

Parkgate House School

80 Clapham Common, Northside, London SW4 9SD

Inspection dates

13–15 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils throughout the school learn well and make good progress.
- Leaders are ambitious to make the school as good as possible. They plan well. Improved systems for measuring pupils' progress are already making an impact.
- Leaders promote good teaching. They offer many training opportunities for staff to improve their skills. Leaders recognise that more needs to be done to make sure that pupils needing extra support consistently make as much progress as possible.
- The curriculum is rich and stimulating, so that pupils enjoy their learning. The curriculum stimulates pupils' imagination and deepens their understanding of the world around them.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good. Adults' effective questioning encourages pupils to think for themselves. Specialist teaching is strong, enabling pupils to develop a wide range of skills.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They love learning. They show respect to others and are kind to one another.
- Adults are extremely caring. The school is a safe environment. Adults teach pupils how to keep themselves safe.
- In the school's caring and supportive ethos, pupils develop strong resilience. Adults encourage them to take occasional setbacks in their stride. As a result, pupils are ready to learn, and outcomes are strong. Pupils are prepared well to move to the next stage of schooling.
- Adults in the Nursery and Reception classes provide a safe, secure learning environment. Children learn good language, number and social skills. Leaders recognise that the quality of resources in the indoor areas does not consistently match those outdoors.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The school also meets the requirements of the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that pupils who need extra support to keep pace with others consistently make the strongest progress they can by:
 - planning tasks with the right level of challenge for them
 - deploying additional adults more effectively to support these pupils.
- Make sure that all children in the Nursery and Reception classes have access to a range of stimulating resources, particularly in the indoor play areas.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders work together in effective partnership to ensure that the school is a happy environment where pupils learn well and are safe and secure. Staff comment positively on 'the ethos of teamwork and kindness' promoted by leaders.
- Leaders make sure that all the statutory requirements, including those relating to the independent school standards and the early years framework, are fully met.
- Leaders are ambitious to improve the school, and staff share their ambition. A typical comment from one member of staff is, 'We are always looking for ways to improve our practice.' Leaders plan well for future improvements. For example, new systems for checking pupils' progress are already improving their reading and spelling skills. The school is well placed to continue to improve.
- Links between school and home are strong. Parents are positive about the school. Nearly all parents who responded to the Ofsted online survey agreed that they would recommend the school to other parents. They describe the school as 'a wonderful and nurturing environment'. A parent who spoke to inspectors said, 'My children cannot wait to go back on Monday mornings.'
- Leaders effectively promote teaching which is of consistently good quality. Leaders carefully check on the quality of teaching and offer helpful advice. Teachers are encouraged to observe colleagues teach, in order to share good practice. Staff are encouraged to take courses to improve their skills.
- Leaders provide a rich and stimulating range of subjects for pupils to learn. English and mathematics are at the core of the curriculum, and these subjects are taught imaginatively and to an exacting standard. For example, in one English activity, pupils preparing to write a creative piece were invited to use ambitious figures of speech. One pupil offered to use oxymorons and gave as an example 'the living dead'.
- The curriculum provides a wealth of subjects that broaden pupils' knowledge. For example, specialist subject teachers enable pupils to acquire sophisticated skills in creative arts, languages and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The many school clubs, trips and visits to places of interest enrich the curriculum and stimulate pupils' imagination and understanding of the world. For example, inspectors visited the school's chocolate workshop, a part of its 'Events Week'. Pupils designed and made chocolates, and took part in discussions in the style of 'Dragons' Den' about marketing and distributing their products.
- The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn a great deal about other cultures and faiths. As a result, they show respect to those of all backgrounds and religions.
- Pupils receive a good grounding in British values. This deepens their understanding of the world around them and their place in it. For example, one Year 6 activity prompted pupils to understand the different types of drugs available in society, and to evaluate which were helpful and which were harmful.
- Most pupils make strong progress in their learning. Leaders recognise that a few pupils,

primarily those who struggle with their learning, sometimes make slower progress. This sometimes happens when the level of challenge does not match their needs. Leaders do not routinely ensure that teachers and additional adults provide the support needed to ensure that all pupils catch up quickly.

