

Inspection of Park Junior School

Elm Road, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire GL10 2NP

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Park Juniors is an improving school. Staff want pupils to do well. Executive leaders have brought about positive change. Expectations of pupils are now much higher than before. However, many improvements are in their infancy. They still need time to become fully embedded.

Pupils are friendly and polite. They hold doors open for others and know the importance of good manners. Pupils trust staff to keep them safe because they take the time to get to know them as individuals.

Pupils behave well overall. They understand the routines and expectations. Staff sort out any friendship issues quickly. Behaviour at lunchtime has improved now pupils have more to do. They enjoy various activities and resources, from the library to football, games club to exercise.

Staff provide a variety of activities to enrich the curriculum. Clubs and trips to museums help bring learning to life. Pupils are keen to help out around the school. They eagerly take on responsibilities as house captains and tuck shop monitors. A highlight for many is the 'star award' assembly. Pupils achieve certificates for displaying the 'PARK' values.

Many parents praise the school's work. Positive comments include how the school has improved since being part of the federation.

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

The school has been through an unsettling time since the previous inspection. During this period, standards have slipped. However, the school is on an upward trajectory of improvement. Senior leaders provide a clear sense of direction. They are working determinedly to bring about sustainable changes in a considered way. This means that some aspects are further developed than others.

The teaching of reading is an urgent priority. Recently, the school introduced a new phonics programme for struggling readers. Books are well matched to the sounds pupils know. Although it is early days, some weaknesses exist in the support weaker readers receive. This prevents them from becoming confident and fluent readers. The school has plans to bring in early reading experts to provide further training and coaching for staff.

The curriculum has gone through significant change. It now identifies the essential knowledge pupils need to learn. In established subjects, such as mathematics and history, pupils can recall prior learning using relevant vocabulary. For example, pupils in Year 3 can explain the concept of settlement. They know how Stone Age people developed from nomadic hunter-gatherers to farmers. However, the school is in the early stages of evaluating the impact of the new curriculum on pupils' learning. Therefore, it does not fully understand how well pupils learn across all subjects.

Teachers know what effective learning looks like. They present information clearly. For example, teachers show pupils how to build their knowledge step by step and recap prior learning. This is helping pupils to learn and remember more.

The school has improved how it identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers plan learning that enables pupils with SEND to work alongside their peers. Nonetheless, some learning for pupils with SEND is not adapted precisely enough to meet their needs. This slows the progress these pupils make through the curriculum.

Pupils behave well most of the time. They respond to adult prompts quickly. A minority of pupils have complex needs. Staff help these pupils to regulate their behaviour so that learning is not disrupted. As a result of an improved curriculum and raised expectations, incidents of poor behaviour have reduced notably.

Through the curriculum, pupils know the importance of being responsible citizens. They raise money for charities and learn to respect other faiths and cultures. Pupils represent the school in sporting competitions and enjoy celebrating their achievements. They understand how to stay physically healthy and keep safe in the community.

Teaching staff speak positively about the raised ambition. They know that the school is now moving in the right direction. Staff value the opportunity to share expertise and best practices across the federation.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff vary in how well they implement the phonics programme. As a result, too many weaker readers do not gain the knowledge they need to become confident and fluent readers. The school must ensure that the agreed approach to teaching phonics is used consistently well so that pupils catch up rapidly.
- Not all staff know how best to adapt learning for pupils with SEND. This means that some pupils are not supported well enough to learn across the curriculum. The school needs to ensure that all staff understand how to tailor learning so that pupils build knowledge securely across all subjects.
- The school has not evaluated the impact of changes to the curriculum in some subjects. Therefore, it does not have a full picture of how well pupils learn the intended curriculum. The school should strengthen the checking of processes so that it can gather and evaluate the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	115539
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10284084
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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Parker
Headteacher	Lisa Jones (Executive headteacher)
Website	www.parkjuniorschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Significant changes in leadership, teaching staff and governance have occurred since the previous inspection. The executive headteacher joined the school in January 2022, following a period of interim leadership.
- The school became part of the Stonehouse Park Federation in December 2021. The federation consists of Stonehouse Park Infant School and Park Junior School.
- Schools in the federation share the same executive headteacher, executive deputy headteacher and governing body.
- A special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) took up post in January 2023.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the executive deputy headteacher, the SENCo and school staff.
- The lead inspector met with governors and held a telephone call with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with the school, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with leaders and looked more widely at pupils' writing.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 read to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector met the designated safeguarding lead, checked the single central record of adults working in the school, took account of the views of staff and pupils, and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, during breaktime, lunchtime and around the school site. They spoke with pupils and staff about behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how the school supports their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day. They considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. They also considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Berry

Ofsted Inspector

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