

# The Park Junior School

Orchard close, Shirebrook, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG20 8JX

## Inspection dates

7–8 November 2018

<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>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders are ambitious for the school. Their decisive actions after a period of turbulence are successfully driving improvements.
- Middle leaders lead their areas of responsibility well. They share senior leaders' determination to ensure that pupils make good progress in different subjects and enjoy their learning.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to plan activities which interest pupils and broaden their understanding.
- The school offers an exciting curriculum that aims to build pupils' knowledge and skills over time and inspires them to learn. It contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive and friendly. Adults encourage pupils to be confident, independent and enthusiastic learners. Pupils enjoy school and cooperate well.
- Transition between classes and schools is well considered and highly effective. Adults ensure that pupils and their parents or carers understand what is expected of them. Pupils settle quickly and make a good start to the school year.
- The school environment is a cosy, welcoming and motivating place to learn. Staff ensure that displays and spaces around the school encourage pupils to want to find out more.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is good. Pupils receive support which enables them to make good progress.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for. Their personal development and welfare are exceptional.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. They are well mannered and polite. The school is a calm and friendly place.
- Members of the governing body have a good understanding of the work of the school. They provide good levels of challenge and support to senior leaders. However, some governors are new to their roles and have yet to develop their skills fully in checking the impact of additional funding on improving outcomes for pupils.
- Senior leaders do not evaluate the impact of their work to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils as effectively as they could.
- Occasionally, teachers do not provide sufficiently challenging work to ensure the most able pupils achieve their best.

## **Full report**

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

- Ensure that leaders' actions to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are highly effective and rigorously evaluated to enable pupils to make consistently strong progress and attain the standards of which they are capable.
- Make sure that governors have a sufficiently precise understanding of how additional funding is used for pupils so that they can hold leaders to account.
- Ensure that teachers plan work that consistently challenges the most able pupils to achieve the very best they can in a range of different subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of turbulence. There has been some instability in the senior leadership team and a decline in standards. However, over the last year school leaders have ensured that there is strong senior leadership and a cohesive team of staff who feel well supported by leaders. Leaders are successfully driving improvements and raising aspirations for pupils.
- Leaders have put in place a rigorous system for checking the effectiveness of their actions to improve the school. For example, actions to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are frequently scrutinised by leaders, including governors, who hold teachers to account well.
- Middle leadership is strong. Leaders are passionate about their areas of expertise. They sharply evaluate the impact of their actions. They ensure that improvements in teaching and learning are improving the progress pupils make in different subjects. For example, the leaders for reading, writing and mathematics are confident and have a good grasp of their roles. They work alongside colleagues well to strengthen teaching and as a result have improved standards for pupils.
- Leadership across the school for pupils with SEND is good. Leaders ensure that support for these pupils is carefully tailored to meet their individual needs. Staff receive relevant training to ensure that provision for pupils is appropriate. Leaders work effectively with outside agencies to seek advice when necessary.
- Staff are enthusiastic and committed to the school. Those who spoke with inspectors said that they feel valued by school leaders and greatly appreciate the opportunities they have to develop their practice. Leaders encourage staff to be innovative and improve their professional and personal skills to develop their careers. For example, the school provides placements for teaching assistant apprentices. There are several examples of staff who started as apprentices and have since been encouraged by leaders to train as teachers.
- Leaders have reviewed the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. Leaders are passionate in their desire to provide a curriculum that motivates and inspires pupils to learn. They have planned the curriculum to give pupils opportunities to learn skills and acquire knowledge across different subjects. Leaders ensure that teachers plan for pupils to revisit and build on these acquired skills in other areas of learning as they progress through key stage 2. This extends their knowledge in different areas of learning. Vibrant, interactive displays around the school, together with evidence from work in pupils' books, demonstrates the richness of the curriculum and its positive impact on developing pupils' skills and knowledge.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of fundamental British values well. Lessons and collective worship regularly focus on areas such as respect, independence, fairness and the importance of embracing diversity. Members of the pupil management team told inspectors that, 'Everyone deserves to be treated with respect. At our school we learn to treat others how we would like to be treated ourselves.' Pupils highly value the many elected positions of responsibility they hold in school and the opportunities they have to

organise activities, including leading whole-school collective worship.

- Transition arrangements are very effective. Considerable thought and planning goes into ensuring that pupils are familiar with their new classes and new schools. Staff work closely with colleagues from the federated infant school and local secondary schools to ensure that pupils make a good start to the new school year.
- School leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Nevertheless, leaders do not rigorously evaluate the impact of their actions to make certain that increased proportions of pupils make strong progress and attain the expected standards at the end of Year 6.

