

Inspection of Park View Academy

146-148 Parkview Road, Welling, Kent DA16 1SR

Inspection dates: 23 to 25 May 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

'It's the best thing I've ever done,' said one parent or carer about choosing Park View as their child's school. Inspectors understand why this is so. Leaders provide high-quality care for each pupil. Many pupils have complex needs. Many have also been out of education for significant periods of time. Staff work together to support pupils in helping them to regain their confidence and to engage with learning. For many pupils, their attendance and behaviour improve during their time at the school.

Leaders have high expectations. They constantly keep the curriculum under review and offer a range of qualifications, including in English and mathematics, to meet pupils' needs.

Staff put a strong emphasis on ensuring that pupils can access visits and activities outside of school, for example pupils go to the opera and museums. These experiences help pupils to find out about the arts and the world around them.

Park View is warm and welcoming. This includes classrooms and open spaces, as well as staff interactions with pupils. They build positive relationships with pupils and do all they can to keep them safe from harm. Leaders make sure that bullying is not tolerated, any incidents are dealt with robustly.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. Staff think carefully about what pupils learn and when they should learn it. They carefully review each pupil's education, health and care plan (EHC plan) and check what gaps pupils have in their knowledge. They use all this information to make sure that pupils study a broad and personalised curriculum that meets their needs.

All pupils learn English and mathematics and a wide range of other subjects. Leaders offer a range of qualifications, including off-site, work-related courses and GCSEs. Some curriculum choices directly link to pupils' interests and aspirations, for example the courses in music and graphic design. Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) is rightly given a strong emphasis. Leaders ensure that the curriculum for careers and life skills prepares pupils well for adulthood.

Leaders' approach to the teaching of reading has many strengths. Younger pupils are taught how to read through daily phonics sessions and additional one-to-one support. They read books that match the sounds they are learning. Older pupils read regularly for pleasure. However, there is still some work to do to improve the teaching of reading. Sometimes when adults listen to pupils read, they do not ensure that pupils use their phonics as well as they should. Also, a few older pupils need further support with their reading fluency.

Leaders make sure that staff have all the resources they need to teach pupils. For example, the school has a modern and well-equipped music studio and a kitchen for food technology. Staff know their pupils' needs. Pupils are routinely supported through one-to-one teaching and/or small group sessions.

Most adults use their subject knowledge well to explain new ideas and concepts. For example, in geography, pupils were able to apply their learning by using grid references to identify different locations. However, in a few subjects, there is some variability in how well adults deliver the curriculum. For example, sometimes activities are not used as well as they could be to help pupils learn important knowledge.

Leaders focus on helping pupils to manage their own behaviour. Staff use a variety of strategies to help pupils self-regulate. Leaders ensure that staff know any physical intervention is a last resort. Any incidents of intervention are carefully recorded. Pupils usually behave well and show commitment to their learning. Occasionally, adults do not intervene as effectively as they could when pupils lose focus on their work or do not meet the school's high expectations.

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of the school's work. The PSHE programme teaches pupils about a range of topics, including relationships and personal safety. Leaders organise guest speakers who talk about hate crime and homophobia. Pupils learn to work together and feel part of a community, such as by making lunch in the kitchen or by learning about independent living in the school caravan in Rochester. Leaders are now planning to increase the number of clubs and activities during the school day.

Leaders are right to be proud of their well-being award. This reflects the emphasis placed on mental health and well-being. Staff have also been trained on a range of topics, including managing stress and anxiety. Leaders have ensured that therapy is available to support pupils with their social, emotional and mental health.

The proprietor and trustees work in partnership with leaders. The trust board has an appropriate range of skills and knowledge to fulfil its roles effectively. Collectively, the board ensures that leaders are held to account for the quality of their work. Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards are met and that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Staff morale is high at Park View. There is a clear sense of teamwork and dedication. Leaders make sure that staff receive a range of training and support. A few staff are new to their roles, and leaders have appropriate plans in place for their future development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff ensure that pupils' safety and well-being are the number one priority. All staff

are well trained and have regular updates on safeguarding, including online safety. They are alert to any changes in pupils' behaviour. Staff report concerns quickly, and leaders are equally quick to respond. Leaders' decisions have a strong focus on pupils' welfare. They work closely with a range of external agencies to share and act on information effectively.

Pupils learn how to stay safe in lots of ways, including through talks from the safer schools police officer.

The safeguarding policy is written in line with the latest statutory guidance and is available on the school website.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Sometimes adults' support for pupils who are learning to read is not as effective as it could be. For example, when listening to primary-aged pupils reading or during class activities that involve reading, adults do not ensure that pupils apply their phonics to decode unfamiliar words as well as they could. Likewise, pupils in other key stages sometimes have gaps in their phonic knowledge which affect their reading fluency. Leaders should make sure that staff maximise their support for pupils so that they quickly become fluent readers.
- In a few subjects, there is some variation in how well staff deliver the subject curriculums. Sometimes they do not use activities as well as they could to help pupils deepen their subject knowledge. Leaders should review their training so that staff develop more subject-specific expertise in delivering the intended curriculum.
- Occasionally, adults do not deal with poor behaviour as well as they could, for example when pupils lose focus and/or do not meet leaders' high expectations. Leaders need to refine their training for staff so that they can apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and with confidence.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	138386
DfE registration number	303/6000
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10291379
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	38
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Gemma Gosden
Headteacher	Emma Chatzispiridou
Annual fees (day pupils)	£50,540 to £69,713
Telephone number	020 3137 3629
Website	www.parkviewacademy.co.uk
Email address	parkview@alpschools.org
Date of previous inspection	30 April to 2 May 2019

Information about this school

- Park View is an independent special school. It caters for pupils with autism spectrum disorder and/or social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- Pupils are placed at the school by a range of local authorities.
- The proprietor is Gemma Godsen. However, the proprietor as recorded on the government's register of educational establishments Get Information about Schools (GIAS) is Philip Hoppenbrouwers. Leaders have been liaising with the Department for Education (DfE) to update the proprietor information on the GIAS website.
- The school uses four alternative provisions, three are unregistered and one is registered. Pupils attend these provisions on a part-time basis, for example one day per week to complete accredited work-related qualifications.
- The school accesses additional facilities for physical education, play and learning about independent living:
 - Crook Log Sports Centre, Bexleyheath, London, DA7 4HH
 - Danson Park, Danson Road, London, DA6 8HL
 - Allhallows Leisure Park, Rochester, ME3 9QD.
- The school's last full standard inspection was in May 2019 when it was judged to be good and all the independent school standards were met.
- The school had a material change inspection in March 2020. This change involved extending the capacity of the school from 30 to 40 pupils.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- This inspection was unannounced as commissioned by the DfE, the registration authority for independent schools. This was in response to concerns being raised with the DfE in relation to safeguarding and leadership and management at the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior

staff. The lead inspector also met with the proprietor and the managing director.

- Inspectors also held telephone conversations with local authority leaders to discuss safeguarding and the quality of education provided to pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, PSHE and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers, supporting adults and pupils about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work in a range of other subjects.
- Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and behaviour. They reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including pre-employment checks on staff, risk assessments and case studies. Inspectors considered the views of parents, staff, pupils and other agencies to help evaluate the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors did not make a separate judgement on the sixth form. This is because there were too few pupils on roll to avoid identifying individuals at the time of the inspection. However, inspectors included sixth-form provision when evaluating evidence for the other judgement areas.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence to evaluate compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspectors considered replies to Ofsted Parent View and the online surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Sam Hainey, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jo Jones

Ofsted Inspector

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