

# Park Avenue Girls' High School

22 Avenue Road, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 2DT

## Inspection dates

10–12 October 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Inadequate</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Safeguarding is ineffective. Leaders have not ensured that the school premises are a safe place for pupils, and some checks on staff's suitability to work with children are incomplete.
- Leaders' checks on attendance and safeguarding issues are not robust. Their checks lack detail and do not contribute strongly to keeping pupils safe. Therefore, pupils' welfare is not assured.
- Outcomes are not yet good because too many pupils attain below their capabilities. This is especially the case for the most able pupils, who are not consistently challenged. In lessons, pupils have too few opportunities to discuss and develop their ideas.
- Governors do not have a strong understanding of pupils' outcomes, behaviour, attendance, welfare or the impact of the curriculum. Their work is not improving pupils' education effectively.
- Leaders have not ensured that the independent school standards are met consistently. They do not have a strong understanding of these standards.
- Teachers do not consistently match work to pupils' specific needs. They do not take pupils' starting points into consideration when planning lessons. Teachers have had little training to develop their teaching skills.

### The school has the following strengths

- Some middle leaders have strong skills and knowledge and perform their roles effectively.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It offers pupils a wide range of opportunities.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and lead to pupils' positive behaviour.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They follow instructions willingly and are well behaved at all times while on the school premises.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

## Full report

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

- Urgently improve pupils' welfare, health and safety by:
  - undertaking a full risk assessment of the premises
  - managing all of the risks in the building so that pupils are safe
  - making sure that all aspects of staff vetting are complete
  - consistently providing soap, toilet rolls, suitable toilets, showers and a medical room
  - keeping accurate, detailed registers and records of safeguarding concerns.
- Improve the quality of leadership by ensuring that:
  - arrangements made to safeguard and promote pupils' welfare, health and safety are effective and keep pupils safe from harm
  - the independent school standards are met consistently
  - middle leaders' thorough understanding of teaching, attainment and pupils' progress is shared by senior leaders and governors
  - attendance is monitored effectively
  - published material on the school site is fully vetted so that unsuitable sectarian publications are not in school.
- Improve the quality of governance by ensuring that governors:
  - have a full understanding of all aspects of school life, especially the effectiveness of the arrangements made for safeguarding, pupils' welfare, attendance, behaviour, the curriculum and pupils' outcomes
  - have an informed and positive influence on the quality of education provided and its impact on learning
  - do not get distracted from their wider strategic purpose by single projects such as the proposed new school building.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - providing effective training for teachers to improve their teaching skills
  - providing consistent challenge to pupils, especially the most able
  - ensuring that teachers take pupils' starting points into consideration when planning lessons
  - using a wider variety of activities and effective questioning so that teaching more consistently meets pupils' specific needs.

## **The school must meet the following independent school standards**

- The proprietor must ensure that a written policy on the curriculum is drawn up and implemented effectively (paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a) and 2(1)(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school:
  - enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
  - fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves
  - involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
  - shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons
  - utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range
  - demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress(paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(f) and 3(g)).
- The proprietor must ensure:
  - that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy
  - compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
  - that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
  - that the welfare of pupils in the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy, and that appropriate action is taken to reduce the risks that are identified(paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 11, 12, 15, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure the suitability of persons appointed as members of staff at the school, other than the proprietor and supply staff, by ensuring that:
  - in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining an enhanced criminal record certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State
  - checks are completed before a person's appointment(paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(e) and 18(3)).
- The proprietor must ensure the suitability of members of the board by making sure that members of the board:
  - are not barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section

3(2) of the 2006 Act where that individual is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 of that Act

- do not carry out work, or intend to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction

(paragraphs 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i) and 20(6)(a)(ii)).

- The proprietor must keep a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question, and ensures that:

- in relation to each member of staff ('S') appointed on or after 1 May 2007, whether checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e)

(paragraphs 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a) and 21(3)(a)(viii)).

- The proprietor must ensure that, in relation each member ('MB') of a body of persons named as the proprietor appointed on or after 1 May 2007, the checks referred to in paragraph 20(6)(b) were made, the date they were made and the date on which the resulting certificate was obtained (paragraph 21(6)).

