

# Parkroyal Community School

Lyon Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 6QX

## Inspection dates

28 February–1 March 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher and other senior leaders have successfully arrested a decline in the school's performance. Their determined and focused leadership has secured improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, and pupils' attainment and progress are also now improving.
- School leaders, including governors, have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their improvement plans are detailed and plot a clear way ahead. Their vision for moving the school forward is shared by staff.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is now good overall. In almost all classes, teachers display secure subject knowledge and clear explanations help pupils to learn well.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Pupils get on well with each other and say that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Attendance rates are typically above the national average.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has a particularly strong musical tradition and many pupils benefit from playing in the orchestra or singing in the choir.
- The school is very successful in its work to engage parents, including an innovative approach to homework and an 'open-door' start to the day in Reception class. As a result, the great majority of parents are very positive about the school. They appreciate the care and support their children receive.
- Children get off to a good start because of the effective provision in the early years. They make good progress and the proportion of children reaching a good level of development is rising quickly.
- While the effectiveness of teaching across key stages 1 and 2 has improved, there are still some inconsistencies. Not all teachers plan effectively to meet the different learning needs of pupils in their class or build on what pupils know. Occasionally, teachers' explanations are not clear enough for pupils to understand. Where this is the case, pupils' learning slows.
- The school's determination to improve pupils' achievement in English and mathematics has led to good progress in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing is variable. Less attention has been paid to developing pupils' skills and knowledge in subjects such as science, history and geography. As a result, outcomes for pupils in those areas are not as strong as they should be.

## Full report

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

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress and raise levels of attainment across key stages 1 and 2 by:
  - eradicating the remaining inconsistencies in quality of teaching and learning so that pupils make consistently good progress across all classes
  - ensuring, particularly in key stage 1, that teachers consistently build on the writing skills that pupils have already developed
  - ensuring that pupils are given sufficient opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge in science and the foundation subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher and senior leadership team have galvanised the school into action, and their energetic leadership has begun to bring about the improvements needed following a dip in the school's performance. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have put strategies in place designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning and its impact on outcomes for pupils.
- Results in the key stage 1 and 2 national assessments in 2016, work in pupils' books and the school's tracking information all show that leaders' efforts are having a positive impact and improvements have been made in a number of areas. Standards in reading and mathematics continue to rise, while there are also improvements in pupils' written work, particularly in key stage 2. Leaders recognise that there is more to be done so that outcomes in writing match those in reading and mathematics.
- The leaders responsible for the early years, for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for English and mathematics provide effective leadership in their areas and are contributing well to ongoing improvements. This illustrates the importance that the school has placed on developing leadership, and shows that the school has good capacity to continue to improve. Leaders with responsibility for other subjects have had less opportunity to have a significant impact on their specific areas because the school's focus has been so heavily on mathematics and English.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to overcome specific barriers to learning experienced by the relatively small proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school, including social and emotional barriers and specific learning needs, such as in speech and language. Funding is also used effectively to enhance pupils' learning experiences, for example by ensuring that they have access to trips and high-quality music provision. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils vary between cohorts but are typically good and differences between their performance and that of other pupils nationally are diminishing overall.
- Leaders ensure that other specific funding is used effectively. Funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well used and is having a positive impact on their learning. The primary physical education and sport funding is effectively used to ensure that pupils have access to a wide range of sporting activities. The school fields a number of sports teams and has recently tasted success in a regional hockey tournament.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Teachers encourage pupils to think about other people and to develop an understanding of British values. As a result, pupils are aware of important issues at home and abroad, actively take part in charitable work and show empathy for other people.

- Leaders have put appropriate arrangements in place to manage teachers' performance, and teachers are increasingly being held to account for the performance of pupils in their class. School improvement and staff development needs are catered for effectively through access to a range of staff training and development opportunities. As a result, teaching is improving across the school, although there is still scope to eliminate the last few remaining inconsistencies so that teaching is consistently effective across all classes in key stages 1 and 2.
- The school offers a broad curriculum that covers a wide range of different subjects, topics and themes. Pupils say that they enjoy practical activities, and are particularly enthusiastic about their shared enrichment sessions. The curriculum is further enhanced by a range of additional opportunities, including clubs and trips to places of interest, and so contributes well to pupils' personal development. However, while provision in subjects such as music is very strong, pupils' learning in some areas, including science and history, lacks depth and their progress in these areas is slower.
- The school has maintained good links with the local authority since its conversion to academy status and benefits from working with the local authority and neighbouring schools on activities such as writing moderation. The school also works effectively with other partners to secure external support for carrying out self-evaluation of the school and deciding on aspects for improvement.

