

Parkside Community Primary School

Beechwood Lane, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8QQ

Inspection dates

9–10 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher has a compelling vision for an exciting and varied curriculum that is shared by staff, parents and pupils alike.
- Pupils make exceptionally strong progress in their learning as a result of excellent teaching and a stimulating curriculum.
- Teachers plan challenging activities that enthuse pupils and encourage them to do their best at all times.
- Teachers' strong subject knowledge and skilful use of questioning deepens pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils' outcomes in reading, mathematics, science and a range of subjects are exceptionally strong.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics as a result of the carefully tailored support they receive.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are well supported and so make progress in their learning similar to or above that of all pupils nationally.
- Teachers provide high levels of challenge to the most able pupils, enabling them to make strong progress in all subjects and all year groups.
- Pupils are outstanding ambassadors for their school. They wear their uniforms with pride and are polite and welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils behave well and often impeccably in lessons and around the school. They are considerate to each other at break and lunchtimes where they play together well.
- Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare, and that if it does occur, teachers deal with it promptly.
- Pupils have been taught to understand risk and know how to keep themselves safe in daily life, including when using the internet.
- Pupils love coming to school, as shown by their rates of attendance, which are now above average.
- Children in the early years foundation stage make good progress overall. In the Nursery, progress is particularly strong because teaching is closely matched to children's needs.
- Leaders have a clear vision for the further development of the early years curriculum. However, their plans are currently at an early stage of development. As a result, new systems for organising learning and checking children's progress are not yet fully embedded.
- Governors provide very effective oversight. They know the school well and are ambitious for all pupils in the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders should ensure that the new arrangements for teaching and learning in the early years foundation stage are fully embedded, so that all children make outstanding progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership to the school. His compelling vision for a wide, rich and challenging curriculum permeates the school and lies at the heart of its success. Since his arrival five years ago, he has patiently and systematically developed the school's facilities and resources so that it now offers an exceptionally broad curriculum. At the same time, he has ensured that the high-quality learning facilities are complemented by equally high-quality teaching.
- The headteacher has seized the opportunity afforded by changes nationally to put in place a demanding and innovative curriculum for pupils at Parkside. As well as the outstanding provision for the full range of subjects in the primary national curriculum, pupils in all year groups benefit from and enjoy additional experiences. For example, leaders have made imaginative use of the school's extensive woods and small farm to enrich the curriculum. Carefully planned outdoor learning activities increase pupils' understanding of their environment and complement their learning in other subjects.
- The headteacher rightly sees his staff as his greatest asset, and has made a significant investment in their training and development. As a result, teachers' morale is high. One member of staff who responded to Ofsted's staff survey wrote: 'Parkside is so much more than a school; it is a community. We all want to do the very best we can for our children and their learning.' This positive spirit means that staff are willing to go the extra mile for their pupils. They run a very wide range of clubs and lead frequent educational visits that both pupils and parents appreciate greatly.
- The headteacher has recruited a highly skilled team of subject leaders in recent years. They share his ambition and high expectations and carry out their leadership roles with determination and rigour. They give precise and thoughtful advice to teachers on how they can improve by leading training sessions and providing one-to-one coaching. Leaders also make effective checks on the quality of teaching and hold teachers to account for the progress their pupils make. As a result, teaching in the school is outstanding.
- Leaders are rigorous in analysing published outcomes from national tests. They quickly address any areas of relative weakness. In 2016, they identified reading comprehension in key stage 1 and writing across the school as areas for improvement. The effective actions which leaders have taken since September have ensured that current pupils in all year groups are making rapid progress in reading comprehension and in writing.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is highly effective. The special educational needs coordinator provides strong leadership to her team of teaching assistants and ensures that pupils' needs are identified early and the right interventions put in place. She also gives teachers detailed and practical advice on meeting the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in lessons so that they have access to the same rich curriculum as other pupils.
- Leaders make effective use of additional funding provided by the government. For example, leaders have used some of the pupil premium grant to set up a nurture group in key stage 1 which provides effective support for vulnerable disadvantaged pupils.

The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding has enabled leaders to expand pupils' participation in sport as well as to fund specialist coaches who work with teachers to improve their skills in teaching PE.

- Leaders' provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils spoke with animation about residential trips that have given them experience of teamwork and leadership. In outdoor learning, pupils were engrossed in identifying the signs of spring in the school's woods. In English, Year 6 pupils wrote movingly when imagining themselves as soldiers in wartime.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain by making strong provision for the teaching of British values. Pupils learn about the rule of law through the school's own simple and well understood behaviour policy. Older pupils visit the Houses of Parliament to learn about democracy. In religious education, pupils discuss different world religions thoughtfully and visit places of worship.
- Parents are highly complimentary about the school and the headteacher's impact on it. They appreciate the school's caring ethos, the rapid progress their children make and the facilities and opportunities the school provides. One parent who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, wrote: 'I cannot praise this school enough. It offers everything I could hope for and more.'

