

# Parkside Middle School

Stourbridge Road, Bromsgrove, B61 0AH

**Inspection dates** 27–28 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Given their starting points when they join the school in Year 5, most pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 8, their attainment is typically above that expected for their age.
- Support for pupils who qualify for additional government funding is enabling them to make increasingly good progress.
- Pupils achieve well because teaching is good, and also because they have good attitudes to school and learning.
- A consistent approach to pupils' personal, as well as their academic, development results in their good behaviour and understanding of how to be and stay safe.
- Leadership at all levels is good, from subject and key stage leaders to the senior leadership team and the governing body. As a result, the school's effectiveness, achievement and teaching have improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils in the specially resourced provision for those with autistic spectrum disorders make particularly good progress in their communication skills, and in their social and emotional development.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural values well.
- The school's positive approach and encouragement of its pupils is appreciated by their families.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is yet outstanding. Teachers do not apply the school's marking policy consistently and effectively.
- When leaders check on the quality of teaching, they do not focus sharply enough on marking and the ways teachers challenge pupils by asking questions.
- Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6 are not as high as those that pupils achieve in English.
- Pupils do not use their mathematical skills for a wide enough range of purposes in different subjects.
- Teachers are still developing the ways they share best practice in mathematics teaching.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 32 lessons; 27 teachers and their teaching assistants were seen. Six lessons were seen jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Daily registration time was observed and an inspector attended an assembly.
- Inspectors looked at examples of pupils’ work, and heard a sample of pupils from both Key Stages 2 and 3 reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils selected at random by the lead inspector; these included pupils from the school’s specially resourced provision for those with special educational needs. In addition, many informal opportunities were taken to talk with pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies and reports on the school’s strengths and aspects for development, monitoring records and reports, safeguarding and curriculum materials, information provided for families, and governing body documents. The school’s data, including records tracking pupils’ progress, were reviewed.
- Discussions and conversations were held with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and assistant headteacher, the school’s curriculum and pastoral managers, subject leaders, class teachers, staff from the school’s specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs, administrative staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The 39 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into consideration. Inspectors also explored the results of the school’s own, similar survey of 101 parents and carers. The 41 responses to the questionnaire for school staff were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Michael Miller, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Kim James	Additional Inspector
Beverley Mabey	Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- This school is a smaller than average-sized secondary school.
- It shares a campus with the Meadows First School; this is inspected separately by Ofsted.
- Most of the pupils attending Parkside Middle School are of White British heritage. A few come from other backgrounds, mainly from Mixed, Asian or Asian British backgrounds.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and none are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs; its Able Autistic Unit is known as the Mainstream Autism Base (MAB). The local authority allocates places for pupils at the unit from across the county. The MAB Unit provides for up to 12 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders at both Parkside Middle School and Meadows First School. There are currently six Parkside pupils, from Years 5 to 8, attending the unit. The inclusion manager from Meadows First School manages the MAB provision on behalf of both the local authority and Parkside.
- The welfare manager, on behalf of the governing body, arranges for breakfast and after-school club facilities to be provided each day. Other childcare is provided on site by The Castle Kids Club; this is inspected separately.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching, and enhance pupils' achievement, by:
  - ensuring a more consistent approach to the regular marking of pupils' work, including written feedback to pupils, to help pupils understand and remember better what to improve
  - checking on pupils' progress in lessons and, together with comments in the marking, identifying more clearly for pupils their next steps in learning
  - making sure that leaders' monitoring of teaching focuses on the quality of pupils' learning and their progress, the marking of their work and the way pupils' learning is assessed, including the use of questioning during lessons.
  