- The proprietor must ensure that:

- suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education
- suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for sole use of pupils
- suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils
- the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured
- the lighting in each room or other internal space is suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein
- external lighting is provided in order to ensure that people can safely enter and leave the school premises
- suitable drinking water facilities are provided that are readily accessible at all times when the premises are in use and are in a separate area from the toilet facilities

(paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 25, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(2), 28(2)(a) and 28(2)(b)).

- The proprietor must ensure that, in relation to the provision of information, they provide or make available on request:

- particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions
- particulars of the policy referred to in paragraph 2
- particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations

- details of the complaints procedure referred to in paragraph 33, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(e) and 32(3)(f)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:
  - demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
  - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently
  - actively promote the well-being of pupils(paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).
- The proprietor must make arrangements to meet the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Leaders and governors are enthusiastic and ambitious for pupils in the school. However, they do not have a strong enough knowledge about the requirements for running a school to make sure that pupils are kept safe and achieve well. They have not ensured that the independent school standards are consistently met. They have not complied with the enforcement notice issued by the Department for Education in February 2016 because parts 3, 4 and 8 of the independent school standards remain unmet. In addition, at the time of this inspection, the school did not meet parts 1, 5, and 6 of the independent school standards.
- Some of the information that must be made available to parents and others on request is not currently available. Leaders do not have a coherent, written, up-to-date curriculum policy, for example. The existing curriculum policy does not reflect the school's current practice because it was written before the school opened and there have been many changes since. Clear and sufficiently detailed information about admissions, behaviour and exclusions is not readily available, nor are details of the complaints procedure or the number of complaints that have been made in the preceding year.
- Inspectors found published sectarian material in a storeroom behind the school office. They made the headteacher aware of this. The headteacher explained that he was not aware of how the materials came to be in school. At the end of the inspection the headteacher confirmed that he planned to destroy the material and suitably vet all remaining published material in the school.
- Inspectors did not find any evidence that this sectarian material had influenced teaching or learning in school. However, material of this kind has no place in schools and leaders have not ensured that systems are in place to prevent such literature from entering the school and being accessible in a storeroom.
- The middle leaders responsible for teaching, learning and assessment have a thorough understanding of the quality of education provided in school. They have designed a system for observing teachers and have accurately identified what needs to be developed to improve pupils' progress. They also accurately assess pupils when they first enter the school so that they can track their progress over time. However, work to improve pupils' progress and teaching is too recent to effect any sustained impact. Senior leaders and governors do not have a strong understanding of these assessment systems or the quality of teaching. Consequently, this limits their ability to evaluate the school's performance.
- The school's strong curriculum for citizenship makes sure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils study a range of world religions. Inspectors observed them discussing these in detail, with sensitivity, understanding and respect, thereby acquiring an effective understanding of why different people's faiths are important to them. Pupils talked with inspectors in detail about the work teachers do to promote fundamental British values in their lessons.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the full range of protected characteristics is strong. They spoke with inspectors about the importance of equalities, different sorts of relationships, gender and marriage/civil partnerships. They have a good understanding of

the law surrounding equalities in this country.

- Pupils enjoy taking part in a range of charity work as extra-curricular activities. They value the ways in which they are encouraged to take part in their community and have an active, positive role. They enjoy this part of their education.

