

# Parkfield School

20–22 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, BH1 3NL

## Inspection dates

21–22 April 2015

| Overall effectiveness          | Previous inspection: | Not previously inspected |   |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---|
|                                | This inspection:     | Requires improvement     | 3 |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Requires improvement     | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good                     | 2 |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Requires improvement     | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Requires improvement     | 3 |
| Early years provision          |                      | Requires improvement     | 3 |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement is too variable between subjects and year groups. Several of the most able pupils fall short of reaching the standards of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not always set suitably challenging work which builds closely on what pupils already know, or use marking effectively to help pupils improve their work.
- Children in the early years have too few opportunities for using outdoor space to support their learning and development.
- There are not yet agreed approaches to teaching reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- Subject leaders are not fully involved in monitoring and improving learning in their subjects.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning by senior leaders is not always sharp enough to provide an accurate picture of pupils' learning. This leads to the school's self-evaluation of some aspects of its work being too generous.

### The school has the following strengths

- The Principal and governing body have a clear vision for the school and have overcome considerable challenges to secure the establishment of the school.
- Standards are rising and achievement is improving. The introduction of a new scheme to teach reading is having a positive effect on the learning of pupils up to Year 2.
- Senior leaders, governors and staff have the capacity for completing the improvements needed to take the school on the next stage of its journey.
- Pupils are well behaved and work hard. They enjoy school and cope well with the constraints of the current accommodation.
- Respectful relationships between pupils and staff underpin the school's harmonious and safe environment.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language receive high quality support which is accelerating their learning.
- The achievement and attainment gaps between disadvantaged secondary-aged students and their peers are narrowing.
- The distinctive curriculum, with its focus on the environment and global issues, is effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning across the school, including 19 lessons, of which five were observed jointly with senior leaders. They conducted learning walks to check on the teaching of reading and the use of marking. In addition, they heard pupils read and observed them receiving targeted help to improve their reading and numeracy skills.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff, governors, pupils and an external adviser. They also gained pupils' views by meeting with pupils in groups and through informal discussions around the school and in the playground.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents including information on pupils' progress, teachers' planning, safeguarding policies and procedures, and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- The views of 105 parents and carers expressed through the online questionnaire (Parent View) were analysed. Discussions were held with a few parents when they brought their children into school.
- The views of 24 staff who responded to the staff questionnaire were also considered.

## Inspection team

Andrew Redpath, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jacqueline Good

Additional Inspector

Noureddin Khassal

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Parkfield School opened in September 2013 as an all-through academy free school. It is smaller than most primary and secondary schools. Currently, the school provides education for pupils from Reception to Year 10. The early years comprises two Reception classes for four-year-olds who attend full time. There are currently no pupils in Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. The number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils receiving special educational needs support is broadly average.
- The school currently occupies a former office block in the centre of Bournemouth and plans are under way to move to a new site on the outskirts of the town in September 2015. It will eventually cater for pupils aged four to 18 as part of its planned growth.
- There is no requirement for the school to teach the National Curriculum programmes of study. The school follows the Montessori approach for children in the early years and in Years 1 and 2, and the International Primary Curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Secondary-aged students study the International Baccalaureate and a range of GCSE courses.