- Raise standards and pupils' achievement in mathematics by:
  - making sure that, across all year groups, pupils make as much progress in mathematics as they do in English
  - extending the opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in mathematics lessons and across a wider range of subjects
  - ensuring that the best practice in the teaching of mathematics is shared across the whole school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join the school in Year 5, in the middle of Key Stage 2, from a variety of first schools. They leave at the end of Year 8 before they have completed Key Stage 3. One of the school's strengths is that it works closely with its partner schools, and the local authority, to ensure pupils' attainment on entry and exit are accurately assessed. There is currently a major initiative across the local authority to promote partnerships between schools for such assessments.
- Parkside uses not only the information from its feeder schools but also a variety of commercial tests, which are independently assessed. The local authority promotes this as an example of the school's good practice. Such tests and checks on teachers' assessments at the start of Year 5 show that pupils' attainment in mathematics is often a couple of terms behind that expected for their age, and is around a term behind for writing. Attainment in reading is often better than expected; this helps teachers in accelerating pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy.
- Since the last inspection two years ago, the school's independently validated assessments and tracking of its pupils' progress has proved invaluable because of two factors.
- First, there was a problem with the administration of the Year 6 national tests in summer 2012, which resulted in limited, and potentially misleading, national data being provided for the school.
- Second, an issue with the teaching of a particular Year 6 mathematics class during the 2012–13 academic year led to underperformance by that particular set in the national tests. This was not typical of the rest of the year group, but it affected significantly the school's overall performance in mathematics. The headteacher and governing body have taken appropriate action concerning this, and the pupils concerned are now back on track to make good progress. There is a good momentum for enhancing further pupils' achievement in mathematics.
- School data and inspection evidence show that pupils typically make good progress year-on-year during their time at the school. By the time they leave at the end of Year 8, the attainment of most pupils is above that expected for their age. By summer 2013, most pupils were on track to gain at least expected levels by the end of Key Stage 3 in English and mathematics, and almost all were on track in science. A large majority were in a good position to go on to gain above-average standards.
- Although pupils are making good progress in mathematics during Years 5 and 6, their attainment in the subject is not quite as high as in English. Although catching up, there is around a term's difference. Pupils have not had as many opportunities to use their mathematical skills for a wide enough range of purposes in different subjects as, for example, they do in writing. This is one area where the school is still working to share good practice.
- Nevertheless, good achievement was seen in two Year 6 mathematics lessons, where pupils deepened their understanding of mean, mode and median averages. They gained significantly in confidence as they thought through and explained to each other how and when they might apply these different ways of calculating averages in real-life situations, such as exploring their shoe sizes. Pupils' attitudes to learning, and the way they cooperated in their groups, made an important contribution to their progress.
- There is often quite an overlap between disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs and those eligible for additional government funding through the pupil premium. School data shows that both groups of pupils make equally as good, if not better, progress than their

classmates in English and mathematics. In Year 6, in 2013, the attainment gap between this group and their classmates was very wide; it was around four terms in mathematics and writing, and it was five terms in reading. By the end of Year 8, accelerated progress has closed the gap between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and their classmates to around a term.

- The achievement of those pupils entitled to the pupil premium is enhanced by the thoughtful ways this and the Year 7 'catch-up' funding are used to provide enhanced support for those who are eligible. The school uses its tracking systems well to ensure early and effective interventions to boost learning. The use of the pupil premium is often imaginative. For example, a Key Stage 2 yoga lesson specifically for those for whom the school receives this funding makes an important contribution not only to the pupils' physical but also their mental well-being.
- Minority ethnic pupils, and those who speak English as an additional language, make equally as good progress as their classmates; this also reflects well the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity.
- More-able pupils are catered for well and make good progress. Pupils enjoy the regular, extra challenges set for them in many lessons and, where this happens, it enhances their progress. They enjoy that extra element which often tests them and gets them thinking about their work in more depth. Most pupils are keen to explore problems which will take them to the next level or extend their skills.
- Pupils in the MAB unit make good progress. Excellent progress was seen in a Year 8 MAB Unit English lesson. Pupils were challenged very well and had great fun exploring the nuances of some complex language when discussing the use of adjectives to enhance their writing. Some advanced thinking was shown in considering how the concept of molecules could be used as an alternative to the adjective 'little'.

## The quality of teaching

is good

- Discussions with pupils confirm that teaching is mostly good throughout the school. Pupils appreciate that teachers are usually clear about what they want them to learn. They also consider that their teachers and teaching assistants have much to offer them. Consequently, there are very positive working relationships and levels of mutual respect right across the school. This underpins securely the pupils' good attitudes to learning.
- Teaching in the MAB Unit is consistently good. The school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity is seen in the ways pupils from the unit are integrated into some mainstream lessons and activities. In a Year 8 information and communication technology lesson, the pupils concentrated most productively, alongside mainstream pupils, on researching computer games in order to design one of their own for younger children. This was a good example of the way unit staff enable autistic pupils to organise themselves and develop confidence in communicating their ideas.
- Many teachers are very good at asking questions of the pupils, both to check understanding and provide an extra element of challenge in a lesson; pupils show that they are keen to rise to such challenges. When pupils are hard at work, teachers and their assistants often question individual pupils and groups to check their understanding of what they are doing. In such instances, pupils appreciate the opportunity to raise any question they may have, and this promotes their confidence and success. However, such practice is not consistent across the school.
- The aims of each lesson are usually shared very clearly, and projected on the interactive whiteboards. This helps to reinforce important messages during lessons. Oral feedback is

helpful; pupils say this supports them in understanding their next steps in learning and what to improve. However, pupils' day-to-day work in exercise books and work folders is not always checked or marked regularly. This does not support pupils' learning in the longer term when their memory of the teacher's spoken advice and guidance may have faded.

