

Parkside Community Primary School

Tennyson Avenue, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1EP

Inspection dates 19–20 June 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school is a welcoming place where pupils are keen to learn and make good progress. Their positive attitudes to learning prepare them well for their next schools.
- The Nursery and Reception classes give pupils a good start because activities are carefully planned to meet individual needs.
- During Key Stage 2, more pupils make the progress expected of them in English and mathematics than do so nationally.
- Effective additional support for pupils who find learning difficult, or who are at an early stage of learning English, is helping them to achieve well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is strong and, as a result, they are polite and behave well around the school and in lessons.
- Teaching is good overall and pupils say that teachers make learning 'fun' in many lessons.
- Pupils feel safe and are confident that adults will be quick to respond to their needs.
- The passion and vision of the headteacher and governors are succeeding in raising the expectations of what all pupils can achieve. Governors support and challenge the school exceptionally well.
- The school is securing its place at the heart of the community it serves because more families are supporting its high aspirations for their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding and sometimes teachers spend too long giving explanations and so progress slows.
- The work in lessons is not always matched accurately enough to the abilities of all pupils.
- Marking does not always give pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to move their learning on.

Information about this inspection

- Short lesson observations were made jointly by the inspector and headteacher in all six classes. The inspector visited significant parts of eight lessons involving all teachers, two jointly with the headteacher and another senior leader. The inspector listened to a sample of pupils read, both in and outside lessons. He also attended a whole-school assembly.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, a range of staff, a group of pupils and a representative of the local authority. The inspector observed the school's work and checked pupils' work, progress information, evaluation and development documents, safeguarding information, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and governing body minutes.
- The inspector took account of 41 responses to the school's questionnaire for parents and carers, completed in March 2013, and six questionnaires completed by staff during the inspection. Three parents also responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Steven Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Parkside is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding made available by the government for pupils eligible for free school meals, or who are in local authority care or from service families) is well above average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and a much higher proportion than found nationally is of Romany or Gypsy heritage. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The school runs breakfast- and after-school clubs.
- 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?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and raise achievement by making sure that:
 - the work always matches the abilities of the different groups of pupils, so that it gives them more opportunities to be actively involved in managing their own learning, for example pupils assessing their own and each other's work
 - teachers move pupils' learning on quickly by not spending too long on explanations
 - marking always gives pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to move their learning on and pupils are given the opportunity to respond to the guidance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The vast majority of parents and carers say their children make good progress. Pupils' achievement, including for those supported by the pupil premium and those of Romany or Gypsy heritage, is good and improving across the school. However, too few pupils are attaining the higher levels in the key stage tests for achievement to be outstanding.
- In mathematics, the attainment of pupils supported by pupil premium is broadly similar to that of other pupils but in English they are about one term behind their peers. This gap is narrower than in 2012 as the school has provided extra support for those pupils at risk of falling behind.
- A substantial proportion of children enter the school below, or well below, age-related expectations. In the Nursery and Reception classes, they learn in a well-resourced environment. Children are encouraged to make independent choices and practical activities, which they have opportunities to initiate, help to engage them in their learning for extended periods of time. This enables them to make good progress.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in the 2012 national tests was well below average in English, although most pupils were making at least expected progress from their well below starting points.. School information, which has been checked for accuracy, shows that attainment has risen strongly in 2013. The school monitors carefully the progress all pupils make. More pupils are making at least the progress expected of them in English, especially in writing, and in mathematics than do so nationally.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) is having a positive impact on pupils' early reading and writing skills. Pupils are developing confidence at a young age because they understand how to attempt unfamiliar words. Some pupils say they do not have the opportunity to read at home but those who do so enjoy reading.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from the early identification of their needs, well-planned group and individual tuition and close monitoring of their progress. Teaching and learning assistants are adept at providing the right balance of support to pupils. This enables them to make good progress and achieve well, including those at an early stage of learning English.
- At the end of Year 6, pupils are given their 'Learning Journey' containing samples of work they have done. Each pupil's folder provides a useful record of the progress they have made and what they have achieved during their time at the school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good overall, with some that is outstanding. Pupils readily testify to their enjoyment of lessons. However, there are still some variations and not all teaching is at the level of the very best. A small minority of lessons require improvement and the school has strategies in place to address this.
- In an outstanding mathematics lesson, pupils clearly understood what they were learning and why. Activities revolved around budgetary planning and they easily related this to a life-skill that would be useful to them. This secured their engagement in pair work for an extended period. The teacher then gave some pupils opportunities to talk about their learning, so the teacher and the pupils could assess the progress they had made. When asked about the lesson, one pupil said, 'I like to be challenged.'
- Information on pupils' progress is used well to spot those pupils in need of extra help, particularly those who may be in danger of falling behind.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. They often provide feedback on how well pupils are doing but do not always provide clear guidance on how they can move their learning on. When they do, pupils are not always given time to act on the guidance, and learning opportunities are missed.

- Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and accurately in lessons, for example through effective questioning, but do not always use the feedback from pupils to adjust their approach and so ensure the activities continue to match pupils' abilities. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own work, as shown in a Year 2 lesson. Pupils put their thumbs up if they understand, or thumbs down if they do not, so the teacher is able to help them. Pupils have too few opportunities to assess each other's work and so be responsible for their own progress.
- Pair and group work are regular features of lessons, where pupils discuss their work with their 'talk partners' to increase their understanding, although there are times when teachers spend too long in discussion or explanation, which slows pupils' progress.
- Work is appropriately matched to the learning needs of most pupils but the most able are not always challenged to reach the higher levels by having more thought-provoking tasks to do.
- Good levels of adult support are enabling specific pupils and groups of pupils, such as those who speak English as an additional language, to make good progress within lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school sets high standards for behaviour and pupils respond very positively. Pupils know how they should behave but told the inspector about occasional lapses from the exceptionally good behaviour seen during the inspection, which interrupted their learning. Such lapses, although rare, prevent behaviour from being outstanding. Pupils are confident that the school deals effectively with such matters and how they will be dealt with. One pupil gave the example: 'Waste a teacher's time, waste a pupil's time', to describe a detention at playtime. They also value the rewards for good behaviour, especially trips.
- Behaviour is very well managed by all adults, who apply the school's robust behaviour policy consistently. Pupils behave well within lessons, particularly those which engage their attention. In a few, pupils tend to listen passively to the teacher, rather than challenge each other's thinking or explore ideas.
- Pupils feel safe in school and say that 'the school works hard to keep us safe'. Incidents of any form of bullying are very rare and pupils themselves confirm that, should they occur, they are dealt with swiftly and effectively. All pupils spoken to knew who they would turn to for help should they need it. They know how to keep themselves safe and appreciate the advice the school has given them about how to stay safe when going online.
- Pupils say that they are listened to and are keen to contribute ideas to improve their school.
- Pupils value the opportunities the school provides to take on additional responsibility, such as being elected to the School Council, helping run the office at lunchtime and selling books.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs offer a wide choice of activities within a warm and caring environment and, as a result, the pupils flourish.
- A small minority of parents have concerns about behaviour and the way that bullying is dealt with by the school. Inspection evidence found that bullying is rare and, when it occurs, it is dealt with effectively.
- Pupils enjoy going to school because, as one said, 'you can learn' and this is reflected in their attendance, which has improved significantly since the last inspection.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's passion and drive to do the very best for all pupils is contagious. The vast majority of parents, carers and staff are very positive about the leadership of the headteacher and hold her in high regard.
- The school has a very accurate view of its work, which is used to inform school improvement planning. Leaders at all levels have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what it

needs to do to improve. Continually improving the quality of teaching and enriching the educational experience of all pupils provide strong motivation to drive the school forward.

- The headteacher and staff benefit from a local partnership of schools which is developing and strengthening opportunities for schools to learn from and support each other. This approach is strengthening the school's capacity to improve further.
- School monitoring over time reflects the inspection evidence that teaching is good, and regular training has brought about improvements, although leaders are very clear that there is more to do to move it to outstanding.
- The broad and balanced subjects and topics are being linked to develop a creative curriculum. They are carefully planned to make sure the National Curriculum is covered whilst giving pupils every opportunity to practise their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of enrichment activities, for example Djembe drumming, and were looking forward to a trip to Leeds Castle the day after the inspection.
- Staff actively promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination, and this is seen in the good progress now being made by all groups of pupils.
- The local authority has evaluated the school correctly and has provided appropriate support which the headteacher and school adviser work hard to secure.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is a significant strength. The Chair of Governors provides strong, dynamic leadership for the very skilled governing body and encourages all governors to contribute to the life of the school; as a result, pupils know who they are. They are realistic about where the school is now and want it 'to be the best school it can be for the pupils'. The governors are strategic thinkers and undertake appropriate training. Governors' aspirations for the future of the school are reflected in the rigour of their monitoring and the effective way they challenge the headteacher and other leaders. They have considerable understanding of all aspects of the school's performance and how it relates to schools nationally. They are aware of the quality of teaching and how teachers' performance links to pupil progress and to pay progression. They know how the school rewards good teaching and challenges underperformance. They have a strong focus on statutory duties and undertake careful audits to ensure that nothing is missed, including all aspects of safeguarding. Governors manage the budget carefully and use funding sensibly to bring about improvements. The impact of pupil premium, including that allocated for children of forces families, is checked regularly to ensure it is helping those pupils supported by it to achieve in line with other pupils.

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	118536
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	412981

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ajay Sharman
Headteacher	Irene Nierzwicka
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 October 2009
Telephone number	01227 464956
Fax number	01227 457908
Email address	headteacher@parkside.kent.sch.uk

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