

Park Primary School

Gloucester Road, Aldershot, Hants, GU11 3SL

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is average when pupils leave school.
- All groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points because of consistently good and sometimes outstanding teaching. Progress in mathematics has improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- Effective support for a substantial number of pupils who find learning difficult means that they are happy to come to school. They also feel very safe and well cared for. This contributes to the well above average attendance in the school.
- Guidance for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' good relationships with each other, their positive behaviour and attitude to school life and the value they place upon each other's successes.
- The warm welcome and support for pupils' social development is extended to parents and was apparent in their highly appreciative comments to inspectors. Parents have a high regard for the school. They are pleased with the good teaching and effective leadership.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors are an effective and dedicated team, fully committed to school improvement. They have ensured that all issues from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed.
- The governing body now comprises knowledgeable governors able to challenge and support the school's development.
- Strong partnerships with local schools, other agencies and the local community enrich pupils' learning and development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not yet have all the skills they need to become outstanding teachers and help pupils to make even faster progress.
- More able pupils do not spend sufficient time on their harder tasks so do not make the progress of which they are capable.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed eight teachers, learning support assistants and adults from outside agencies. They also talked to pupils about their work and heard individual pupils from Years 2, 4 and 6 read.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures and the school’s analysis of how well it is doing and how it plans to improve. Records of monitoring the quality of teaching and the minutes of the governing body meetings were also examined.
- The inspectors looked at samples of pupils’ work across a range of subjects and classes.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and groups of pupils. Individual pupils were spoken to in lessons and around the school. A meeting took place with a school adviser from the local authority.
- Questionnaires from 30 members of staff were analysed. The inspectors took account of the views expressed in the 25 online responses from Parent View and comments made by parents during informal meetings before school during the inspection.

Inspection team

Anna Sketchley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Green

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Park Primary School is smaller than the average-size primary school. Pupils attend from the immediate area.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported by school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above that found in most schools. This is additional government funding to provide extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. A very small number are in the early stages of learning English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- There is a breakfast club run by the school.
- A local authority Children's Centre exists on the same site as the school. Within the Centre there is a privately run pre-school and nursery. These were not inspected as part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Use the existing outstanding teaching to develop teachers' skills further and so increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in order to enable pupils to make even quicker progress.
- Ensure that the most able pupils make more rapid progress by creating as much time as possible for them to work at their harder tasks.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills below those typical for their age. They make good progress, especially in communication, language and literacy and number.
- Due to a welcoming, calm classroom atmosphere, children settle quickly and confidently into school life. They engage immediately with the well-organised and exciting learning opportunities provided both indoors and outside. Children quickly became engrossed in their task and showed good levels of concentration as they worked together to fill containers with water when learning about capacity.
- Learning to read is given a high priority and standards in reading in Year 1 are above average. Pupils readily use their knowledge of the sounds letters make (phonics) to help them read and spell unfamiliar words. Evidence gathered during the inspection showed the teaching of phonics to be good. Results of the national screening check on the progress of Year 1 pupils last year were above average.
- A rich selection of books encourages pupils to read widely for enjoyment. Older pupils discuss favourite authors and read enthusiastically with fluency and expression. They say small reading groups guided by the teacher have helped them to develop their skills.
- By Year 2, attainment is above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. Standards have been rising steadily for several years, building on the good progress children make in Reception.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made good progress from their starting points and attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Throughout the school, all pupils have made good progress since the previous inspection.
- Previous concern about pupils' progress in mathematics has been successfully addressed, resulting in substantial improvement. Particular attention has been paid to developing pupils' mental and basic computation skills. As a result, as observed during the inspection, pupils tackle long multiplication and work with decimals confidently.
- School information shows that the percentage of more able pupils reaching the higher levels of which they are capable in mathematics is increasing. However, sometimes these pupils spend too much time sitting through easier tasks at the beginning of lessons before they start on their own more challenging tasks. This means that they do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils at risk of not doing well and those who need extra help are well supported by highly trained and effective learning assistants as well as their teachers. This is resulting in pupils making good progress and reaching standards similar to those of the same group nationally.
- The gap in attainment between all other pupils and those supported by extra funds to improve their learning has closed for the large majority of these pupils. The attainment of a very small minority of pupils is affected by their significant learning needs but they make good progress from their starting points.
- The support for vulnerable families and pupils is outstanding and parents spoke highly of the positive help they are given to ensure that their children make the best possible progress they can at school.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because a few pupils, especially the more able, do not make the more rapid progress of which they are capable.

