

Inspection of Parkwood Primary School

Deanwood Drive, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent ME8 9LP

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to this friendly and welcoming school. They are happy and kind to one another. Pupils enjoy the well-equipped playground. They play together happily. Pupils do not worry about bullying because it does not happen very often. When it does, staff take it seriously and deal with it quickly.

Leaders expect pupils to behave well. Pupils know the school's rules of 'be safe, be respectful, be ready' and they strive to live up to these. Pupils enjoy learning and are eager to talk about what they have learned. They achieve well in English and mathematics. They do not, however, achieve as highly as they should in some other subjects, because the curriculums in these subjects are not yet as well developed.

Pupils learn how to make a positive contribution to society. They fundraise for different charities and pupil 'litter-pickers' check for litter around the school. Pupils also learn about different cultures. They are respectful of people's differences. They say that 'everyone is welcome here'.

Pupils' mental health and well-being are supported well. Pupils appreciate how the 'Talk and Toast' and 'Wake and Shake' breakfast clubs offer a calm, positive start to the day.

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

Leaders know that pupils have not achieved as highly as they should in English and mathematics in recent years. Leaders have made it a priority to rectify this. They have established an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum for these subjects that begins right from the start of early years. Leaders have trained staff so that they have strong subject knowledge in these subjects. In English and mathematics lessons, staff explain important concepts to pupils clearly and accurately. They use resources well to support pupils' understanding. Leaders make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the help they need. Teachers break learning down into small steps. They provide additional resources to help these pupils access the curriculum.

Children get off to a strong start in learning to read. Leaders have established a consistent approach to teaching phonics. This is taught well. Pupils build on these strong foundations in Year 1. Teachers regularly check the phonic knowledge that pupils remember. They give pupils extra help if they are struggling. This helps pupils to catch up quickly. As pupils continue through the school, they become increasingly fluent and confident when reading more complex texts.

Leaders are now developing the curriculum in all other subjects. They have staggered their approach to this to make staff workload more manageable. Senior leaders have trained subject leaders. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and passionate. They have a clear, aspirational vision for their subject. In some subjects,

leaders have introduced a well-sequenced, ambitious curriculum. However, these curriculums are very new and are not fully embedded.

Furthermore, some subjects are still in the early stages of development. In these subjects, teachers do not know precisely what pupils need to learn and when they need to learn it. Teachers are unable to plan activities that help pupils to remember knowledge over time. Teachers do not check what pupils have remembered routinely. Therefore, they cannot identify gaps in pupils' knowledge consistently well. This means that while some pupils can recall their learning and can make connections with prior learning, too many pupils struggle to remember what they have been taught. As a result, in many subjects, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Despite this, pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning. They work hard in lessons and are eager to do well. Leaders have set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Teachers have established effective routines to support this. No learning time is lost.

Currently, children also do not achieve as well as they should in early years. Sometimes, teachers plan engaging activities for children to practise important knowledge. When this happens, children persevere with their tasks and learn well. However, this is not consistent. Sometimes, children are given activities that do not focus precisely on what they need to learn. Adults are not focused enough on developing children's vocabulary. Furthermore, leaders have not considered carefully enough how the early years curriculum prepares children effectively for Year 1 in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Leaders plan a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop beyond the academic curriculum. Clubs and competitions help pupils to develop their fitness and their sporting talents. Pupils benefit from visitors to the school. For example, a visitor from The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association supported pupils' understanding of equality and diversity.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a culture where all staff make pupils' safety and well-being a priority. Pupils know whom to talk to in school if they have any worries. Leaders and staff work together to get pupils and their families the help they need. However, leaders do not always record their decisions and the actions they have taken in sufficient detail. This means that important safeguarding information could be missed.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They receive regular reminders of how to stay safe when online. Pupils also learn about road safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders do not consistently record in sufficient detail the decisions they have made and the actions they have taken in response to staff raising safeguarding concerns. This means that important safeguarding information could be missed. Leaders must ensure that their systems for recording safeguarding information are robust.
- In too many subjects, leaders have not identified what pupils need to learn precisely enough. Where this is the case, pupils do not build knowledge effectively so that they know and remember more over time. Leaders need to ensure that all subjects are planned so that the important knowledge that pupils will learn is sequenced clearly right from the start of early years.
- Leaders have not yet developed effective approaches to assessing pupils' learning in science and the foundation subjects. Teachers are not always clear about how to identify misconceptions and check that pupils are remembering the intended curriculum content well. Leaders need to implement strategies that enable teachers to check whether pupils have remembered important knowledge and to use this information to address gaps in knowledge effectively.
- Leaders have not yet considered the key knowledge that children must learn in early years in order to be ready for learning in Year 1. Furthermore, the quality of provision for children in early years is variable, and children are often not provided with activities to support their learning well enough. Leaders need to ensure that the early years curriculum identifies the key knowledge that children need to learn and that this is implemented consistently well.

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	118472
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10268195
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	547
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Terry Wildman
Headteacher	Alex Moir
Website	www.parkwoodprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection of Parkwood Infant School in February 2019, the school has amalgamated with Parkwood Junior School. The two schools formed Parkwood Primary School in August 2020.
- The previous inspection of Parkwood Junior School was undertaken on 28 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The school was judged to be good at this time.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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 met with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and pupils. They also met with representatives from the governing body and spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in art and design, early reading, English, geography and mathematics. 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.
- The lead inspector listened to some pupils reading aloud. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum and talked to pupils about their learning in other subjects.
- To inspect the school's safeguarding arrangements, inspectors met with leaders responsible for safeguarding and looked at relevant documentation, staff recruitment checks and training records. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met pupils from different year groups to talk about their learning and experiences at school.
- The views of staff and parents and carers were gathered through discussions and through Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Leah Morgan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Fisher-Pink	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Hylands	Ofsted Inspector

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