- The school has a helpful marking policy and approach. However, this is not applied consistently by all teachers. Where the checking of pupils' work consists mainly of ticks, this does not give them sufficient guidance as to how to improve their work, or encourage them to respond adequately to their teachers' comments.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well in lessons and around the school, and have good attitudes to learning.
- There are very good working relationships between adults and pupils. This is because there is a consistent approach to behaviour management; pupils know exactly where they stand and rarely overstep any boundaries. Pastoral care is good, and the school's files confirm that pupils and their families receive good-quality advice and guidance.
- Pupils took responsibility for running most of a 'celebration assembly' and were confident when performing. There was some first-class singing by a group of Year 7 girls and an outstanding reading of their own poetry by three Year 5 pupils. The whole school was attentive to the performers and genuine in its warm applause.
- Pupils show a well-developed sense of sportsmanship, and can cope well when considering the views and situations of others which may be different from their own. In a 'creative curriculum' lesson in the hall, two Year 7 classes combined very well during team and leadership building activities. Physical disability proved no bar in the games played, and excellent opportunity was taken by the teams to discuss 'strategy'. Pupils learnt a great deal about their individual strengths and character, and how they can use this for the general good.
- Occasionally, pupils' attention in lessons wanders when they have too much information to deal with at once. They become unclear about what it is they are being asked to do and this limits their approach to and involvement in learning.
- The school has worked to ensure above-average attendance rates are maintained. The attendance of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is often better than that of their classmates; the school is rightly proud of this. Pupils come to school regularly because they know there will always be something of interest to do and learn.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Consequently, pupils know and understand well how to keep each other safe in school. Their general spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is good. Pupils develop well as responsible young citizens.
- Pupils know about the implications of bullying. The school's personal, social and health education programme has prepared them well to recognise and deal with different types of bullying and any threats they might meet in the wider world. When talking with a group of pupils from the MAB Unit, they showed an advanced understanding of e-safety and the pitfalls of social media.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The steady and secure progress pupils make, in both their personal and academic development, reflects the good teamwork among staff. Almost all staff who returned their questionnaire indicated that they are proud to be on the staff of the school and appreciate the way in which it is led and managed. This is echoed by parents, the very large majority of whom recommend the school.
- There is good leadership, at all levels, from subject and key stage leaders, through curriculum and pastoral managers, to the headteacher, senior leadership team and governing body. There is a common sense of purpose which underpins the school's good capacity for improvement. This is enhanced by the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity for all its pupils. This is illustrated very well through the ways MAB Unit pupils are integrated fully into the life and work of the school, and the commitment of pastoral managers to ensuring that no pupil is discriminated against in any way.
- The school is recognised by the local authority as showing good practice in the ways it works with its partner schools. This is demonstrated through the excellent ways the work of the well-managed and organised MAB Unit is integrated fully into the everyday life of the school.
- Shared lesson observations show that all members of the senior leadership team evaluate accurately the quality of teaching. The school's records show regular checks on the quality of teaching. Staff are positive in the ways they look to share good practice, and leaders are taking action to ensure a greater focus on this with regard to mathematics, especially in Key Stage 2. Discussions with staff show they are open to the sharing of new ideas.
- Leaders' monitoring of assessment is not consistent, including of teachers' use of marking and questioning in lessons. This means that the leaders have not ensured that the school's marking and assessment policy is implemented fully in practice.
- The school is working purposefully to ensure that the new National Curriculum, due to be implemented from September 2014, is developed effectively, and in good time. It is also taking the opportunity to review how all subjects may contribute more effectively to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, particularly through practical situations which have a direct relevance to pupils' everyday lives.
- The school has established a good range of subjects and topics which make pupils' learning interesting. The school's curriculum and pastoral managers have played no small part in helping to develop the school's approach to ensuring pupils' personal as well as academic development. Some of the lessons mentioned earlier in this report – for example, the yoga and team leadership lessons – resulted from their initiatives.
- The school is making good use of its primary sport funding. Pupils already benefit from some excellent indoor and outdoor facilities. The school's commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles is shown through the various awards it has received in these areas. Most pupils are already involved in a range of activities. The funding is being used effectively to provide enhanced staff training and the promotion of additional sports clubs and competitions.
- The local authority provides effective support for the school. It helps check regularly on the accuracy of pupils' attainment in the tests and teacher assessments the school uses, particularly when pupils join the school in Year 5. The local authority is also active in supporting networking generally between its middle schools.



**■ The governance of the school:**

- Governors contribute well to the school, both personally and professionally, and use their skills and expertise to good effect in support of the school. They play an active part in school life and are well informed about their roles and responsibilities. They place a clear priority on ensuring the school's legal requirements are met, including those for safeguarding. They have worked to ensure clear guidelines for staff as to how salaries are linked to pupils' progress, teaching quality and national *Teachers' Standards*. They monitor spending closely and check that pupil premium funding has a good impact on the achievement of eligible pupils, both through additional staff support and various enrichment activities. The governing body is committed strongly to the principles of middle school education, knows how the school is performing in relation to similar schools nationally, and works closely with the staff to ensure continual, further 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116959
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	440545

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9–13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	478
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Harris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Neil Mills
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 Jan 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01527 873660
<b>Fax number</b>	01527 836574
<b>Email address</b>	office@parkside.worcs.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2014

