

Parkwood Hall

Beechenlea Lane, Swanley, BR8 8DR

Inspection dates

6–7 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2
Overall effectiveness of the residential experience		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- School leaders know their school well because they regularly monitor the quality of teaching and carefully check on everyone's progress.
- Governors have a clear vision for the school. They ensure that all its resources are used effectively to help students achieve as much as possible.
- Students' behaviour is good. They are positive in lessons and show care and respect for each other and for the school environment at all times.
- Teaching is typically good. Teachers regularly check students' progress. They plan lessons which have a close focus on helping each individual to learn more.
- The school's work to keep students safe is good. Students feel safe and are well supported by the staff.
- From their low starting points, students make good progress. Some do so well that they attain good Entry Level passes or qualifications in the Open College Network programme.
- Good teaching in the sixth form helps to prepare students very well for the next phases of their lives and learning.
- The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Opportunities for learning in colleges and in the wider community are not widely available to all students in the sixth form.
- Teachers and their assistants do not use signing consistently in all lessons and activities.
- Record keeping in a few areas of safeguarding and student welfare for residential students is not of the highest possible quality.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 11 lessons. On almost all occasions, they were accompanied by the principal or his deputy. The social care inspector met students in the residences.
- Meetings were held with students, school governors, teachers and residential care staff. The views of the 11 parents who responded to the online Parent View survey were taken into account. Sixty-nine members of staff returned the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors heard students read in class and watched the school’s steel band at a rehearsal. Inspectors joined pupils at lunchtime and in an assembly.
- Important school policies were reviewed, including those which relate to safeguarding and school improvement planning. Inspectors looked at the school’s own systems for checking on the quality of teaching, care arrangements and students’ achievements.
- Minutes of governing body meetings were scrutinised. An inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at students’ workbooks and files in their classrooms and reviewed the photographic and other displays to learn about their activities at school and in the wider community.

Inspection team

Bob Pugh, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Michael Buist	Additional inspector
Sophie Wood	Social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Parkwood Hall is a special school for students aged 8 to 19.
- The school has very recently become a trust school, with foundation school status.
- The school's partner local authority, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, places a very few students at the school. Other students have homes in neighbouring authorities in the south-east and in London.
- Approximately one third of students attend as weekly boarders. Others travel to school from home each day.
- The proportion of students who are supported by the pupil premium is well above the national average. This is additional funding for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- About one third of students are from backgrounds which are other than White British. A few have homes where English is not the main language.
- The school makes use of alternative provision at West Kent College, Tonbridge for a small number of students in Year 14.
- There have been a number of changes on the school's governing body since the previous inspection. The Chair of Governors took up his post at the beginning of this term.
- The main school building and residences are set in extensive grounds.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in the sixth form by accelerating plans for extending highly personalised learning programmes so that they are available for all students in Years 12–14.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding, by ensuring that all staff use signing consistently to help students improve communication skills.
- Improve the quality of practice and record keeping in respect of safeguarding and student welfare by:
 - reviewing safeguarding policies to ensure that they are better connected, and expand upon the current number of designated persons throughout the school
 - ensuring that all risk assessments contain sufficient detail
 - ensuring that welfare plans accurately describe specific concerns and how they will be addressed.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The principal and deputy principal know their students very well because they regularly observe them at work in class, in performances and in sporting events. They receive effective support from senior colleagues in their work to improve standards.
- Middle leaders have worked hard to improve learning programmes and activities organised for students. As a result, there is a much greater emphasis on teaching skills such as money and time, which, along with good careers advice, prepares students well for their lives beyond school.
- School leaders provide accurate feedback to teachers following their observations and in performance management meetings. As a result, the quality of teaching is consistently good. School leaders have high expectations of everyone, which they demonstrate by organising regular staff team reviews of what is successful and what should be improved.
- Teachers and other staff speak highly of the good professional development opportunities for improving their skills to help students make better progress.
- Good leadership and management have inspired staff to plan and implement activities which are well suited to students' current and future living needs. They make sure that students develop good reading skills. This helps develop students' confidence and prepares them well for life in the wider community.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. There are good relationships and the school does not tolerate any discrimination. Good teaching about different faiths and lifestyles deepens their understanding of their place in society and of life in modern Britain. Students' speaking, listening and performance skills are good, because of effective teaching in music and drama.
- Although school policy documents are regularly reviewed, a record is not always made of when they have been reviewed. This means that the due date of the next review is not clear.
- School leaders have ensured that all resources, including additional funding available for disadvantaged students, are used to good effect to help improve literacy and numeracy skills. There are missed opportunities for strengthening everyone's achievements in communication, as signing is not used consistently.
- The local authority provides suitably effective light-touch support for this school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide good support and challenge. The governing body consulted stakeholders about the school's future. This led to the development of 'trust' status. Governors visit regularly, meet staff and students and monitor achievement. As a result, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have undertaken appropriate training to help them interpret data on students' progress and to ensure that arrangements for keeping students safe meet all requirements.
 - They have implemented effective systems for teachers' performance management, including that of the principal. They use reports on the quality of teaching to ensure that highly effective teachers are properly rewarded. Governors ensure that the school's finances are efficiently managed. They ensure that additional funding such as the pupil premium has a positive impact on students' achievement. The improved provision of speech and language therapy is a good example. They ensure that every student enjoys an equal opportunity to use all available resources.