## **Governance**

- A new governing body has recently been appointed. These governors form the proprietorial body. They have undertaken training in safeguarding and governance skills, which demonstrates their commitment. However, they do not yet contribute strongly to ensuring that safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively or pupils' achievement is improved quickly.
- Governors accept that they have been almost entirely focused on the school's proposed move to a new site. They acknowledge that they have not paid sufficient attention to other elements of the school's development. They have not held school leaders to account for the quality of education provided and school outcomes.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are inadequate. Safeguarding procedures are not creating a safe culture in school.
- The school's safeguarding policy is not detailed enough. It is not up to date and is not implemented effectively. For example, it is based on old government guidance and refers to the safeguarding procedures of local authorities that are not local to the school. This is because leaders have taken the policy from elsewhere and not made the guidance fully relevant to this school. The framework does not consistently identify the leaders responsible for safeguarding. There is, therefore, a lack of clarity about who deals with concerns and/or referrals to others. The policy is published on the school's website.
- All staff, including governors, have a broad range of training in safeguarding. This means that teachers have an informed awareness of a range of risks that pupils might face and understand the need to be vigilant. However, this training is undermined by weaknesses in leaders' understanding of the necessary vetting checks designed to ensure that unsuitable adults do not come into contact with pupils.
- Leaders and proprietors have not ensured that they complete all of the relevant recruitment checks and checks on staff's suitability to work with children before staff start work. For example, leaders have not completed further checks on all those staff who have lived or worked overseas.
- At the time of the inspection, the official admissions register did not meet requirements. Attendance registers indicate that leaders do not follow up and record the reasons for pupil absences properly.
- The school's records of any safeguarding concerns have very little detail in them.
- Risk assessments are insufficiently robust. Consequently, a range of high-risk hazards exist on the school site, which means that pupils are at risk of injury.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement because not all pupils make consistently good progress. Teachers do not routinely use assessment information to establish what pupils can and cannot do. Consequently, there are times when work does not offer appropriate challenge. In lessons that inspectors observed, for instance, all pupils undertook the same tasks. This meant that some were not challenged to achieve as highly as they should. Middle leaders' self-evaluation records show that this is not untypical.
- Teaching does not encourage learners to become actively engaged in their work. There is little evidence of pupils discussing their work with one another or their teachers. Instead, teachers' questioning is often limited to factual recall and teachers do not consistently deepen or develop pupils' understanding beyond the tasks that they are given. Middle leaders have also identified this as an issue needing development in several subjects.
- Currently, teachers are not offered sufficient training to improve their teaching.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently follow the school's policy. Often, work is assessed for completion, not the quality of the understanding it displays.
- Middle leaders have developed systems to monitor pupils' progress over time. These systems are logical and the assessment baselines they are based upon are accurate. However, these systems are not yet having a strong impact on pupils' achievement and progress.
- Parents receive detailed reports showing their child's attainment, attitude to learning, effort and quality of homework. However, information for parents about academic progress is more limited.
- Relationships between pupils and their teachers are positive. Pupils work diligently to complete the tasks that they are given. They get down to work swiftly and do not waste time.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong in some subjects, especially in subjects where examination content informs the curriculum.
- Homework is used well by teachers. Pupils say that it relates directly to the lessons taught and is useful in their learning. Pupils are positive about homework.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Inadequate

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Currently, pupils are not safe in this school. Leaders have not identified the range of risks present on the school site. For example, inspectors found windows, both single- and double-glazed, that were broken, sharp and accessible to pupils. This included in the shower area. There are trip hazards on stairs and carpets. A range of the school's lighting is not operational, and there is no recent fire risk assessment that covers the potentially dangerous materials presently on the site. These include chemicals in the science room and a number of large liquid gas canisters in classrooms and the staffroom. There are no



protective covers over fluorescent lighting. Pupils do not wear shoes in the school and physical education (PE) takes place in rooms with this unprotected lighting. This presents a high risk of light fittings being broken and injuring pupils' feet. The medical room has no hot water and a range of hazards within it.