The quality of teaching is good

- An exciting curriculum, built skilfully around a wide range of high quality books, involves pupils imaginatively in their learning. As a result, they are keen to begin their tasks, settle quickly and listen attentively. For example, pupils in Year 4 made rapid progress when writing their own settings for a story because of their study of the book 'The Journey Home'.
- Learning tasks are very clear so pupils know and understand exactly what they are to achieve. Using statements stuck into their books prior to the lesson enables pupils to check their own progress as they work, so they know how well they are succeeding.
- Sometimes more able pupils do not begin their harder tasks quickly enough and spend too much time listening to learning that other pupils need to practise.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge and the effective skills of learning assistants enable them to ask searching questions so that pupils can move on quickly in their learning.
- Opportunities for pupils to explain their answers fully, especially in mathematics, mean that teachers can judge accurately how well pupils understand their tasks and their learning.
- Classroom displays, such as tips on how to solve a mathematical problem, number facts and letters and the sounds they make, all help pupils if they are stuck.
- Thorough marking of pupils' work is consistent throughout the school. Pupils are very clear about how to improve their work because of teachers' comments. Pupils are expected to respond to marking and make corrections, taking some responsibility for their own progress.
- A wide variety of well-planned homework tasks ensure that pupils have creative opportunities to practise their skills at home.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because some teachers do not yet have the skills necessary to help pupils, especially the most able, learn as rapidly as they could.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. School records show that strategies to help pupils with challenging behaviour have been successful and there have been no exclusions in the past year.
- During the inspection, pupils were well behaved in lessons, polite and well mannered. Older pupils enjoy leading games at playtimes and all pupils get on very well together on the playground. Comments from parents, adults in the school and pupils fully support this view.
- Pupils meet together regularly each week for discussion in mixed-age groups called 'circle times'. This encourages younger pupils to learn from older ones to have a very good understanding of right and wrong and the importance of cooperation and caring for each other. This strong provision for all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development promotes excellent relationships, trust and mutual respect.
- Pupils told inspectors 'We learn things and lessons are fun! It's not boring!' Their well-above-average attendance demonstrates just how much pupils thoroughly enjoy school.
- Many responsibilities enable pupils to play a full part in the life of the school as, for example, members of the school council and 'Play Leaders', and by helping in the dining room at lunchtimes.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Involving pupils in opportunities to check the safety of the playground and equipment heightens their awareness. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and this view is fully supported by parents.
- Incidents of bullying are rare. Parents told inspectors that any problems are immediately 'nipped in the bud' and pupils say with great emphasis 'we do not call each other names!' They know exactly who to go to if they are worried or distressed and that an adult is immediately on hand to listen and help them.
- Pupils demonstrate a very good understanding about internet safety, especially when at home. They are very clear about telling an adult to 'turn it off' if they feel that something is not safe.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety is not outstanding because although pupils are not allowed to disrupt lessons, a very small minority are not always fully engaged in their learning so do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's relentless drive to improve achievement has been wholly successful. Together with very competent senior leaders and a skilled governing body, she has built an exceptionally strong school team wholly committed to further improvement.
- Previous underachievement has been effectively tackled by thoroughly checking the school's performance across all of its work. The accurate knowledge of what needs to be done next is driven forward by clear plans for action that support rapid development.
- Securing successful completion of plans to deal quickly with issues from the previous inspection demonstrates that the school has the capacity to sustain its current position and promote further good achievement for pupils.
- The headteacher measures teachers' performance rigorously against national standards, and training needs are identified quickly. Specialist help from the local authority and other external advice to improve writing and mathematics are providing teachers with good teaching skills.
- Regular meetings using information about pupils' progress ensure that teachers know exactly what pupils need to do next to secure good achievement but some do not yet have the skills to secure the outstanding teaching that would enable pupils to make even more rapid progress.
- Subject leaders manage their subjects well and comprehensive plans are in place to ensure that the flow of learning is not interrupted when teachers are absent and cannot manage their subjects for long periods of time.
- Teaching a range of subjects using themes based on high quality children's books presents pupils with engaging and exciting learning opportunities. Good links across subjects enable pupils to practise their writing and mathematical skills well. Music is a strength of the school.
- Attending such clubs as dance, drama, Lego, cheerleading and choir enhance learning and make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal and social development.
- The breakfast club is a well-managed facility and helps pupils develop their social and physical skills as well as ensuring they have a positive start to the day.
- Improvements in pupils' fitness levels, the chance to try a wider variety of sport and the value of teamwork have all been made possible by the effective use of additional funding for sport.
- Local school partnerships enabling teachers to meet together regularly to share ideas and enhance their skills, projects with the local community such as singing with the Welsh Guards and the Military Wives Choir and help from external agencies all support and enrich pupils' learning and development.
- Equal opportunities for different groups of pupils are promoted well and the school does not tolerate any form of discrimination. The governing body and the school staff make sure that safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously and fully meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Seeking to improve their leadership role, governors reformed the governing body to include a number of co-opted members bringing many useful skills from the world of work. Together with specific governor training, they now effectively monitor the work of the school, resulting in them being very well informed about its performance. Using this knowledge, governors are able to pose challenging questions as well as offer the school their full support. A robust understanding of the spending and impact of additional funding ensures that this is used to maximum benefit. Rigorous objectives set for the headteacher are monitored thoroughly throughout the year and reviewed annually. Teachers' pay and the progress pupils make are carefully compared and considered to ensure good value for money. Governors carry out their statutory duties very diligently.

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	116233
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	443094

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brenda MacCormack
Headteacher	Kate Steven
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 March 2013
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