The behaviour and safety of students are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. They settle very quickly in lessons. Interruptions to learning are rare, and over time, students learn to cope well with distractions such as computer equipment not working as well as it should. Those taught in alternative provision behave well.
- As a result of good organisation of learning activities, students demonstrate positive attitudes in lessons. They also behave well at break and lunch times. They show great pride in their work and in their school. They make the most of the enrichment activities which are available every day during the lunchtime break, such as extra sport and music clubs. Their behaviour during an extremely well-organised rehearsal of the steel band was outstanding because they were keen to perform really well.
- A review of documents, including behaviour logs, and observations during the inspection demonstrated that staff do everything they can to keep students safe. Their good recording systems show that on those occasions when bullying occurs, appropriate action is taken to support all concerned through extra support in class or the residence and by ensuring that staff and students have plenty of time to talk about what

has happened.

- As a result, the overwhelming majority of staff, parents and students say that behaviour at school is good.
- The accurate records which are maintained by senior leaders provide evidence that improved students' behaviour over time leads to a quickening in their rates of progress.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. By reviewing case studies, inspectors observed how the school works with parents and other agencies to keep students safe and concluded that safeguarding is effective. There are good routines to keep students using alternative provision safe.
- Sufficient staff and governors have received advanced training in safeguarding. All staff receive training in child protection. They sign to say that they have read and received the school's policy.
- Risk assessments relating to activities on the school site as well as in the wider community cover a wide range of possible risks. However, they do not always include information about individual students.
- Students learn about bullying, including online bullying, in class and in their living areas. They welcome the opportunities to discuss what has happened with staff, when incidents occur. As a result, they are aware of different kinds of bullying and they say that they feel safe and are well supported by staff, when they have concerns.
- Although there are some improvements needed in safeguarding record keeping for boarding aspects of the school, generally there are effective recording of incidents that occur. Follow-up includes thorough debriefing sessions for staff and students. This adds to students' sense of feeling safe.

The quality of teaching

is good

- As a result of careful monitoring, school leaders know that teaching is effective. They have successfully addressed underperformance.
- Teaching is never less than good. The teaching of English is particularly effective. This is because teachers know their students well and ensure that planning is precisely focused on what each one needs to learn.
- Good teaching in literacy and numeracy helps many students to make good progress in reading and writing. The well-organised 'numbers for life' programme helps students to handle money confidently, read receipts and check their change. Occasionally, opportunities for helping students to understand even more are not fully exploited, because teachers and their assistants do not use signing consistently to model good communication. This means that not all students are taught to use different means of making themselves fully understood.
- In a discussion about remembrance, one older student used her good word-building skills to read some suggestions about the people and events she liked to remember. On another occasion, students who were making preparations for the Christmas fayre were encouraged to share their good ideas for fund raising with others. Because they were given such good guidance, students participated enthusiastically, speaking confidently and listening respectfully to others.
- Regular recording of students' progress in reading provides teachers and their assistants with precise information about how well each one is doing. Teachers and their assistants use questioning to good effect and gain a good understanding of how much everyone has understood. They use students' responses to shape the next part of the teaching. Teaching assistants offer good coaching in lessons, for example on food preparation, by supporting and challenging students to try hard to help themselves.
- Teachers provide good feedback to students on how much progress they are making during lessons and when they mark their books and files.

The achievement of students

is good

- Students, including those from ethnic minority groups, make good progress from their low starting points. Some students gain good qualifications such as Bronze or Silver Art Awards, which provide them with the equivalent of a GCSE pass. A few students do particularly well in music, providing a foundation for them to continue with this interest when they leave.
- More able students gain a range of accreditation through Entry Level and Open College Network programmes.
- Disadvantaged students sometimes do better than others in the school as a result of the extra resources

made available to them from additional funding. Teachers' assessment of progress is accurate because school leaders check their assessments with colleagues from other schools, to add strength to their own analysis.

