum, including visits, visitors and sports activities, adds richness and enjoyment to students' learning. This has a very positive impact on students' emotional well being and contributes very well to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school benefits from being part of a Complementary Education Service, which promotes the sharing of good practice. This has helped to maximise the use of resources and provided high-quality professional development for staff in and beyond the school. The clear picture of sustained improvement within the school is recognised by the local authority, which now provides light-touch support.
- Students, parents and staff feel they are highly valued in the school community. The school's ethos promotes equality of opportunity very well and tackles discrimination promptly.
- Safeguarding meets requirements. Effective practices help to strengthen the good care and support for students and their families.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The experienced management committee is effective, supportive and challenges both the provision and the local authority in positive ways. Members check the quality of teaching and understand the essential links between the quality of learning and attendance for all groups of students. A recent example of this was the review of teaching and learning with a headteacher on the management committee where her views on areas for development led to staff training. Members manage finance efficiently and understand the underlying principle for using pupil premium funding, although it is not explicitly identified in the budget by the local authority. They make effective use of performance management to continuously improve outcomes for students, including those known to be eligible for the pupil premium.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133571
<b>Local authority</b>	Middlesbrough
<b>Inspection number</b>	406530

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	28
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Chair</b>	Jan Brunton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Linda Harries
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 513180
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