

# Parklands Community Primary School

Little Sutton, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH66 3RL

<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 May 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- This is a dynamic and progressive school which is well led and managed by a headteacher who has been relentless, and successful, in her ambition of making Parklands a good school.
- Together with senior leaders, staff and governors, the headteacher has addressed weaknesses identified from previous inspections, ensuring that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has improved.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, their attendance is high and they are confident and resilient learners. Pupils have many opportunities to show that they are mature and responsible citizens.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that pupils make good progress in their learning.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught well. Pupils read widely and have a good knowledge of different authors and writing styles.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their understanding of British values is outstanding.
- Pupils benefit from a stimulating and engaging curriculum which captures their interests.
- Pupils' attainment and progress have improved year-on-year for the last five years at the end of both key stages 1 and 2.
- The progress of the vast majority of pupils was at least good by the time they left school at the end of Year 6 in 2015.
- Parents and carers are highly positive about the school. They are of the view that their children are safe, happy and progressing well.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They make good progress and are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The theoretical understanding and mathematical reasoning of some pupils is not as well developed as it should be.
- A few of the most-able pupils are not yet fully challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Occasionally, early years staff miss opportunities to develop and refine children's reading and writing skills through their learning and playing activities.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and in so doing, raise standards across the school, by:
  - developing pupils' theoretical understanding and reasoning in mathematics
  - harnessing the school's effective work to build pupils' confidence and resilience, to ensure that the most-able pupils are fully challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching in the early years by ensuring that staff take every opportunity to develop and refine children's reading and writing skills through their learning and playing activities.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher is highly organised and leaves nothing to chance. Together with a capable and supportive senior leadership team, staff and governors, she has ensured that the school has gone from strength to strength, and that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are trained well. All staff who spoke to inspectors were highly appreciative of their training and development opportunities and unanimously indicated that these are helping to improve their teaching practice. Teachers are well aware of the high expectations that senior leaders have of them, as expressed in their challenging performance management targets. They are eager to share their ideas with colleagues in school and in the local teaching school alliance.
- Subject leaders responsible for English and mathematics take a systematic approach to improving the quality of teaching and assessing how well pupils are performing. Leaders of subjects such as science and history regularly check teaching in their subject areas and meet with pupils to establish their views on learning. Middle leaders responsible for the school's work to 'build learning power' and develop pupils' confidence are highly effective. They work well with teaching assistants to develop resilient, resourceful and reflective pupils.
- Pupils benefit from a rich and stimulating curriculum and participate in a wide range of after-school clubs, including drama, baking and gardening. Pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills are promoted well across the curriculum, especially through their history, geography and science work.
- Senior leaders ensure that additional funding, provided through the pupil premium grant, is used effectively. For example, the specialist teaching support for disadvantaged pupils helped to ensure that they made accelerated progress in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 in 2015.
- Primary school sports funding is spent well to improve pupils' skills in gymnastics, football, netball, cross-country and multi sports. Funding also improves pupils' participation in competitive sports such as swimming and develops the skills of staff in teaching various sports and physical activities such as gymnastics.
- Senior leaders' work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of the tenets of the major world faiths. In Years 2, 4, 5 and 6 pupils enjoy their residential learning opportunities and all pupils enjoy their many visits to museums, zoos and the theatre. Pupils regularly play various percussion and string instruments, learn Spanish, and have a good appreciation of art.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of British values. They exercise their democratic rights as ministers, with portfolios, on the Parkland Parliament and through the school council. Pupils show that they are responsible citizens in their many roles, including as e-cadets and play leaders. They show consideration to those less fortunate than themselves, raise money for various charities and show a good appreciation of the culturally diverse nature of British society.
- The school has excellent relationships with parents of those who met with inspectors; none could say how the school could be improved. All parents who responded to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) are of the view that their children are happy, safe and making good progress. Of the many text messages received during the inspection, typical responses from parents were, 'Parklands helps all the family, not just the pupils', and 'Parklands staff strive to encourage pupils to achieve their dreams'.
- The school has a highly productive relationship with the local authority. Most recently, the school's improvement partner has carried out a full review of the quality of teaching and learning and provided support in developing the effectiveness of middle leaders. The local authority has also brokered support from a headteacher from a local outstanding school, who has helped the senior leaders 'tighten-up' improvement plans.
- **The governance of the school**
  - The quality of governance is good. Recently, the governing body has been rationalised and slimmed-down. This has proved very useful, as it has ensured that all governors have the skills needed to help the school continue on its highly successful journey. However, governors are not complacent. They know that there is more work to do to improve pupils' attainment, particularly at the end of key stage 2.