### **Governance of the school**

- Members of the governing body are aware of their responsibilities and meet regularly to discuss the performance of the school. They use the information provided by senior leaders to ensure that they have a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Governors demonstrate a strong commitment to the pupils. The school has been through a period of turbulence, during which standards for pupils declined. Governors reacted swiftly to provide senior leaders with appropriate challenge and support to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning has improved. Their determination to provide pupils with an aspirational education is realised in the school's curriculum and in relationships between pupils and staff.
- Governors ensure that additional funding is used to improve the progress of pupils and broaden their understanding and experience of the wider world. However, governors new to their roles do not have a sufficiently sharp understanding of the impact of additional funding on improving pupils' outcomes and ensuring that increased proportions attain the standards of which they are capable by the end of Year 6.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a good culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Leaders provide all staff with relevant up-to-date training to safeguard pupils. Staff know the school's procedures for raising welfare or child protection concerns.
- Adults in the school ensure that pupils are kept safe. The safeguarding and pastoral leader ensures that records for safeguarding are well maintained. She closely monitors events which may be related to safeguarding and rigorously tracks incidents and concerns about pupils. Senior leaders are tenacious in monitoring vulnerable pupils. They meet regularly to discuss how to support vulnerable pupils and work in partnership with external agencies, where necessary, to ensure pupils' well-being.

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

**Good**

- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan activities which are interesting for pupils and are usually well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils enjoy learning and they

make good progress.

- Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent. Teachers know pupils very well. Pupils trust their teachers and teaching assistants. Strategies to enable pupils to work things out for themselves are well established. Consequently, pupils are confident to try difficult tasks or contribute answers in lessons. For example, when pupils lack understanding and seek further support they are secure in the knowledge that they have their teacher's as well as their peers' support.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use resources and questions well to clarify misconceptions, consolidate learning and deepen pupils' understanding. Teachers constantly challenge pupils to explain what they are learning as well as make connections with their prior learning. They use real-life experiences to inspire pupils to learn and develop their understanding. For example, pupils in Year 6 visited the Holocaust Centre as a stimulus for their work about the Second World War.
- The teaching of reading has improved because of leaders' sustained focus on this area of the curriculum. Staff training and new approaches for the teaching of reading are improving outcomes for pupils. Pupils say they enjoy reading and are encouraged to read regularly at home and at school. A good culture for reading has been successfully established. Teachers provide motivating reading spaces in classrooms and around the school. Pupils animatedly explained to inspectors that books have, 'broken out of the library' and are distributed around the school. They say that they love that they are now able to 'grab a book to read at any time of the day'.
- Teachers plan mathematics lessons that are well structured. Recent improvements have ensured that there is a consistent approach across the school. Pupils have frequent opportunities to practise their skills and apply their knowledge to solve problems. Teachers constantly ask pupils to explain what they have done and why, to deepen their understanding.
- Pupils write with confidence and enthusiasm. Teachers encourage them to edit and improve their writing to ensure they do their very best. Pupils are encouraged to write for different purposes, which are linked to different genres, real-life experiences and topics of interest. This enables them to develop their understanding and use of language. For example, Year 4 pupils used their experience of visiting the Jorvik Viking Centre in York to inspire their writing about life when the Vikings invaded England.
- Pupils with SEND are taught well. Teachers carefully plan activities to meet these pupils' needs. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to ensure that additional support is effective and carefully targeted to move pupils' learning on.
- Teachers ensure that classrooms are comfortable and motivating places for pupils to learn. Displays are interactive and carefully targeted to promote effective learning. Teachers provide pupils with models and examples of learning so that pupils feel well supported and are clear about what is expected of them.
- Occasionally, teachers do not ensure that the work they plan is sufficiently and consistently challenging for the most able pupils to make as much progress as they can in their learning across different subjects.

