

# Inspection of The Park Community School

Park Lane, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 9AX

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Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

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

Pupils respond well to the school's values of 'participation, ambition, responsibility and kindness'. Through the house system, pupils work together to support charities and participate in competitions. Pupils appreciate opportunities for pupil leadership that include the school and house councils.

Leaders make sure that the subject curriculum is ambitious. In lessons, pupils' behaviour is calm and orderly. Pupils focus on their learning. They understand the expectations of leaders. Yet, some pupils do not go to some of their lessons. They do not do what leaders ask of them. As a result, their learning is hindered. Leaders have recently put in place measures to manage this.

Pupils learn that bullying and using derogatory language towards others are wrong. Pupils say occurrences have lessened over time, and leaders act when pupils report such behaviour. Leaders are responding to concerns from girls who say some boys use inappropriate language towards them.

There is a broad range of additional activities and trips that support pupils' wider development. They include drama, textiles, chess, a school newspaper and a school band. Many pupils participate in a range of sports training and competitions. Several older pupils volunteer and complete the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

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

Leaders have established a well-planned five-year curriculum. Leaders have carefully considered the knowledge and skills pupils need for the next stages of their education. They review what pupils know when they join the school and consider what pupils need to know and understand next. Leaders make sure the curriculum builds on their findings.

Teachers regularly check what pupils have learned. They use this information to help pupils recall important content before they move on to new learning. Consequently, teachers have a good understanding of what pupils know and where gaps exist. This helps pupils understand what they need to do to improve. In lessons, pupils concentrate on their work. They move between learning activities calmly.

Leaders have identified pupils who are still in the early stages of learning to read. Although help is in place, the approach to teaching pupils to read is not systematic. Therefore, pupils do not learn to read quickly or with confidence. This gets in the way of their learning.

Leaders have recently put in place improved arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers receive the information they need to help these pupils. Staff have received some training to support pupils, but there is more to do. Support for pupils with SEND is not always appropriate for their

needs or provided at the right time. Some parents say they would like to know more about the help their child receives.

The personal, social and health education curriculum is thoughtfully planned. Pupils revisit topics as they grow older. This deepens their understanding. Leaders ensure that the curriculum covers current issues and topics relevant to pupils. Pupils say they find it helpful to discuss topics like sexual harassment, the risks of vaping or online safety. As a result, they feel well informed. All pupils learn about healthy relationships.

Leaders provide a full careers programme for all pupils. This includes work experience, careers fairs and visiting speakers. As a result, pupils learn about a broad range of education, training and careers. Pupils are well informed and supported when they make choices about the next stages in their education.

Leadership has changed recently. Staff appreciate what leaders do to recognise and remedy workload issues. Leaders are ambitious to raise standards for all pupils. The newly appointed acting headteacher has the full support of the staff, the trust and trustees in improving the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff receive training to identify and report concerns. Systems to report and follow up concerns are well established. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure the best possible support for vulnerable pupils and their families.

Leaders make sure pupils learn about local and national risks and learn how to stay safe.

Leaders have raised awareness of derogatory language and dealt with incidents when reported to them. However, a minority of pupils persist in making inappropriate comments.

Thorough recruitment processes ensure that staff are suitable to work with children.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read do not receive the support they need to catch up. The approach to teaching reading is not systematic. This hinders pupils' learning. Leaders must put in place measures which enable these pupils to read so that they quickly catch up with their peers.

- Despite recent improvements, some pupils with SEND do not get the right support at the right time. Leaders need to ensure greater consistency in implementing support so that pupils get the help they need when they need it.
- During lesson time, some pupils do not attend lessons, or they absent themselves from part of the lesson. This means they are not learning the full intended curriculum. Leaders need to make sure that recent actions to deal with such behaviour have an impact so that pupils attend lessons.

## 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.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146094
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10257087
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,454
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Graham Cockell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Craig Tamlyn
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.theparkschool.org.uk">www.theparkschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The acting headteacher took their post on 1 January 2023.
- The Park Community school is part of the Tarka Learning Partnership.
- The school joined the trust in January 2019. There are seven primary schools and one secondary school within the trust.
- The school uses five unregistered and one registered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 11 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, modern foreign languages and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of work.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other senior leaders, trust leaders and trustees, the Chair of the School Community Board, the SEND coordinator, teachers, support staff and pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector examined school records. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and trust lead. They also spoke with a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke to some of the alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted’s online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also viewed the responses to the pupil survey and the responses to the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Rachel Hesketh, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Matthew Collins	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Thomas	Ofsted Inspector
Stuart Wilson	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Lewis	Ofsted Inspector

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