- Governors know exactly how well the school is performing and how pupils' achievement compares with that of other pupils nationally. They ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively by rigorously monitoring its impact on outcomes for pupils to ensure that it is making a difference.
- Governors know that the quality of teaching is good because they receive regular reports on both pupils' and teachers' performance and come into school to see for themselves. Governors are prepared to reward teachers for their good work when they reach their targets.
- Governors are trained well and keep abreast of developments in education, including those linked to the 'Prevent' duty and keeping children safe in education.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Stringent procedures are in place to ensure that pupils, and children in the early years, are safe at school. All members of staff are appropriately trained to deal with any issues raised by pupils that might have implications for their safety and well-being.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Throughout the school, teachers are highly skilled at motivating pupils to learn. They pay close attention to pupils' interests and ensure that the curriculum is engaging. Due to good teaching, effective partnerships between teachers and teaching assistants and close tracking of pupils' performance, the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Teaching assistants are an asset to the school. They are trained well and enhance pupils' learning through their good questioning skills. Teaching assistants work skilfully to ensure the good progress of all groups of pupils, including the most able and those who have special educational needs or disability. Their effective partnership with teachers ensures that teaching assistants know pupils' next steps and have a good understanding of information on pupils' performance.
- Pupils enjoy learning because teachers make sure that it is fun. Pupils relish the many opportunities they have to recount their educational visits. They are eager to do well for themselves and their teachers. This is captured in their well presented writing in Year 5, recalling their recent visit to the theatre to see *Romeo and Juliet*, and in Year 3 pupils' reflections on their residential visit to Beeston Castle at the end of their final term in Year 2.
- Teachers use every opportunity they can to get pupils to practise their reading skills. This was exemplified in a Year 5 class where Mr. Fox (from 'Little Red Riding Hood') was on trial. Pupils showed great confidence in expressing their views and sharing their descriptions of the fox and were careful to ensure that they used plenty of interesting adjectives and various literary devices to maintain the interest of the audience.
- In mathematics, teachers match tasks closely to pupils' abilities, routinely assert the importance of using technical language and link themes from a variety of subjects into their teaching. This was evident in a Year 1 class where the teacher used the story of 'Goldilocks and the three bears' to encourage the use of words such as 'shortest', 'tallest' and 'largest'. Excellent use was made of 'porridge' (sand) to extend pupils' vocabulary and encourage them to use words such as 'estimate', 'scoop' and 'pour'. Throughout the lesson, the teacher reinforced pupils' good learning behaviour with phrases such as 'watch this', 'listen carefully' and 'What are you thinking?'
- Teachers regularly assess pupils' work and consistently follow the school's marking policy. Mathematics work is laid out in the correct squares and columns and writing is neat and tidy. Teachers give pupils regular feedback on their work and time to respond to it. Work in books shows that pupils diligently improve their learning as a result of precise and useful advice.
- Teachers use assessment information well to establish what pupils can already do and where they can still improve. This information is used effectively to plan lessons which improve pupils' learning. Assessments are robust and accurate as confirmed by inspectors and checks carried out by the local authority. However, while pupils are resilient, and poised to 'take on' difficult work, teachers do not always take full advantage of this. As a result, a few of the most-able pupils do not always achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Work in pupils' exercise books reveals that they have many opportunities to apply their writing skills across the curriculum. Similarly, science books show a good use of mathematics in work linked to, for example, calculating the distance of different planets from the sun. However, while pupils are often given challenging activities, these do not always develop pupils' theoretical understanding and reasoning in mathematics.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are exceptionally proud of their school. They are looked after well and are supremely confident in talking to any adult about any concerns they may have. Pupils rarely miss school, have a thirst for acquiring information and enjoy discovering new things with their friends.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves healthy through exercise and their dietary choices. This they learn throughout the school, starting in the Nursery class with the healthy living outdoor area.
- Pupils work hard to 'build learning power'. This helps them to learn from their mistakes, persevere and be resilient and resourceful.
- Outstanding support is available for pupils through the nurture room, should they need it. Here pupils can talk to adults, or simply relax and reflect in the calm and peaceful atmosphere. Learning mentors are always available and provide a good link between the school, home and the community.
- Pupils have an array of opportunities to demonstrate their maturity, and to cultivate their leadership skills. This includes their activities on the school council and in their roles as peer mediators, buddies, monitors, safety officers (who carry out risk assessments on play equipment) and play leaders. Pupils can also exercise their democratic rights through electing their peers to prominent positions in the Parkland Parliament.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at all times. They have a highly developed understanding of how they can stay safe while using the internet. 'Stay safe online' guides are available in each classroom. 'E-worry' boxes provide a useful avenue for pupils to express any 'e-concerns'.
- Various visitors to the school, from the police, fire, health and social services, help to develop pupils' acute awareness of dangers and risks and of safe and unsafe situations.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The hospitality that pupils show towards visitors is outstanding. They are proud of their appearance and achievement, behave sensibly when in class, moving around the school and during lunch and playtimes. Pupils make sure that school buildings and gardens are kept in pristine condition.
- Pupils' attendance is high and significantly better than at the time of the previous inspection. This has helped to ensure that their achievement is continually improving. The well-attended breakfast club helps to ensure pupils' excellent punctuality, as does the popular 'walking bus' which delivers large numbers of 'passengers' to the school every day.
- Teachers and governors are of the view that pupils' behaviour is always at least good. On the rare occasion that pupils find it difficult to manage their own behaviour, good management by staff means that there is very little disruption to the purposeful routine of the school day.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors were overwhelmingly positive about pupils' behaviour. They had no hesitation in describing the school as harmonious and orderly. The overwhelming majority of parents who sent text messages during the inspection, as well as those who completed the online survey, Parent View, also expressed this view.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including racism, which they say is 'when people make fun of your skin colour or culture'. They are adamant that racism never happens in school because, 'everyone is treated the same and we are all as special as each other'.
- Pupils relish the opportunities they have to come together for assemblies, where they can sing, learn new things and celebrate each other's attendance and achievements. This was shown during a whole-school assembly focusing on 400 years of William Shakespeare's legacy. Pupils behaved impeccably and were eager to answer questions. At the end of the assembly pupils were flabbergasted and could hardly contain their excitement when a school governor presented them with a published anthology of their written work.
- The school keeps detailed records of pupils' behaviour. These show very few incidents of poor behaviour and indicate that behaviour has improved significantly over the last year and is outstanding.