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

- Improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring senior leaders monitor teaching and learning more rigorously and give more detailed guidance to teachers on how to improve their practice
  - using the expertise of subject leaders more effectively in monitoring learning and in developing plans for improving their subjects, especially in English and mathematics in the primary classes.
- Improve teaching and learning by:
  - checking pupils' understanding more thoroughly and planning work which builds closely on what pupils already know
  - developing suitably challenging extension tasks for pupils who have the potential to reach or exceed age-related levels in reading, writing and mathematics
  - using marking more consistently to give pupils specific suggestions for correcting their work and making sure suggestions for improvement are followed up
  - establishing agreed approaches to teaching reading, writing and mathematics and using them consistently across the school.
- Improve provision for children in the early years by:
  - providing more opportunities for the use of outdoor space to promote children's physical development
  - using a wider range of activities to promote children's communication and language development.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the roles of middle leaders are not fully developed. Middle leaders are not monitoring their subjects consistently and developing suitable plans for improvement across the school. Where plans do exist, for example in mathematics, they are sometimes brief and lack clear targets with milestones for achieving them. Senior leaders are aware of this issue and are reviewing the roles of middle leaders.
- Governors, the Principal and staff are ambitious for the future development of the school and have established a culture of improvement. Senior leaders have good systems for checking the progress of pupils throughout the year. They know how well different groups are performing and use the information to tackle underperformance. For example, a new approach to improve reading has been introduced in the early years and Key Stage 1 classes which is showing early signs of success. Senior leaders have rightly identified raising the attainment of more able pupils as an area for development.
- Senior leaders monitor teaching regularly each term. They have a broad understanding of the strengths and areas for development, although in some cases subsequent action plans for improvement with identified professional development lack detail.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced in both the primary and secondary areas of the school and it supports effectively the school's stated aims. Pupils often study international topics and the impact of actions on different societies and on the environment. Learning is enriched through a wide range of trips and visits, for example to Corfe Castle, the Tutankhamun museum in Dorchester and to a local 'Streetwise' project which promotes the safety of younger pupils.
- There is a strong focus on cooperation, resilience and respect in all areas of the school. Staff make great efforts to include all pupils in the life of the school, such as in end of term drama productions. Different faiths and cultures are celebrated at assemblies and through visits to places of religious worship, for example a church, mosque and synagogue. These activities prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain and have a strong impact on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The pupil premium is used effectively to provide additional support for English and mathematics. It is having a particularly positive impact on raising standards for disadvantaged students in secondary classes.
- The primary school's physical education and sport funding is used well to support participation in sport. Additional coaching, for example in swimming, gymnastics and tennis, has been provided and the impact is measured through pupils' increased participation in competitive sports and the achievement of swimming certificates.
- Students receive appropriate careers advice and guidance. Some would appreciate a wider choice of optional subjects at Key Stage 4.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Staff have had suitable child protection training and new staff are subject to checks to make sure they are suitable to work with children.

### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is effective and governors provide a high level of challenge to senior leaders about the school's performance, particularly when judging pupils' attainment. The Chair, Vice Chair and other key governors visit the school regularly and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Governors have a good knowledge of how the pupil premium funding is spent and monitor closely its impact on those pupils for whom it is intended.
- Suitable arrangements are in place which link the performance of staff to pay progression and management responsibilities. The underperformance of staff is tackled effectively.
- Finances are managed prudently and the school operates within its budget.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

### are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils typically display positive attitudes to learning in lessons, respond quickly to staff instructions and conduct themselves sensibly around the school.
- In accordance with the school's aims to foster social skills, teachers often set pupils tasks which require them to work in pairs and small groups. Pupils generally do this effortlessly and display a high level of maturity. Occasionally, pupils lose concentration and become distracted in lessons when the work does

not challenge them fully or when they spend too long on an activity.

- Younger pupils understand the meaning of bullying and report, 'It does not happen very often here.' Some report that they feel uncomfortable when coming into contact with much bigger and older pupils, for example when playtimes are shared, or when they use the stairs at the same time. Inspectors judged that pupils managed the narrow stairways and made use of the limited outdoor space well. However, there was a lack of equipment for use at some playtimes.
- Pupils learn to take responsibility, for example when they are involved in school councils, or when older students help younger pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
- Staff with responsibility for managing pupils' behaviour keep appropriate records of any incidents. As the school has become established and routines commonly understood and accepted, the number of exclusions has fallen sharply since the first year and is now low. This is at a time when the school roll has increased by about a half.
- Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Some pupils have joined the school with a history of low attendance which affects the overall absence rate. The school is using effective measures to work with families and follow up persistent absence.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils report that they feel safe. They say that staff are approachable and that they know who to contact if they have a concern. High profile activities, such as anti-bullying week, reinforce pupils' safety. In response to the on-line questionnaire, a very large majority of parents reported how their children were happy and safe at school.
- E-safety is taught effectively and pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet.
- Fire drills are held regularly to make sure pupils know how to evacuate the building in an emergency.