Governance

- The proprietor successfully governs, leads and manages the school, together with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. The proprietor is very hands-on, and spends a great deal of time at the school, holding leaders to account effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders promote a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Leaders work in partnership with parents and external agencies to make sure that pupils are safe and protected.
- The school publishes a comprehensive safeguarding policy on its website, and copies are also available on paper. The policy meets statutory requirements and provides clear guidance on keeping pupils safe and promoting their welfare.
- Leaders carefully check the backgrounds of all adults at the school. Checks are thorough and leave no stone unturned.
- Leaders make sure that all staff are trained in keeping children safe, using the latest guidance. Staff training is up to date. Adults responsible for children in the early years provision have up-to-date paediatric first-aid training. Adults know which leaders to turn to, should they have any safeguarding concern about a pupil.
- Leaders are aware of increasing risks to young people from using the internet. They ensure that pupils and staff understand the risks and know how to avoid them.
- Adults are trained in recognising signs of neglect or abuse in children. Adults and pupils are alert to signs of radicalisation or extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is stimulating. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy the wide range of subjects taught, and feel they are making good progress. There are good relationships in the classroom. Pupils told inspectors they like their teachers and want to learn.
- Teaching is consistently good, with no areas of weakness. Adults have wide and secure subject knowledge. There are particular strengths in specialist teaching, with pupils learning such subjects as music, Latin, French and drama to a high standard.
- Teachers' use of challenging questioning successfully helps pupils to think things out for themselves. For example, questioning enabled pupils in Year 6 to work out for themselves what qualities distinguish the pairs of lovers in Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream.' Similarly, in a mathematics activity, pupils were asked to find for themselves ways of measuring ratio. Again, as is typical for the school, the focus was on finding out, rather than being told.

- Teaching in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently effective and there are particular strengths in the teaching of reading. Adults in the Nursery and Reception classes teach children the skills they need to be able to piece sounds together and read. The focus on reading continues throughout the school. Pupils who read aloud to inspectors did so fluently and with expression. Adults encourage pupils to read challenging and worthwhile books.
- The quality of planning to meet pupils' individual needs is generally good, enabling most pupils to make strong progress. However, some pupils who struggle with their learning are not consistently given tasks that have the right level of challenge. Sometimes teachers do not plan sufficiently carefully with additional adults to meet the needs of these pupils. As a result, these pupils' progress is sometimes less strong.

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 confident, articulate and polite young people. They are a credit to the school.
- Pupils are encouraged to think of others, not just themselves. For example, in one classroom activity, pupils wrote 'friendship notes', telling others in the class why they like them. In one such note a pupil wrote to another, 'I appreciate you because your smile always cheers me up.' In such ways pupils learn to be kind and think of others.
- The school's kind and caring ethos is seen in pupils' considerate and respectful behaviour towards others. Pupils who spoke to inspectors showed they understand what bullying means and the different forms it can take, such as cyber bullying. Pupils told inspectors that, if they have a falling out with another pupil, the adults sort it out quickly. Pupils told inspectors that there is no bullying at the school. Inspectors looked closely at the school's behaviour records and found no evidence of bullying.
- Several parents spoke of the school's 'family ethos'. Pupils enjoy mixing with others from different year groups. For example, older pupils drew pictures of skylarks so that younger ones better understood the French song 'Alouette'. In breakfast club and the after-school care provision, pupils benefit from the calm environment and the chance to mix with pupils of different ages.
- The school keeps pupils safe and gives them the skills they need to keep themselves safe when out and about. The school advises pupils about potential risks from fire or crossing the road or talking to strangers. E-safety is a particular strength of the curriculum. Pupils gave inspectors a thorough account of how they are encouraged to stay safe when searching the internet.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are keen to learn. Attendance is very good. This was evident even in the snowy weather shortly before the inspection.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is exemplary. Pupils are ready to discuss topics with one another when asked to do so. They move rapidly and without fuss to the next activity.
- The school places great importance on encouraging pupils to be resilient, so that they

meet success and failure with the same strength of purpose. As a result, pupils persevere in their learning and try their best.

- Pupils are considerate when moving around the school and using the staircases. They play energetically in the playground, while taking care not to put others at risk. Pupils keep the school tidy. Classrooms are pleasant spaces, where pupils' work is well displayed. Pupils keep their exercise books neat and are proud to show them to inspectors.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress in their time at school. Children leave the Reception Year with language, number and social skills that are consistently above average. Pupils continue to make good progress through each phase of the school. By the time they leave, they have acquired strong skills in reading, writing, mathematics and many other subjects.
- Pupils' attainment is consistently above average. Their vocabulary is wide. They communicate confidently with adults. Their work is neatly presented. The school prepares pupils very well for the next stage of schooling. Pupils go on to a range of high-achieving secondary schools.
- The school's focus on resilience encourages each pupil to persevere and learn as well as possible.
- The most able pupils receive challenging tasks that enable them to learn well and make substantial progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive one-to-one support based on their individual requirements. These pupils learn well and make good progress.
- Occasionally, pupils who struggle with their learning do not receive the right level of challenge to enable them to keep pace with others. Sometimes the work is too difficult for them. Teachers do not consistently work in sufficiently effective partnership with additional adults. As a result, the progress of these pupils is sometimes slower than for others in the class.

