

Inspection of a good school: Parkhill Junior School

Lord Avenue, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex, IG5 0DB

Inspection dates:

28 February and 1 March 2023

Outcome

Parkhill Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils politely greet adults and each other with the motto 'Enjoy learning!' at this supportive and respectful school. Adults and pupils work well together to make the school feel safe and kind.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils work hard in class. They listen to each other and enjoy discussing ideas. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the extra help they need to learn successfully.

Pupils behave sensibly around the school. They are eager to speak to adults about their learning and opinions. Pupils are able to regulate their behaviour for themselves and they are considerate to each other.

Pupils said that staff listen to them and provide help when needed. Staff quickly sort out any poor behaviour or any rare incidents of bullying. As one pupil said, 'Bullying barely happens. This is a really rights-respecting school.' This view was typically shared by many pupils.

Pupils relish the additional responsibilities they can take on, including being a member of the school's parliament. They enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs and other cultural activities, including visits to museums.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They have designed a broad and balanced curriculum. They have successfully adapted this curriculum to meet the needs of pupils whose learning was affected during the COVID-19 pandemic. They have dedicated more time to teaching early reading, for example, to ensure that pupils learn to read fluently as quickly as possible.

The curriculum sets out the key knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn. It is carefully sequenced. As a result, pupils develop and deepen their understanding during their time in the school. For example, in mathematics, pupils in Year 3 learn how to calculate the perimeter of shapes. They try different methods to get to the answer and learn which methods are the most efficient. In Year 6, pupils answer complex questions about percentages and fractions, drawing on the calculation methods they learned when they were younger. In art and design, pupils develop their skills in working with clay and mixing colours over time. As a result, they are able to create highly detailed clay models of their heads in Year 6. These showcase creativity and originality, together with pupils' well-developed artistic skills.

Teachers carefully check that pupils remember and that they understand what they have learned earlier. Teachers' knowledge of the subjects that they teach is typically strong. However, leaders have not ensured that staff have training to teach subjects beyond their areas of expertise. Where teachers' subject knowledge is not as strong, pupils' misconceptions are not identified and corrected as well as in other subjects. Occasionally, pupils are not given the help they need to understand important early concepts.

Leaders are determined that all pupils will learn to read well. This year, many pupils have joined the school in Year 3 with low starting points. As a result, leaders have revised their approach to teaching phonics. They have invested in a new phonics scheme and have trained staff thoroughly to teach it. Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly. Pupils practise their reading using books which match the sounds they have learned. As a result, pupils are catching up quickly. Where pupils fall behind, they receive extra support promptly. Older readers develop reading fluency and confidence. They relish opportunities to discuss books in well-structured group sessions, which help them to develop their vocabulary and encourages them to develop a love of reading.

Pupils with SEND receive effective extra help in class. Teachers skilfully support pupils with SEND. They break down questions into smaller steps, so that pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils are encouraged to develop understanding of their rights and their responsibilities towards each other. They are taught the vocabulary they need to talk about this and given opportunities to discuss sensitive issues. They are well prepared to contribute positively to life in modern Britain. Leaders organise visits to museums and galleries, which broaden pupils' experiences. After-school clubs offer pupils further enrichment activities, including learning how to play chess at a high level and compete in tournaments.

The governing body have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They check arrangements for safeguarding and the quality of pupils' learning through regular on-site visits. Their work enhances the effectiveness of the school. Most staff, including those in the early stages of their careers, said that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being. Relationships with parents and carers are typically strong, but some said that they find it difficult to have discussions with leaders about any concerns they may have.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained and they are vigilant for any signs which might show a pupil is at risk of harm. There is a clear system in place for staff to report any concerns. In staff meetings, leaders frequently include a focus on keeping children safe. Leaders and governors work well together to manage the safe recruitment of staff. As a result, there is a strong culture of safeguarding.

Leaders offer guidance to parents where appropriate, for example, on how to create a calm morning routine, so that pupils arrive on time and ready to learn. Leaders work closely with external agencies, ensuring that pupils and their families receive the additional help they need.

The school teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe online and how to identify potential risks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, staff do not have the subject knowledge they need to identify any misconceptions and to ensure that pupils grasp important concepts securely. This leads to inconsistencies in how well these subjects are taught. Leaders should ensure that all staff have high-quality subject-specific training, so that the curriculum is delivered consistently well.
- Some parents raised issues around communication with leaders. They found it difficult to raise with leaders any concerns that they may have. Leaders should strengthen lines of communication with parents.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2017.

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

Unique reference number	133939
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10255459
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	468
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Majid Saleem
Headteacher	Denise Hughes-Mulhall
Website	www.parkhilljunior.com
Date of previous inspection	12 and 13 July 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-size school.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff.
- The inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body, and with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were considered as part of this inspection.

- The inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding through scrutiny of the school's single central record of pre-employment checks as well as other records, and through discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Julian Grenier, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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