

Inspection of Parker's Church of England Primary Academy

Pound Hill, Saham Toney, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 7HP

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The executive headteacher of this school is Sarah Disney. She looks after this school and one other. This school is part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Oliver Burwood, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Willie Crawshay. There is also a head of school, Carla Lansdell.

What is it like to attend this school?

The six values of respect, hope, kindness, responsibility, strength and unity are threaded through everyday life at Parker's. Pupils are keen to show these values in their attitudes and in their relationships with each other. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They play happily in the playground, where older pupils look after their younger peers.

Adults encourage pupils to work hard and aim high. Pupils feel proud when their efforts are praised. They love to celebrate each other's achievements in weekly celebration assemblies. Adults have the same ambition for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are fully integrated in school life.

Pupils can apply for leadership roles, such as being on the school council or members of the librarian team. They relish the chance to have a say in the running of the school. They know their opinions are valued.

Pupils enjoy carefully planned trips that extend their horizons and enrich their learning. These include visits to a nearby wetland centre, Norwich Castle and the Imperial War Museum at Duxford. The school provides a residential trip for the oldest pupils. This helps to promote their independence and resilience.

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

Following a curriculum review, the school has designed a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum. The curriculum in each subject sets out the key knowledge pupils need to learn in each year group. Documents break this knowledge down into manageable chunks. They specify the order in which these should be taught so that pupils' learning builds gradually.

The needs of the mixed-age classes have been carefully considered. The curriculum is designed to ensure pupils learn the knowledge they need each year. In a very small number of subjects, teaching is not always precisely matched to the needs of the different age groups in a single class. The planned activities do not always promote pupils' progress as effectively as they could.

In the early years, children quickly settle into the school's clear routines and expectations. Adults plan activities that inspire children to think deeply. For example, after listening to a story about Rosa Parks, the children made a 'bus' outside. They acted out the story, recalling what happened, and could explain why discrimination is unfair.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They explain things clearly and often recap on pupils' previous learning. From the Reception class to Year 6, teachers highlight the subject-specific vocabulary pupils need to learn. Pupils remember what has been

taught. They use appropriate language when talking about and recalling their learning.

The school promotes a love of reading. High-quality books underpin learning in all subject areas. Daily phonics sessions in the early years and key stage 1 are taught well by skilled adults. Pupils who fall behind get extra help to catch up. Most pupils learn the sounds they need to be able to read fluently by the end of Year 1. Older pupils in key stage 2 who are not confident readers do not always get the support they need. This is because some adults in key stage 2 have not yet been trained in the school's chosen phonics programme.

Most pupils behave well. Adults model the behaviour they expect. They are consistent in their approach to managing behaviour. As a result, classrooms are generally calm spaces, conducive to learning. A small number of pupils struggle to meet adults' high expectations. These pupils get additional help to regulate their feelings and emotions.

The school quickly identifies pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their classmates, sometimes with adapted tasks or additional adult support. The school ensures pupils with SEND get the help they need.

Pupils' personal development is a high priority. Lessons in relationships and health education teach pupils age-appropriate social and emotional skills. Pupils are encouraged to be active citizens. They fundraise for charities and litter pick in their local community. Religious education lessons and visitors to the school teach pupils about the world's major religions. Pupils' understanding of the need to respect others, regardless of difference, is well developed.

The trust provides a clear structure for governance. While there have been changes in the membership of the local governing board, the trust has continued to support and challenge leaders appropriately. Staff appreciate the networking and training opportunities offered by the trust and the federation. They are supportive of leaders and proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a very small number of subjects, the curriculum does not fully meet the needs of the mixed-age classes. Sometimes, pupils are engaged in activities that are not appropriate for what they should be learning. The school should consider how best to develop the curriculum in these subjects so that the activities and resources better meet the needs of all pupils.

- Not all staff working in key stage 2 have been trained in the use of the school's chosen phonics programme. Consequently, older pupils in the early stages of learning to read do not always receive the precise support they need to progress. The school must ensure that all staff receive the training they need to effectively support older pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

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	148151
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10288580
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Willie Crawshay
CEO of the trust	Oliver Burwood
Executive headteacher	Sarah Disney
Website	www.parkers.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust.
- The school is federated with Caston Church of England Primary Academy. The executive headteacher oversees both schools in the federation.
- Parker's Church of England Primary Academy converted to become an academy in November 2020. When its predecessor school, Parkers Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school has a religious character. Its previous section 48 inspection took place in March 2019. The next section 48 inspection will take place within eight years.
- 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with a range of leaders, including senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, trust leaders, including the CEO and the deputy CEO, governors, including the chair of governors, and a representative of the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work from science and history. The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, 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 reviewed the responses to Ofsted's parent and staff questionnaires. They also spoke with pupils, parents and staff to gather their views of the school.

Inspection team

Caroline Crozier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tessa Holledge

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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