### **Governance**

- Governors have a clear picture of the school's current strengths and weaknesses, and are providing school leaders with an increasingly well-informed and robust level of challenge. Governors are now more frequent visitors to school, and play a more active role in the leaders' evaluation of provision. Another reason for the increased effectiveness of governors is the redevelopment of the governing body's committee structure, which has ensured that governors' individual skills are being used more effectively. All aspects of the school's work are now properly scrutinised. Governing body minutes confirm that governors are now more rigorous and effective in holding school leaders to account.
- Governors make sure that school leaders administer performance management of staff fairly and have overseen a further strengthening of the appraisal process this year. They also ensure that spending decisions are appropriately focused on the school's priorities for improvement, and have successfully overseen a major building programme which has significantly enhanced the overall learning environment.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders have successfully created a strong safeguarding culture throughout the school. Staff and governors receive regular training to ensure that their knowledge is up to date and they have a clear understanding of the procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child's well-being. The designated leader for safeguarding maintains detailed records of any concerns, and checks that they are rigorously followed up. Good partnerships have been established with external agencies to ensure that potentially vulnerable pupils and their families receive the support they need. This is typical of the school's effective engagement with parents and other stakeholders.

- Thorough checks are made on staff, governors and volunteers to ensure that they are suitable people to work with children, and the school maintains appropriately detailed records of these checks. An electronic system is used to keep a clear record of people entering and leaving the building and leaders have ensured that the school provides pupils with a safe and secure environment.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The quality of teaching across the school is good and is continuing to improve. Teachers have secure subject knowledge which they use well in planning a range of different activities. Pupils told inspectors how much they enjoy their lessons and parents agree with their views. One parent observed that, 'the children are clearly motivated and inspired by their teachers'. This comment was reflected in the views of the large majority of other parents.
- A key strength of the school is the positive and warm relationship between staff and pupils. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond well to this. Where pupils require additional support with their behaviour, this is provided sensitively and effectively, reflecting the school's inclusive ethos. This can also be seen in the effectiveness of teaching and support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who progress well during their time at Parkroyal.
- Teachers are using the school's recently reviewed systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress with increasing confidence. As a result, they plan activities that build on pupils' prior learning, and ensure that pupils receive any additional help or support that they might need.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved and mathematics is now taught effectively. Teachers use questioning effectively to check and develop pupils' understanding of different concepts and overcome any misconceptions. In many classes, information technology is used to good effect as a teaching tool to model solutions or to highlight pupils' work. Teachers also give pupils plenty of opportunities to apply the skills they have developed to problem-solving activities. Pupils enjoy this type of challenge, as was seen in a Year 5 class where a group of pupils were engrossed in an activity calculating the cost of laying different types of flooring in a house.
- The teaching of reading is good. Phonics teaching is effective throughout the school. Teachers ensure that phonics sessions are carefully planned to systematically build up pupils' phonics knowledge, and most phonics teaching engages pupils well and helps them to learn. Teachers then build on these early reading skills so that pupils become confident readers.
- Teaching assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning. They often work with small groups outside the classroom, practising and developing particular skills, and also regularly provide in-class support for individual pupils. Their work helps pupils who are struggling to catch up, or gives the most able pupils an additional time in which to extend their learning.
- Writing is not taught as effectively across the school as reading and mathematics. While there have been improvements in many classes, teachers do not always build consistently well on the writing skills that pupils have already learned, and this means that progress is not as swift as it could be.

- While most of the work that teachers set for pupils is well matched to their learning needs there are occasions, particularly in the lower half of the school, when this is not the case and work is too easy for some pupils or too hard for others. This problem is then sometimes compounded by teachers failing to explain things clearly enough to pupils, so that they are left unsure of what to do. When this does happen, the pace of pupils' learning slows.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school, and almost every parent who spoke to inspectors or responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed with this view and said that their children enjoy coming to school. One parent said, 'My children would be here seven days a week if it was possible.' This was typical of the many positive views expressed by parents.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in different situations. They can explain practical strategies that they would use to stay safe when using the internet, such as not giving personal information to strangers.
- There is a strong anti-bullying culture at the school, and pupils have their own 'anti-bullying ambassadors' who help to ensure that any problems are swiftly dealt with. Pupils are aware that there are different types of bullying, including homophobic bullying and cyber bullying, and know that bullying is wrong. Pupils say that incidents of bullying in their school are very rare and they trust staff to deal swiftly with any issues that do arise.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are friendly and welcoming to visitors and are happy to talk about their school and the things that they enjoy doing. Their enjoyment of school is shown in their attendance rates, which are typically above the national average and improving.
- Pupils behave sensibly around school and they display good manners towards both adults and fellow pupils. At breaktimes they make the most of the outdoor space available to them and play well together. School leaders have made sure that those pupils who do need additional help to manage their own behaviour are catered for successfully through individual support and effective small 'nurture groups'.
- In class, pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. They listen well and respond quickly to teachers' instructions. Pupils work equally well in a range of situations, including working independently and as part of a pair or group. On occasions, when they find their work difficult, the vast majority of pupils show an admirable determination to keep going and not give up. However, if they find the learning less interesting, some pupils do allow their minds to wander and drift off task. When this happens, the pace of learning slows.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- In 2016, results of national assessments at the end of key stage 2 showed that pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics were above the national average, and attainment and progress in reading were both broadly average. However, attainment in writing was significantly lower than typically found in other schools nationally, as were pupils' rates of progress in writing. This continued a trend seen in the previous two years as well, in which rates of progress in writing had declined while they had risen in reading and mathematics. As a result, pupils leaving Year 6 have not been fully equipped with the skills needed for the next stage of their education.
- The picture over time in key stage 1 is similar. While there are some variations from year to year in the overall strength of results, the one common feature has been attainment in writing being stubbornly below the national average.
- School leaders have recognised this issue and have made improving standards in writing across the school a top priority. Their work is beginning to have an impact. There has been an improvement in the teaching of writing and most teachers are now finding an effective balance between developing pupils' writing skills and giving them chances to develop and practise these skills by writing for different purposes. As a result, in most year groups current pupils' progress in writing, although not good, is accelerating. Evidence seen in pupils' written work, and the school's own tracking show that there is more to be done, and that improvements are currently quicker in key stage 2 than key stage 1.
- The emphasis placed on improving writing has had an impact on pupils' achievement in science and the foundation subjects, where insufficient emphasis has been placed on developing pupils' skills and knowledge. As a result, progress in these subjects is variable. Although pupils are benefiting from a suitably broad curriculum, they are not being given enough opportunities to properly deepen their learning in these other subjects.
- The most able pupils typically make good progress in reading and mathematics during their time at the school, but their progress in writing is less consistent. This is because, over time, the teaching of writing has not consistently built on the skills that pupils have already developed.
- The improvements in reading and mathematics indicated by the 2016 key stage 2 results are continuing for pupils currently at the school. Progress for many is now good from their different starting points. Pupils' knowledge and understanding in mathematics are improving and pupils across both key stages are becoming increasingly confident at using their mathematical skills to help them solve written problems.
- By the end of Year 2, the vast majority of pupils use their phonics knowledge well to help them to tackle tricky words, and they are developing their skills and confidence in reading comprehension. Pupils make good progress and build on these skills throughout key stage 2, and develop into enthusiastic and capable readers.



- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils varies between year groups, and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils vary between different cohorts. Evidence indicates that disadvantaged pupils typically make good progress in their learning from their differing starting points when compared with other pupils in the school and nationally. This is because leaders use additional government funding effectively to help disadvantaged pupils overcome their barriers to learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress from their different starting points. Well-planned additional support helps these pupils learn well and they regularly go on to achieve their individual targets. This illustrates that the school makes effective use of the additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Children start in Reception class with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age in most areas of learning, but more usually below that level in speaking, writing and aspects of personal development. There are strong links with the attached pre-school setting and with other local early years providers which help to ensure that children settle into life in Reception class quickly.
- Parents are encouraged to play an active role in Reception class, and many stay with their children to complete simple tasks at the start of the day. This typifies the school's positive approach to working with parents and helps to establish strong ongoing links between home and school.
- Behaviour in the early years is good. Relationships between adults and children are warm and positive and children play well with each other. Staff make sure that children's safety and well-being are a high priority and that all statutory welfare requirements are met.
- Teaching is good and teachers provide activities which are engaging and well thought out. As a result, children make good progress in Reception class. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of their time in the early years has increased year on year and in 2016 was higher than was found nationally. Children are well prepared for life in key stage 1.
- Staff provide children with a good mixture of adult-led and child-initiated activities and make effective use of both the indoor and outdoor environments. The outdoor area has only recently been developed but already provides children with a range of opportunities to explore, play and learn.
- The whole-school emphasis on improving writing can also be seen in Reception class, where examples of children's writing are displayed in the 'writing gallery'. These indicate that most children are catching up rapidly from their starting points and are very effectively developing important early writing skills.



- Leadership of the early years is good. The early years leader ensures that children's learning and progress are tracked carefully, and uses this assessment information effectively when identifying different children's learning needs. She has a clear vision for improvements that she wants to bring about in the early years, including further development of the outdoor space.

## School details

Unique reference number	140438
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10024123

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	409
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eligio Cerval-Pena
Headteacher	Caroline Beaumont
Telephone number	01625 426 083
Website	<a href="http://www.parkroyalcs.org">www.parkroyalcs.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@parkroyalcs.org">head@parkroyalcs.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for achievement in Year 6.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

- In the early years, children attend Reception class on a full-time basis. There is Nursery provision on site which is run by an independent provider and which is inspected separately by Ofsted.
- The school operates breakfast and after-school clubs every day.
- There have been a number of staffing changes since the previous inspection, including in school leadership. The headteacher took up her position during the autumn term, 2016. This followed a period of 18 months during which the school operated with a shared-headship arrangement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons, year groups and subjects. They also looked at pupils' work in books, records of children's learning in the early years and other information about pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with two groups of pupils. Inspectors also talked informally with pupils around the school and in the playground.
- Inspectors took account of 73 responses to Parent View and also spoke with a number of parents before the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered 67 replies to Ofsted's pupil survey and 31 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with five governors, including the chair of the governing body. Meetings were also held with leaders responsible for mathematics, reading and writing, provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and children in the early years, and the designated lead for safeguarding.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's reviews of its own performance, checks on the quality of teaching and development plans. Inspectors also examined safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

## Inspection team

Neil Dixon, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Joan Williamson	Ofsted Inspector
John Shutt	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Kelly	Ofsted Inspector
Lenford White	Ofsted Inspector

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