### The quality of teaching

#### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it does not yet ensure consistently good achievement for all pupils.
- Lessons are generally calm and purposeful. Teachers typically provide lessons which capture pupils' interest and often have a sense of fun; for example, in mathematics when they finish the lesson with a quiz to review learning.
- Staff have a positive approach to finding creative solutions to the challenges presented by the current limited facilities. For example, in science, when they teach pupils to make a 'non-bake cake' which requires no cooking.
- Teachers often plan different activities for pupils with varying abilities in the class. However, the planning of these activities sometimes has insufficient focus on what pupils are expected to learn. As a result, activities do not always stretch the most able pupils by presenting them with more challenging problems. Some other pupils are not set work in small enough steps to make sure that they understand fully before moving on to the next topic.
- Teachers typically use questioning well to make sure pupils understand the work. Occasionally, they do not give pupils enough time to explain their ideas fully and thereby extend their learning.
- Teachers and learning support assistants have developed quickly their knowledge of how to teach phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) and early evidence shows that this is helping to improve reading. They also possess a good range of skills which are helping pupils with those at the early stages of learning English. The school does not have a writing policy and handwriting is not yet modelled or taught consistently across the school.
- Teachers' marking varies between classes. Teachers often make positive comments when correcting pupils' work. However, pupils do not always follow up suggestions for improvement and some are not sufficiently clear about their broader learning targets. Pupils' work is generally well presented.
- Pupils take home reading books regularly which, together with daily reading in school, is raising standards. Homework in most other subjects is not set regularly and its use to support learning is underdeveloped.

### The achievement of pupils

#### requires improvement

- The achievement of pupils requires improvement because there is too much variation between the achievement of different groups and some do not achieve as well as they might.
- In primary classes, senior leaders have used the Year 1 phonic check (of how well pupils understand

letters and the sounds that they make) and National Curriculum levels to establish a baseline for pupils and to show progress. This information shows that pupils' attainment was generally below the level expected for their age at the end of summer term 2014.

- The most recent assessment information, scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of teaching and learning show an improved picture. Pupils are now making better progress. They are improving their reading following the introduction of a recognised phonics programme in the early years and in Year 1, and many use their phonic knowledge confidently to read new words.
- Achievement in mathematics and writing is more variable between primary classes. In particular, the most able pupils are not reaching the higher levels in English and mathematics of which they are capable. In part this is due to the lack of agreed policies for teaching handwriting and mathematics, and because the work in some classes is not always demanding enough for pupils.
- The school does not yet have a full year of reliable information for the small number of disadvantaged pupils in Year 2. The most recent information shows that the pupils are making better progress than their peers in writing, but less in mathematics. Currently there are no pupils in Year 6.
- In secondary classes, students' progress is measured using the Middle Years Programme linked to the International Baccalaureate curriculum. Current evidence shows students are broadly making progress in line with national expectations.
- Disadvantaged secondary students are making faster progress than their peers following targeted support for mathematics and English. Senior leaders are aware that the most able pupils do not yet achieve their potential and they have introduced grouping by ability to help focus more effectively on meeting their needs.
- Across the school, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Several receive daily individual support from highly skilled staff. These sessions are just the right length of time to maintain pupils' concentration, are carefully planned to build on previous learning in small steps and use a wide range of practical activities to reinforce learning.
- Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are catching up quickly because they have their learning needs assessed accurately and receive daily support based on a recognised programme.

### The early years provision

### requires improvement

- The early years provision requires improvement because the organisation of the accommodation does not allow for the free flow of learning between the indoor and outdoor environments, which limits the overall learning experience for children.
- Children are happy and confident to attend school and settle in quickly. They behave well and are eager to help each other and take on responsibility, for example when they tidy away at the end of a lesson. There is a good ratio of staff to children and safeguarding arrangements are robust.
- Teaching and children's progress require improvement. The lack of outdoor provision limits children's overall progress, and particularly their physical development. Children are making faster progress in reading since the introduction of a recognised programme for teaching phonics. Staff do not yet have a consistent approach to teaching early writing or letter formation. Opportunities for the development of communication and language are not routinely built into activities.
- Appropriate systems are in place for checking the progress made by children. Assessments are accurate and provide a firm basis for planning children's learning. Children who require additional help, have a disability or special educational needs are identified and given support quickly. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is captured in detailed learning journals.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Planning to make sure that all the areas of learning are covered fully is still being developed. Parents are kept informed by emails and texts and have the opportunity to talk to staff at the end of each day. Routine communication, for example letting parents always know in advance the daily learning theme, is less well established. Some parents would appreciate more detailed advice on how they might help their children learn phonics.
- Children are well prepared for their transfer to Year 1. This is helped by their regular work alongside older pupils on joint activities.

## 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> | 139596      |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Bournemouth |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 450104      |

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

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | All-through                         |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy free school                 |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–15                                |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                               |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 420                                 |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                  |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Dr Amita Sen Gupta                  |
| <b>Principal</b>                           | Mr Terry Conaghan                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | N/A                                 |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01202208370                         |
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