Early years provision

Good

- The Nursery and Reception classes provide children with a safe, welcoming environment. Adults care well for the children and make sure they are happy and well protected.
- The early years provision is well led. Leaders ensure that all statutory requirements of the early years framework and of the independent school standards are met. Staff are well trained in safeguarding.
- Leaders accurately evaluate the strengths and areas for improvement of the early years provision. Leaders have recently refurbished the outdoor play areas. These now offer children stimulating resources that enable them to learn a wide range of skills. Plans for future improvements are realistic and achievable.
- The quality of teaching is good. Children begin to learn phonics skills in the Nursery, and make a good start in learning to read and write. Adults promote good numeracy skills in a variety of ways, such as singing 'Five little speckled frogs' to develop children's

subtraction skills.

- Adults give children plenty of opportunities to talk and develop their vocabulary. For example, in one scientific activity, children predicted which objects would float and which would sink. When they tested their ideas out, the children exclaimed, 'It's gone under water' and 'It stayed up'. Adults helped them to use more sophisticated vocabulary and to think about why some objects float and others sink.
- Adults who look after two-year-olds are skilled in giving them as much time as they need to perform tasks. Adults miss no opportunity to improve these children's skills. For example, while children queued to go outside, adults helped them to count how many children there were in the line, and what the number would be if they added the two adults.
- Children are looked after very well. There are detailed safety assessments for activities involving potential risks, and these keep children well protected.
- Children behave very well. They cooperate with one another. They are ready to share the resources and take their turn on the play equipment.
- The curriculum provides children with many opportunities to develop strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities. For example, children celebrate such events as Chinese New Year, and this enables them to show respect for others.
- The school develops in children a strong sense of British values. Children are kind and respectful towards those from all faiths and heritages. Children are taught to respect such institutions as the fire brigade and police force.
- In this pleasant and secure environment, children learn well and make good progress. By the time they leave the Reception classes, children have acquired a range of language, number and social skills that prepare them well for Year 1.
- There are good links between school and home. Parents told inspectors that they like the 'learning journeys' that provide them with photographs and samples of their children's work.
- The school works in effective partnership with external agencies to identify children who have specific learning needs and to provide additional support for them.
- Leaders recognise that resources in the indoor play areas do not consistently match in quality those outdoors. Resources are unevenly distributed among the early years classes, and do not provide equally stimulating opportunities for children to learn a wide range of skills. As a result, some learning opportunities are missed.

School details

Unique reference number	101091
DfE registration number	212/6397
Inspection number	10038151

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	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Number of part-time pupils	45
Proprietor	Catherine Shanley (principal)
Chair	Catherine Shanley
Headteacher	Malcolm McKinlay
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,760–15,060
Telephone number	020 7350 2452
Website	www.parkgate-school.co.uk
Email address	office@parkgate-school.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–23 October 2014

Information about this school

- Parkgate House School was founded in 1987 by its proprietor.
- The school consists of an early years section (Nursery and Reception classes), a pre-preparatory section for Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, and a preparatory section for Year 3 to Year 6 pupils.
- The school occupies a large listed building facing Clapham Common.
- The school's mission is to 'develop confidence, provide opportunity and realise potential in every single child'.

- No pupil has an education, health and care plan.
- No child is eligible for support from the early years pupil premium.
- The school was last inspected by Ofsted in October 2014, when it was judged to be good overall and outstanding for pupils' behaviour.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning throughout the school. Leaders accompanied inspectors on most of their observations.
- Inspectors observed teaching in a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science, music, ICT and art. Inspectors visited the after-school care club.
- Inspectors talked to pupils and listened to them read. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held discussions with the proprietor, headteacher and senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents during the inspection. There were 80 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including 32 written comments. Inspectors took all responses and comments into consideration.
- Inspectors took account of 30 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire for members of staff.
- Inspectors reviewed documents and policies, including those related to safeguarding, in order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence on pupils' attainment and progress. They also examined safeguarding information and records relating to attendance, behaviour and welfare.

Inspection team

Natalia Power, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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