## Outcomes for pupils

are good

- This school has been on a remarkable journey over the last five years. For example, having been well below average in all subjects for five consecutive years at the end of Year 2 up until 2014, pupils' attainment in 2015 was well above average in reading and mathematics.
- Similarly, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2, though still below average, has improved rapidly since the previous inspection. By the time pupils left school at the end of Year 6 in 2015, the vast majority made at least expected progress. From their low starting points on entry to the Nursery class, disadvantaged pupils made better than expected progress in writing and mathematics.
- School leaders are very much aware that there is still more to be done to raise pupils' level of attainment, especially in key stage 2, and to make up for lost learning due to previous teaching that was not good enough. However, the school's own compelling assessment information, and inspection evidence, indicates that the vast majority of pupils made good and sometimes outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school in 2015. Currently, pupils are attaining well and making rapid progress in all subjects.
- Pupils enjoy reading and are familiar with the work of many authors, including William Shakespeare. The school has invested heavily in reading resources in order to boost pupils' progress. For example, all pupils are set regular reading challenges and are enrolled in the local library. Pupils are keen, confident and fluent readers. The very small proportion of pupils who were not secure in their reading skills at the national phonics check in 2015 are making good progress and are supported well in Year 2.
- Pupils make good progress in writing. Despite pupils' below average attainment in writing at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2015, most made good progress. Pupils' work books show that they have many opportunities to write letters, recount various events and develop their creative skills.
- All groups of pupils, including boys, girls and pupils who have special educational needs or disability, make strong progress across the school. This is because staff are caring and nurturing and know pupils exceptionally well. The school's excellent tracking systems ensure that any pupil in danger of falling behind is immediately identified and supported well.
- There are no significant differences between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and any other group of pupils in school. In some year groups these pupils perform better than their peers. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment was below that of other pupils nationally in all subjects at the end of Year 6 in 2015. However, much improved teaching is helping to ensure that gaps are narrowing rapidly.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make learning interesting. Most teachers ensure that pupils are fully challenged and have a full appreciation of the importance of mathematics in everyday life. However, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to fully develop pupils' theoretical understanding and reasoning in mathematics.
- A below-average proportion of pupils attained the higher levels in reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling in 2015, though a small proportion attained the very highest levels in mathematics.
- Senior leaders are well aware of the need to further boost the attainment of all pupils, particularly some of the most-able pupils. Initiatives such as operating the school bank, homework clubs and harder work in class are helping to improve the attainment of this group.