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school. They study performance information closely and they ask challenging questions about the impact of leaders' actions. They check what they are told in the carefully planned visits they make to monitor the school's progress against agreed priorities.
- Governors carry out all their statutory duties diligently, in particular in relation to safeguarding. As well as completing the annual safeguarding audit, they make frequent interim checks on the school's child protection policies and practice. The committee structure ensures that governors provide effective scrutiny of all areas of the school's work, including standards and finance.
- Governors rigorously monitor the impact of pupil premium and PE and sport premium funding. They also check that the school's arrangements for managing teachers' and leaders' performance are fair and rigorous.
- Governors have rightly identified the embedding of the recently adopted approach to teaching and learning in the early years foundation stage as a priority.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils' well-being and welfare lie at the heart of all that the school does. The school has a warm and nurturing climate, in which everyone recognises their responsibility to keep children safe. Many of the parents who replied to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, cited the quality of care that their children receive. Some also commented favourably on how well the school builds character and resilience. One wrote: 'It is

great to see their confidence and belief in themselves growing term by term.'

- Leaders make rigorous checks on the suitability of all who work or volunteer in the school. Governors are diligent in ensuring that these checks are always up to date.
- Staff and governors benefit from regular safeguarding training that is compliant with all current regulations and guidance. As a result, staff are vigilant, and know what to do if they are concerned about a pupil. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding encourage staff to report all and any concerns they may have. If a concern is raised, leaders always follow it up promptly and thoroughly.
- Where leaders decide that it is necessary to involve social services, they are tenacious in ensuring that referrals are followed up and that the child and family receive appropriate support.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are protected when online by teaching them about safe use of the internet and by ensuring that parents also understand the risks. All school computers have an 'emergency bell', which enables pupils to report any examples of online bullying or inappropriate use of the internet.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning because teaching excites and inspires them. Teachers know their pupils well and track their progress carefully. They use this information to plan work which skilfully builds on pupils' prior knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils receive helpful feedback on their progress in line with the school's policy, and act on this to consolidate and extend their learning.
- Teachers use questioning to very good effect, requiring pupils to explain their thinking and consider alternative answers. Pupils have been trained to ask their own questions too, both of their teachers and of each other. As a result, pupils deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects. For example, in outdoor learning teachers' skilful questioning enables pupils to learn from close observation of the natural environment. Pupils are also enabled to make pertinent links in outdoor learning with their work in other subjects, including science, art and English.
- Pupils benefit from the expert subject knowledge of their teachers. As a result, teachers are able to act promptly to address misconceptions and ensure that pupils receive additional support if they need it. Specialist teachers of rugby, French, outdoor learning and music enrich the curriculum and enable rapid development of pupils' skills in these subjects.
- Teachers have very high expectations of what their pupils can do, and pupils rise to the challenges they are given with enthusiasm. Teachers help pupils to be resilient, for example by making skilful use of equipment in mathematics at key stage 1 to support pupils in the development of their skills and understanding. Elsewhere, pupils in key stage 2 use their knowledge of computer coding to make models they have built carry out simple movements.
- Homework provides appropriate stretch and challenge for pupils in all year groups.
- The teaching of phonics is highly effective. Pupils in all year groups use their phonics knowledge confidently to help them read unfamiliar words.