- Good arrangements are in place for tracking students' progress, including the involvement of parents and students at annual review meetings. Teachers make regular checks on individuals' skills. As a result of frequent recording of students' reading abilities, teachers are able to challenge those making more rapid progress to do even better, and to support those who are struggling by introducing new teaching methods and different resources.
- Through their careful monitoring, school leaders are able to identify strengths and weaknesses and to implement changes where necessary. A good example of this can be seen in the development of 'numbers for life' teaching, which resulted from observations that students' progress in mathematics was not as consistently strong as that seen in English. As a result of this change, the rate of students' progress in mathematics is improving. Those students who attend alternative provision achieve well.
- Parents are delighted with their children's achievements at the school. One commented that the school is 'amazing' and is helping her daughter 'to become an independent adult in years to come'.
- Students are very proud of their achievements. In discussion with an inspector, they talked enthusiastically about the travel-training programme which challenged them to plan a journey using public transport from school to the Royal Albert Hall, where they were to take part in a concert.

The sixth form provision

is good

- Students make good progress during their time in the sixth form. Those in Year 14 attend alternative provision at a local further education college. The courses they follow provide them with a good understanding of what will be expected of them when they move on from school. These opportunities are not yet available to students in Years 12 and 13.
- Students in Years 12 and 13 have opportunities for learning in the wider community but they are not yet as rich and varied as those available for the very oldest. This is because school leaders have not yet fully implemented their plans for strengthening teaching and broadening the range of activities available for all students in the sixth form.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is good. Planning is precisely focused on the needs of individual students. Good use is made of facilities in nearby towns to help students develop important numeracy and literacy skills. For example, students learn the value of notes and coins by using cash dispenser machines, or by using money to pay for ingredients to cook snacks and meals.
- Recent improvements to leadership and management and to teaching in the sixth form have led to more opportunities being made available for students to learn about life in modern Britain such as respect for others and tolerance of different faiths and lifestyles.
- Students in the sixth form are very positive in school. They behave well and their behaviour when on visits is exemplary. They are very good ambassadors for their school. They take great care to look after their classroom and outdoor areas and are proud of their achievements.
- School leaders ensure that students are safe when attending the alternative provision by providing transport, staff to accompany them and suitable support.

Outcomes for boarders/Outcomes for residential pupils	are outstanding
Quality of boarding provision and care/Quality of residential provision and care	is good
Boarders' safety/Residential pupils' safety	is good
Leadership and management of boarding provision/Leadership and management of the residential provision	are good

- Outcomes for residential students are outstanding. Students make outstanding progress in personal and social development. They become more confident in their own abilities as a result of the care and guidance of staff.
- Students learn to take greater responsibility for their health needs and make appropriate decisions and choices in line with growing up.
- Their ideas and contributions are respected by school leaders. Many take on leadership roles confidently and enthusiastically. A culture of respect is embedded.
- Over time, students' challenging behaviours improve because staff understand how best to manage this and do so consistently. Students benefit from the wide and extensive range of social and leisure opportunities available. Staff do their best to promote individual talents and interests. Many students engage in activities at school that they would not otherwise have the chance to try.
- The quality of care is good. All staff see themselves as educators, which helps students to achieve realistic yet challenging goals. Staff have high expectations and aspirations for students.
- Meticulous assessment processes ensure that new students join the school well equipped to make a positive start. Care plans and behaviour management documents recognise individual needs. Students make good contributions to these plans. However, some information and guidance for students in these plans is not always sufficiently detailed.
- Students are happy with catering arrangements. They readily engage with the catering manager, who demonstrates a thorough understanding of personal dietary needs.
- There are abundant opportunities for students to shop for, prepare and cook their own nutritious meals. Residential accommodation is secure, comfortably equipped and routinely refurbished.
- Arrangements for keeping students safe are good. Recruitment procedures are robust. All staff demonstrate a strong understanding of potential safeguarding risks for students and reporting procedures are clear.
- The responsibilities of designated persons are well known. Arrangements meet the national minimum standards. However, to meet best practice it is recommended that the school considers expanding the number of these posts.
- School leaders review and amend important policies regularly. However, they do not always record that they have done so on the policy documents. Child protection training occurs with regular updates. Some risk assessments do not contain specific information about individual students.
- Behaviour management plans are meticulously followed and effectively monitored, which leads to a reduction in incidents of challenging behaviour.
- Residential leadership and management are good. The leadership team is cohesive and dedicated to making further improvements. Governors' monitoring visits to the residences are challenging and recommendations for improvement are routinely made.
- Good arrangements for waking-night provision ensure that these staff are actively included in students' care planning, for which all staff receive appropriate guidance, support and training. They are eager to improve upon their own good practice.
- All national minimum standards are met.

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>

Boarding/Residential provision		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	100548
Social care unique reference number	SC051164
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	447894

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Type of school	Special
School category	Foundation special
Age range of pupils	8–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	30
Number of boarders on roll	29
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Walkington
Principal	Nick White
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 June 2012
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