## Early years provision

is good

- All aspects of the early years provision, including teaching, children's progress and work with parents is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work together very well to ensure that children's time in the early years is highly memorable and stimulating.
- The school has accurate and detailed evidence which indicates that most children enter the Nursery class with weak skills in a number of areas of learning, including language and communication. However, children get off to an excellent start and make good progress throughout their time in the early years.
- Children's attainment has improved rapidly over the last three years. By the time children entered Year 1 in 2015, their skills and abilities were broadly in line with other children nationally. The majority were well prepared for their learning in Year 1. This year, children continue to make good progress in all areas of learning.

- Children learn in exciting and well-resourced indoor and outdoor learning and playing areas which clearly link to the different areas of learning. Good teaching and the work of staff to develop children's communication and social skills is paying off. Children enjoy sharing; they listen to each other and adults carefully and are very eager to talk about their learning.
- Children enjoy role play and creative activities such as painting and using glue, paper and fabrics to make collages. They like exploring the properties of water and sand and constructing using various materials. For example, children demonstrated good team-work and planning skills as they worked together to create a tower of different sized coloured plastic blocks, counting as the tower grew in size. They discussed how best to keep the tower steady and how high they could build before it toppled over.
- Children's reading skills are developing well. Good phonics teaching has armed children with effective strategies which help them to sound out and learn new words. In the Reception class, children are adept at using letter blocks to form their first and second names. Work to broaden children's experiences, improve their self-confidence and develop their understanding of the world around them is good.
- Children play sensibly and safely at all times. This is evident when they use their wheeled toys, scissors and various tools and building blocks.
- Staff use assessment information well to plan activities for children of different abilities and identify any gaps in their learning. They ensure that all groups of children, including those eligible for additional support through the pupil premium, make sustained progress.
- Parents are happy with the many opportunities that they have to stay and play with their children. They say that their children are safe and well looked after in the Nursery and Reception classes, communication is good and staff are always available and approachable.
- While children were observed engaging in a wide variety of activities during the inspection and their work books show that their skills are developing well, occasionally opportunities are missed for them to practise and refine their reading and writing skills through their many learning and playing activities.
- The same highly effective safeguarding arrangements in operation in key stages 1 and 2 are fully implemented and effective in the early years.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111238
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10012112

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	195
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Angela Claydon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rosalind Flanders
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 338 2220
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.parklands.cheshire.sch.uk">www.parklands.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25–26 February 2014

## Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is twice the national average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, as well as the proportion who speak English as an additional language, is well below average.
- Children in the early years provision attend the Nursery on a part-time and full-time basis and the Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The school meets current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Before- and after-school services operate from the school. These are managed by the governing body and formed part of the inspection.
- Since the previous inspection two teachers and two teaching assistants have joined the school and three governors have been appointed.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils to learn to read. Joint observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised in class and separately with senior leaders.
- Inspectors considered the 43 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire (Parent View) and 41 text responses from parents. Inspectors met informally with parents at the beginning of the school day and held a more formal meeting with a group of eight parents. Responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 20 members of staff and 25 pupils were also considered.
- A meeting was held with five governors, including the chair of the governing body. Meetings were held with a range of subject leaders, including those responsible for English, mathematics, science and history. Meetings were also held with leaders responsible for the early years provision, provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability and 13 teaching assistants.
- A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' progress, the school's reviews of its own performance, checks on the quality of teaching, development plans, safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

## Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sandra La Porta

Ofsted Inspector

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