

Inspection of a good school: Parkwood E-ACT Academy

Longley Avenue West, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S5 8UL

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 March 2023

Outcome

Parkwood E-ACT Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders know this school well. They care for every pupil. Leaders are committed to making it a place where pupils get the best possible experiences. Pupils enjoy their learning. Teachers work hard alongside the pupils and encourage them to do their best. The support they give to pupils helps most of them achieve their learning goals. Pupils can explain their learning. Most pupils remember important knowledge. Some do not always remember things they have learned from previous lessons.

The school has a strong set of values which pupils use as a guide. The values of being ready, respectful and safe influence everything they do. Because of these values, there are high expectations of all pupils. Pupils meet these expectations and behave well around the school and in their lessons. They are respectful towards each other and adults. Pupils say that bullying is rare. When it does occur, leaders deal with it. Pupils feel safe and well looked after in this school.

Leaders provide extra activities that pupils will enjoy. They know this because they ask pupils what their interests are. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are encouraged to make full use of these extra opportunities. Leaders make sure that there is support available to pupils to take part if they need it.

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

Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum for all pupils. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers plan lessons so that pupils build up their knowledge and skills. Activities at the beginning of lessons remind pupils of important knowledge they will need to remember. This is helping them to improve their knowledge. In the past, pupils have not always remembered important knowledge in humanities subjects. Pupils are now getting better at remembering the most important knowledge in these subjects.

Teachers check pupils' understanding throughout each lesson in most subjects. When they do this in class, pupils say they find this very helpful. Teachers use different ways to

help pupils improve their work and written tasks. Some methods are more effective at developing pupils' learning than others. For example, in English, feedback to pupils helps them to improve their work. In some other subjects, feedback and checking for understanding is less successful. Pupils do not always respond to feedback as they should. Some pupils do not produce the quality of independent work they are capable of.

There is a wide range of support available for pupils with SEND. Teachers use detailed knowledge of individual pupils to support them with their learning. As a result, most pupils with SEND meet their intended learning goals. However, more could be done to remove some of the barriers to learning some pupils have. Leaders are aware of this. They are working hard to provide teachers with the training and support they need to help them to remove these barriers.

Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in leadership across the school. These changes have had a positive impact. For example, the new senior leadership team have improved the curriculum for higher-attaining pupils. Inspectors saw evidence of the impact of this work. In English, for example, careful questioning extended and developed pupils' thinking.

Leaders work hard with pupils, parents and carers to make sure pupils attend school. Despite the challenges that the impact of the pandemic has caused, attendance is improving.

Leaders encourage pupils to report any inappropriate behaviour or comments from others. Pupils say this kind of behaviour is very rare. Leaders take swift and effective action if such incidents occur. Pupils say that their learning is rarely disrupted by others.

The school provides a range of opportunities for pupils to learn beyond lessons. These include sporting activities, such as boxing, residential visits and musical productions. Leaders have put in place a high-quality programme of careers advice and guidance for pupils.

Leaders are considerate of the well-being and workload of staff. Staff are positive about working in the school. They told inspectors that leaders consult with staff when making changes. Staff told inspectors that leaders support their professional needs. Leaders always consider their professional and personal well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and the trust have developed effective procedures for checking, recruiting and training staff. All staff receive up-to-date training. They take necessary action to ensure that pupils receive the help they need. All staff and pupils know who to talk to when they have a concern. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils know who the designated safeguarding leads in the school are. Leaders make sure that pupils, including those who are the most vulnerable, have the pastoral care and support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The strategies to support some pupils with SEND do not always overcome the barriers to pupils' learning. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge as these strategies are not always well matched to pupils' needs. Because of this, some pupils with SEND do not reach the learning goals they are capable of reaching. Leaders should ensure that strategies to support learning for individual pupils with SEND are clearly defined in the information provided to teachers so that barriers to learning are overcome effectively.
- In some subjects, pupils' understanding and knowledge are not checked thoroughly enough. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge as a result. Because of this, the expectations of some pupils and the quality of their work are not as high as it should be. Leaders should ensure that pupils' understanding is checked effectively so that teachers can identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2018.

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

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| Unique reference number | 135934 |
| Local authority | Sheffield |
| Inspection number | 10255704 |
| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 789 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Lord Jim Knight |
| Headteacher | Gemma Cottingham |
| Website | https://parkwoodacademy.e-act.org.uk/ |
| Date of previous inspection | 6 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- A small number of pupils attend registered and local authority-approved, off-site alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- 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 met with the headteacher, trust leaders, senior leaders, curriculum leaders and other members of staff. The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees, including the chair of the trust.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussions.

- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school’s self-evaluation and improvement priorities and safeguarding documents. Inspectors evaluated information relating to pupils’ behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who responded to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, along with responses submitted as free text.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.

Inspection team

Barry Found, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Joe Barton

Ofsted Inspector

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