

Inspection of Parkside Middle School

Stourbridge Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 0AH

Inspection dates: 11–12 September 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy at Parkside Middle School. They enjoy learning and coming to school. Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent. We saw good-mannered, friendly and respectful interactions between teachers and pupils in class and during social times. Every single member of staff works hard to make sure pupils do as well as they can.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They usually work hard and aim to do well. Lessons are calm and orderly. Pupils told us that they feel safe and learn about many topics, such as online safety. This helps them to stay safe outside of school. Pupils do not worry about being bullied. They said if it happens, staff take it very seriously and deal with it quickly.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are at the heart of the school. All staff at the school care about pupils' welfare. Pupils enjoy and speak with enthusiasm about the many opportunities for learning beyond lessons. They gave various examples of clubs and visits that they have taken part in, such as the trip to Worcestershire Parkway. Pupils are keen to learn from and value one another. They are proud of their school and commonly refer to it as the 'Parkside family'.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do

better?

The quality of education at the school is good and still developing. Leaders' ambition is for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve as well as possible. They are unapologetic about their aspirations for every pupil in their school. Leaders have thought about what pupils should learn in each subject, term-by-term, if they are to achieve these high aims.

Leaders support pupils' personal development exceptionally well. This is underpinned by regular trips, visits and excursions. Pupils enjoy these and speak highly of them. Pupils have regular debates about current affairs in personal, social and health education and form times. Pupils told us that they discuss issues that affect their well-being and safety during 'Thrive' lessons. Pupils enjoy those lessons. They talk with confidence about how they can maintain good mental health and a healthy lifestyle and avoid dangers on social media platforms.

The plans for most subjects make clear to teachers exactly what to teach pupils and in what order. This helps teachers to be sure that pupils know what they need to before they can tackle more challenging work. In some subjects, this works really well. Teachers focus on developing skills that the pupils can use in other subjects. For example, pupils use their literacy knowledge, gained in English lessons, across a wide range of subjects to write extensively about their topics.

Plans in French set out what pupils should learn but lessons do not follow in a logical order. Pupils do not gain enough basic knowledge to help them understand later topics. For example, Year 5 pupils start French with lessons about 'French history', 'food and drink' and then 'self and family'. The order of topics is random. Pupils struggle with this because they have not remembered the vocabulary from previous lessons. They do not know these words because they have not been taught them at all or well enough in the past.

In subjects with stronger plans, teachers adapt the plans so that all pupils gain good knowledge and understanding. All pupils achieve well in these subjects. Where the subject plans are less detailed, teachers find it hard to know what changes to make for SEND pupils. SEND pupils do not do as well in these subjects as they could.

Leaders want pupils to understand why they learn what they do. All pupils have access to a well-developed and highly effective careers programme. Teachers aim to link lessons across the curriculum to possible careers. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education and beyond.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that new staff are suitable to work in their school. Staff are well trained to spot signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Teachers know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil. Teachers report concerns, however minor, to the specially trained safeguarding team. Staff know their pupils well and use this information to ensure pupils are safe.

Leaders keep oversight of pupils they know to be vulnerable. They work well with external agencies, such as social services, to make sure that these pupils receive the support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The effective implementation of the curriculum seen in many subjects is not matched in all areas of the curriculum. The content of some subjects is not chosen and sequenced well. This is particularly so in French. Here, the plans do not support teachers to build on pupils' prior knowledge. As a result, pupils' understanding is insecure. Leaders need to ensure that the content of all subject plans is well chosen, carefully sequenced and delivered as intended. Leaders also need to make sure that subject leaders in these subject areas are skilled enough to do this and that teachers have the necessary subject knowledge.
- Teachers use tests to check pupils' knowledge after a series of lessons in some subjects, such as French and geography. However, they do not check if pupils are building on prior learning or are able to do more, know more and remember more over time. Leaders should ensure that teachers check pupils' progression of skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school so that they become increasingly knowledgeable and skilful in these subjects.

How can I feed back my views?

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	116959
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10088409
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	580
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Blincoe
Headteacher	Neil Mills
Website	http://www.edulink.networcs.net/
Date of previous inspection	11 July 2018

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is average. The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above average. This includes provision in a resource base for pupils with autism spectrum disorder and speech, language and communication needs.
- The school makes no alternative provision for any of its pupils.
- A small number of pupils attend part-time sessions at the on-site SEND resource base.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and assistant headteachers, subject and middle leaders, teachers, pupils, governors and an external support partner. They scrutinised school documents, including curriculum plans and school development plans.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's safeguarding arrangements and documentation, including the single central record.

- Inspectors completed various inspection activities to gather evidence on the quality of education. These included lesson visits and discussions with subject leaders, teachers and pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at break and lunch times. They visited an assembly and numerous form-time sessions. Inspectors spoke to many pupils during the two days of the inspection.
- The inspection focused on English, mathematics, French and geography. All other subjects were considered as part of the inspection.

Inspection team

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