- Although leaders have been informed by a general contractor that the building contains asbestos, they have not commissioned an asbestos survey to establish whether this is accurate. Contractors were working in the room with suspected asbestos during the inspection, having not followed any part of the school's asbestos management policy.
- At the time of the inspection, it was not the school's common practice to provide soap for pupils' hand-washing, toilet roll in the toilets or suitable drinking water. Toilet paper is available from the school office when pupils request it. Pupils told inspectors that they sometimes avoided using toilets for the whole school day because of this. During the inspection, leaders began to put toilet roll into the toilets, provide soap and suitable drinking water. The school's showers were removed after a previous inspection and have not been replaced. Therefore, leaders have not made sure that showering facilities are available for pupils.
- Teachers' work to promote pupils' self-confidence is not well developed in some subjects because pupils have little opportunity to discuss their ideas and develop their thinking. Middle leaders' analysis of the quality of teaching also identifies this.
- Leaders' work to promote pupils' understanding of their health and well-being is effective. Teaching covers topics such as mental health and anxiety, healthy eating, the impact of diet on physical well-being and the benefits of exercise. Pupils say that they are encouraged to discuss these things in lessons so that they gain a deeper understanding of how to keep themselves safe and well.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are extremely rare because the school is so small and all pupils get on well. They are confident that, if bullying was to occur, it would be dealt with swiftly and effectively. The school's records show few incidents of bullying.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In lessons and around the school, pupils follow their teachers' instructions willingly. The school's records show that instances of negative behaviour are rare.
- Pupils are polite and respectful to one another and to their teachers.
- In the last academic year, attendance was high and well above the national average. However, in September 2017, attendance and punctuality worsened. Leaders identified this issue swiftly and have pinpointed the reasons for it. Following some work with parents and pupils, over the last few weeks, attendance and punctuality have begun to rise rapidly towards their previously high levels.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Middle leaders have undertaken baseline assessments for all pupils. They set targets for GCSE outcomes that are appropriate. No pupils have yet taken GCSEs in the school. The

first pupils to take these exams are in the current Year 11.

- The school's progress information shows that some pupils are making strong progress from their starting points across a range of subjects, but some are not. For example, in English in Years 9 and 10, around half of pupils are not making the progress that leaders think they are capable of. In Years 7 and 8, around a third of pupils are below their target. In mathematics, over a third of all pupils in the school are below their target.
- Pupils' progress overall, however, is improving. This is because teachers have a developing understanding of pupils' starting points and what the baseline assessments mean. Teachers' use of this information to inform lesson planning varies. While it is too early to see the full impact, middle leaders have a strong grasp of what needs to be done to improve teaching and pupils' progress. They have action plans and their actions are beginning to have a positive impact.
- Leaders' work to improve pupils' reading, fluency and comprehension is having a positive effect. Reading assessments show that pupils are making strong progress in terms of improving their reading attainment and comprehension skills.
- Pupils' preparation for their next steps after Year 11 is successful. Pupils told inspectors that they are highly aspirational, have set their sights on a wide range of careers, and that their teachers have helped them to do this. They have attended a careers fair that provided impartial advice and helped them to choose from a wide range of careers.

## School details

Unique reference number	139784
DfE registration number	861/6010
Inspection number	10033576

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Muslim independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Arshad Mohammed
Chair	Arshad Mohammed
Headteacher	Abdul Salloo
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,500
Telephone number	01782 499091
Website	<a href="http://www.parkavenueschool.co.uk">www.parkavenueschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@parkavenueschool.co.uk">info@parkavenueschool.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	17–19 June 2014

## Information about this school

- Park Avenue Girls' High School is a Muslim independent school for girls aged 11 to 16 years. The previous standard inspection was undertaken in June 2014.
- The school does not use any alternative educational providers.
- Four trustees make up the governing body. One is the chair of this body. They are new since the last inspection. The school has not informed the DfE of this change.
- The trustees have purchased a new building very close to the existing site. This building was, until recently, a school. The proprietors are working on making this building suitable for pupils. It is not possible to evaluate when this building will be ready because the funds for major renovation have not yet been secured.

## Information about this inspection

- This standard inspection was commissioned by the DfE.
- Following a material change inspection in October 2016, the Department for Education (DfE) issued an enforcement notice because the current provision and premises did not meet the parts 3, 4 and 8 of the independent school standards. During this inspection, the DfE asked the inspection team to evaluate the school's progress towards meeting the requirements of the enforcement notice.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior staff, teachers and trustees. They undertook a detailed site walk of the current school site with the headteacher, to evaluate whether the current premises meet the independent school standards. Inspectors met with pupils to gather their views. They visited parts of lessons across subjects and year groups, scrutinised pupils' work over time, and talked with pupils about their work.
- Inspectors evaluated a range of documents, policies and systems, including leaders' work to check staff's suitability to work with children, safeguard pupils, assess pupils' work and progress and monitor attendance and behaviour.
- There were insufficient responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, for inspectors to consider. There were no responses to the pupil or staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Dan Owen, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Michael Onyon

Ofsted Inspector

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