

# Inspection of Parkgate House School

80 Clapham Common, Clapham Common, Northside, London SW4 9SD

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Inspection dates: 1 and 3 March 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**Yes**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are safe and happy at Parkgate House School. They build purposeful and healthy relationships with their teachers and peers. Pupils are resilient and confident in all aspects of school life. They are proud of their school and eager to take on leadership responsibilities such as 'peer mentor'.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in every year group. Pupils are polite and courteous to all. They listen respectfully to each other when sharing views or discussing learning. Bullying is understood, but rare. Even the youngest pupils said they would take a stand against unkind actions. Pupils know adults are on hand to deal with poor behaviour if their own efforts have not resolved the problem.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils. Learning is not limited, and every pupil is supported to achieve well. Pupils enjoy the wide range of subjects and opportunities on offer. When asked about their favourite lessons, pupils invariably list them all.

Leaders provide a vast range of enrichment activities such as horse-riding, ballet, drama and karate throughout the curriculum. Pupils also benefit from before- and after-school clubs which further assist their confidence and character building.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders have designed an ambitious, broad and rich curriculum. Each subject provides all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), the knowledge they need to achieve highly. Curriculum leaders have clearly defined and ordered the most important content and knowledge they want pupils to learn. Every subject is taught securely and consistently across the school, including the early years.

Teachers are confident in their own abilities. They demonstrate strong subject knowledge and transfer this successfully to pupils. Leaders support teachers further with ongoing professional development. For example, the mathematics curriculum leader attended a course on effective techniques for teaching problem-solving. This training has been shared with all staff so teachers can use these strategies in lessons.

Leaders set high expectations for all pupils. These expectations start in Nursery. In reading, for example, pupils learn all the sounds letters make before finishing the reception year. Pupils continue to learn a year above what is expected nationally in every class. Even the lowest ability readers catch up quickly and experience fluency and success. This is because leaders make sure all staff are well trained in teaching phonics.

Each area of the curriculum is broken down into smaller units of knowledge. Teachers check pupils' understanding of key knowledge throughout lessons and give

immediate feedback. For instance, in a Reception class English lesson, pupils were using the words 'frog' and 'green' to write a sentence. The teacher gave immediate feedback on capital letters, full stops and correct letter formation depending on the needs of the child. Pupils then instantly adjusted their sentences. Subject leaders grasp opportunities to deepen pupils' knowledge across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 4 learn about India and its location within the world in geography lessons. In art, teachers reinforce this knowledge by referring to India's location when completing line drawings of the Mumbai Gateway.

Leaders have been teaching the now statutory guidance on relationships, sex and health education for a number of years. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. They know about different types of families and the importance of respect for those with different views. Pupils in Year 6, for example, confidently discussed all of the protected characteristics. They know the terms non-binary and transsexual. They also acknowledge their privilege in being able to access learning about difference.

Leaders have the highest expectations of pupils' behaviour. All staff model these expectations consistently. They take every opportunity to guide pupils to reflect and adjust any behaviour that does not meet expectations. Leaders and staff use 'think again' as a sanction. This structured and reflective conversation, held immediately with pupils, powerfully enables ownership and adjustment of poor behaviour.

In all lessons, including those in the early years, pupils' motivation and attitudes to learning are excellent. In a music session in the Nursery, for example, children join in, listen to and repeat increasingly complicated rhythms. Older pupils maturely discuss their learning and share their views and thoughts. For instance, one pupil in Year 3 referred to her own experience of 'panning for gold' while reading a story about a large sieve. They listen attentively and respectfully when other pupils and adults are speaking.

Leaders develop a strong sense of character in pupils. Building resilience is a fundamental aspect of the schools' provision. Leaders are particularly sensitive to the anxieties that pupils face sitting selection exams. They provide expert advice to all pupils, including those with SEND, and their families in choosing the right secondary education.

Pupils have a secure understanding of democratic processes, public institutions, the rule of law and the importance of being an active citizen. They learn about democracy through humanities, personal, social and health education and through their own democratic elections for school council. In Year 5, pupils learn about the distribution of limited resources. They take on the role of local councillors and discuss making decisions over gritting roads in icy weather, carefully considering the repercussions if they do not.

Staff appreciate leaders' open-door policy. They feel listened to when sharing work and personal problems. Staff spoke of the practical efforts leaders make to reduce workload. For instance, they appreciate the adjustments made to the calendar at

busier times. Staff consistently report high levels of support for their workload and well-being.

The proprietor holds leaders to account for all aspects of education and for meeting statutory obligations. As a result, the independent school standards and the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage are all met. The school is compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's safeguarding policy is published on its website and reflects current government requirements. On joining the school, staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training. This is revisited regularly and means staff know what signs may indicate a pupil is at risk. It also ensures staff know and follow correct protocols for raising concerns. Leaders make appropriate referrals for external help.

Safeguarding leaders maintain close contact with other local schools and external agencies. This enables all staff to address any locally identified risks to their pupils swiftly.

Leaders' safer recruitment checks of staff are robust and compliant.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

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

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

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	101091
<b>DfE registration number</b>	212/6397
<b>Local authority</b>	Wandsworth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10214681
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	151
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	19
<b>Proprietor</b>	Catherine Shanley (Principal)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Malcolm McKinlay
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£6,411 to £16,872
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7350 2452
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://parkgate-school.co.uk">parkgate-school.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@parkgate-school.co.uk">office@parkgate-school.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 to 15 March 2018

## 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.
- There are no pupils with education, health and care plans

## Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the school office manager and several heads of department, including the inclusion/special educational needs coordinator/pastoral lead. They also held discussions with the proprietor.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, humanities and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, looked at records and scrutinised the school's safeguarding practice.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day and spoke to staff about pupils' personal development. They also held discussions with several groups of pupils about their views of the quality of education the school provides.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and staff through Ofsted surveys.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of evidence to check compliance with the independent school standards.

## **Inspection team**

Alison Colenso, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annabel Davies

Her Majesty's Inspector

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