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Leaders understand the needs of the pupils in their community very well. They ensure that the school environment is welcoming, homely and inspires learning through the many attractive displays and well-considered spaces for pupils. For example, an imaginatively created Harry Potter common room provides a space for pupils to sit, enjoy reading and reflect.
- Pupils are taught well about possible unsafe situations and how to keep themselves safe, including when using social media and crossing the road. They say that adults help them with any worries they may have. Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for in school.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive. The school has an inspiring, friendly and calm atmosphere that is highly conducive to learning. Pupils are self-assured, sociable and confident. They are interested in their learning and take pride in their work and their school.
- Pupils have a range of responsibilities, including as members of the pupil management team, prefects and their 'helping hands' roles. Pupils also have opportunities to support and coach each other in lessons to improve their learning. Through these various roles and responsibilities pupils develop their confidence and can take an active part in decision-making for the school. For example, members of the pupil management team told inspectors how they identify an area for improvement for the school by consulting with staff and pupils. They then plan events to raise funds for their ideas to be developed and implemented. The pupil management team excitedly told me that the recent installation of a zip wire on the school field was because of their work.
- Pupils have a good understanding about the choices that they should make to live healthily. They have regular opportunities to develop their physical fitness through exercising regularly, including the daily 'magic mile'. They appreciate the many clubs and sporting activities offered by the school. Leaders provide bespoke care and support to help pupils manage their emotions and maintain good mental health.
- The school offers a wide range of trips, visitors to school and extra-curricular opportunities. These contribute very well to their personal development. During their time in the school, pupils become articulate learners. They demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning and caring and compassionate attitudes to others. They are kind and respectful to other pupils and are taught to embrace diversity.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are well-mannered and courteous. Their conduct around the school and during lessons is good. At breaktime and lunchtime they play sensibly and cooperate well. For example, inspectors observed pupils independently taking part in a breaktime dance club. They enjoyed the opportunity to dance together and socialised happily.

- Pupils have a good understanding of school systems to promote good behaviour. They relish the chance to gain 'PRIDE' points for good learning behaviour, which they can exchange in the school shop. Parents who spoke with inspectors and the majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that the school ensures that pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. They say that incidents of bullying or poor behaviour are rare but when they do happen, staff deal with them fairly and effectively.
- Pupils are confident in expressing their opinions. They work well together in lessons and show mutual respect. Pupils lose concentration only rarely when the work they are set is not well matched to their needs.
- Attendance has historically been in line with the national average. However, persistent absence increased in 2017 to be above the national average. Leaders are taking rigorous and effective actions to reverse this trend, including the employment of an education welfare officer who works closely with senior leaders and families of pupils who are persistently absent. Although attendance is improving it remains a priority.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Evidence seen in lessons and in pupils' books and information provided by the school indicate that the majority of current pupils are working at the standards expected for their age in a variety of subjects.
- In recent years pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6 in reading has been below average. Strong leadership and improved teaching are raising standards. In 2018, the proportion of pupils who attained the expected and higher standards increased to be closer to national averages.
- Pupils' progress is good throughout the school. Current Year 6 pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Improvements made to the quality of teaching and learning last year are being sustained and substantially developed this academic year.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress. Teachers plan well for pupils' needs and teaching assistants provide good extra support in lessons and at other times.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils across the school is higher than seen nationally. Current pupils benefit from good teaching and well-focused extra help when they need it. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work shows that disadvantaged pupils across the school are making similar progress to their peers in the school. However, leaders recognise that there is further work to be done to ensure that progress for these pupils is consistently strong.
- Some of the most able pupils do not make as much progress as they could. Evidence seen in lessons and in pupils' books shows that although these pupils have opportunities to extend their learning, they are not promptly and consistently challenged by teachers to achieve their very best in a range of different subjects.

## School details

Unique reference number	112682
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10052954

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	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Corns
Headteacher (Executive)	Steven Hewitt-Richards
Telephone number	01623 742663
Website	<a href="http://www.parkfed.co.uk">www.parkfed.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@parkfed.co.uk">enquiries@parkfed.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	5–6 March 2014

## Information about this school

- The Park Junior School is a smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and of pupils who speak English as an additional language are below those seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average.
- The school receives support from the local authority.
- The school shares and models good practice with colleagues from other schools.
- The school offers apprenticeships for teaching assistants.
- The school is federated with The Park Infant and Nursery School to form The Park Schools Federation.



- The governing body is the governing body for The Parks Schools Federation. Four governors have joined the governing body in the last year.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups, including some joint observations with the headteacher. They observed the teaching of reading and listened to pupils reading. Inspectors talked to pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the safeguarding and pastoral leader and several middle leaders, including those for reading, writing and mathematics. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day. They took account of the 24 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: the school's self-evaluation of current performance and plans for improvement; the school's most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils; information relating to safeguarding; information about behaviour management; information relating to the school's use of the pupil premium funding and funding for pupils with SEND; the school's most recent information relating to the attendance of pupils; and minutes from meetings of the governing body.

## Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Karen Slack	Ofsted Inspector
Roary Pownall	Her Majesty's 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](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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