- Teachers and teaching assistants provide disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who need to catch up with effective support. Teachers are rigorous in measuring the effectiveness of any interventions they put in place and quickly change them if they are not having the desired impact.
- Teachers think deeply about their work and constantly seek to improve their teaching. They learn from each other and ensure that they take account of evidence of effective practice in their planning.
- Parents are highly appreciative of the detailed and regularly updated information they receive about their children's progress, which they can access at any time online.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are immensely proud of their school. They are unfailingly polite to each other, their teachers and visitors to the school.
- They are genuinely enthusiastic about their learning and are able to talk with confidence about what they have learned and about what they need to do next to improve.
- Pupils enjoy learning about other cultures and religions. They have a sharp understanding of the values of fairness, democracy and the rule of law and are open and tolerant in their outlook on the world. As a result, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils are encouraged to look out for each other, for example through the buddying system in which pupils enjoy acting as mentors to younger pupils.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They have an excellent understanding of how to use the internet safely. They say that bullying is extremely rare and that if it does occur, teachers deal with it well and promptly. The school's own records confirm that there have been very few bullying incidents in the last year.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils like and understand the school's approach to rewards and sanctions and follow it willingly. Their conduct in lessons, around the school and in outside areas is usually impeccable. They are kind and considerate to one another. In lessons, they pay close attention to their teachers and listen respectfully to other pupils' contributions. They play well together and clearly enjoy each other's company while eating at lunchtimes.
- Pupils love coming to school, and current attendance figures show that very few pupils have missed a day since the start of the school year. Leaders are aware that a small number of disadvantaged pupils attend less regularly than they should. Leaders are working closely with the families concerned and with the local authority to address this. As a result, the attendance of a small number of frequently absent disadvantaged pupils is improving rapidly.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Published results for 2016 demonstrate that the school has built exceptionally well on the already strong outcomes achieved in the previous two years. For example, in 2016 rates of progress for pupils in reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 were in the top 10% for all pupils nationally. In science, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard or above at key stage 2 was higher than the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils are very well supported by leaders' judicious deployment of pupil premium funding. At the same time, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from carefully planned and expertly delivered interventions. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made strong progress, in line with or above that made by all other pupils nationally at the end of key stage 2. The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, achieved scores in reading and mathematics above those of pupils with similar starting points nationally at the end of key stage 2. At the end of key stage 1, a larger proportion of pupils than nationally achieved the highest scores in reading and mathematics.
- Published outcomes for the Year 1 and 2 phonics check show that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard or above has been consistently higher than the national average for the last three years. Pupils currently in the school are also making rapid progress in phonics.
- Pupils currently at the school, including disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able are making very strong progress in a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics. The wide and carefully planned curriculum gives pupils the opportunity to excel in a number of subjects. As a result, outcomes for the vast majority of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able, in French, design technology, dance, outdoor learning, science and music are outstanding.
- Pupils' workbooks show that at key stage 1 they gain a secure understanding of the foundations of reading, writing and mathematics. In key stage 2, they demonstrate the ability to tackle difficult concepts, read challenging books with understanding and write with increasing fluency and sophistication. Pupils in Year 6 are currently making particularly strong progress in writing.
- The school vigorously promotes a culture of reading, and all pupils, including less confident readers, read willingly, often and with fluency. They use their phonics skills well and are encouraged by their teachers to select books with the appropriate level of challenge.
- Leaders are keenly aware that a small number of pupils in key stage 1 did not achieve the results expected of them in reading in 2016, and have taken effective action to address this by increasing the focus on reading comprehension and writing in all key stages.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision at Parkside Primary school is currently undergoing a process of change to bring it more fully in line with approaches in key stages 1 and 2. In particular, leaders aim to build children's resilience and ability to organise their own learning. Their plans match the high levels of ambition seen clearly in other parts of the school. However, outcomes remain good as adults become used to the new systems for organising the curriculum and checking the progress that children make.
- Children in the early years make good progress overall from their starting points, particularly in the Nursery where their progress is strong. When children enter the Nursery and Reception classes, the majority have the speech and language skills typical for their age. Published outcomes show that the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception has been consistently above average for the last three years. Similarly, the small number of children who are eligible for the pupil premium achieve outcomes higher than the national average. As a result, pupils are well prepared for Year 1 by the time they leave Reception.
- Teaching in the early years foundation stage is good and often outstanding. In the Nursery, the warm and nurturing classroom provides an excellent climate for learning. Adults respond exceptionally well to children's interests. They engage children in purposeful talk, ask questions that require them to explain their ideas and model activities for them to copy.
- Well laid out inside and outside spaces in the Reception class provide a rich and stimulating environment for learning. Adults respond skilfully to children's interests, making the most of opportunities to develop their language, number work and social skills. The majority of children thrive in this environment, concentrating hard on activities they have chosen themselves and making good progress in their learning. However, a small number of children, in particular boys, find it more difficult to settle to activities and so are not able to make the best use of their time. As a result, they are not making the same rapid rates of progress as their peers.
- Children behave well and are considerate towards others in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Adults reinforce values of kindness and cooperation at every opportunity. As a result, children feel safe and cared for. Parents are highly complimentary about the care their children receive. One parent made particular mention of the 'buddy' system in which Year 6 pupils act as mentors to Reception children, which, the parent said, helps 'the smaller ones feel comfortable with the older ones'.

School details

Unique reference number	114482
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10024707

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	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Siobhan Murphy
Headteacher	Richard Blakeley
Telephone number	01435 864577
Website	www.parksideprimary.org
Email address	head@parksideprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	16–17 July 2013

Information about this school

- Parkside Community Primary School is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average overall.
- The majority of pupils at the school are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by an education, health and care plan is similar to the national average.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school met the government's floor standards for attainment and progress in 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed all classes, across all key stages, the majority jointly with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and also with subject leaders.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke with a representative from the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors also met with pupils to discuss their views about school and heard them read.
- The views of parents were taken into account by analysing 75 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and 50 free-text responses. The lead inspector also spoke informally with parents at the start of the day.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff by analysing 14 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised documentation, including the school’s self-evaluation, minutes of governing body meetings and notes of external visits carried out by local authority officers.
- Inspectors evaluated pupils’ learning over time by examining a sample of their work books.
- Safeguarding procedures were also reviewed, including arrangements for keeping pupils safe in school and for recruiting staff.

Inspection team

Gary Holden, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Joyce Lydford	Ofsted Inspector
Leah Goulding	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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