

# Inspection of a good school: Parkwood Hall Co-Operative Academy

Beechenlea Lane, Swanley, Kent BR8 8DR

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Inspection dates:

10 and 11 October 2023

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The principal of this school is Simon Collins. This school is part of the Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy Trust. The school is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Philip Osman.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils like coming to this school. They feel safe here and know that their teachers care for them. They enjoy making friends and getting to know other pupils. Many parents told us about the positive impact that attending this school has had on their child. For example, in response to our survey, one parent wrote, 'Our son is excited about going to school and the things he does there. They've helped with his confidence and opening him up to trying new things.'

Although pupils enjoy their lessons, they do not always learn as much as they could. Sometimes what they are taught is not challenging enough or does not take account of their different starting points. Pupils are not always given the opportunity to deepen and extend their learning to their full potential.

There are a wide range of enrichment activities, which form part of the school day. Pupils benefit from learning about topics such as horticulture, bike maintenance and cookery. They enjoy learning outdoors, making use of the school's grounds and woodland site. These opportunities help pupils to develop their confidence and widen their experience of the world.

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

Recently, there has been a strong focus on improving systems to ensure that pupils are safe and happy here. The school has also introduced new approaches to improve pupils'

behaviour. This work has been successful. However, plans to improve the quality of the curriculum and its delivery are in the early stages of development.

The planning and delivery of the curriculum across the school are early in their development. Although there are curriculum plans in place, these need further refinement in most subjects. The detail provided to teachers is not always specific enough about what should be taught and how. This contributes to variability in the effectiveness of lessons. While there are systems to assess pupils' progress, these are often not used well to inform what pupils are taught. Equally, teachers are aware of pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans but do not always use these effectively to ensure that work is accessible to all.

There is variability in how effectively pupils are taught to read. Many pupils follow a well-structured reading programme. The books and resources they are given match this programme, and staff have received some training in its delivery. The progress of these pupils is clear to see. However, this programme is not used for all pupils. The teaching of reading to less-able pupils is not ambitious enough and does not enable them to transition to a phonics-based programme when they are ready to do so. Similarly, the teaching of reading to most-able pupils is not always challenging enough.

The school provides careers education, advice and guidance to all pupils from Year 7. This includes opportunities for students in the school's sixth form to participate in a period of work experience. The school complies with statutory legislation, which states that they must provide impartial advice about further education options, including colleges and apprenticeships.

Pupils learn about life in modern Britain through the school's programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Like other aspects of the curriculum, this subject is still being refined. In particular, this is to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils in this particular context. As part of this programme, the school teaches about relationships and sex and health education. Pupils are also taught about topics such as healthy eating and how to prepare their own food.

The school addresses challenging behaviour effectively. Staff understand that many of their pupils need additional support to improve their behaviour. Their work in this area is effective, resulting in a generally calm and focused learning environment. The school's approach, based on understanding the root causes of behaviour, is delivered consistently well by staff.

Over the last year, the majority of the leadership team has changed. The current team has the capacity and expertise required to improve the school. Staff feel well supported by senior leaders, particularly in managing challenging behaviour. They feel valued because they know that their workload and emotional well-being are considered. The structure of the board of trustees has also changed recently. Although in the early stages, the evidence indicates that these changes will help governors to hold leaders to account more effectively for the quality of education.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

During the inspection, it was identified that the school had failed to carry out one of the necessary pre-employment checks on some members of staff. Once this was identified, leaders took immediate action to put this right. A risk assessment has been carried out and leaders are in the process of making sure all checks are carried out as soon as possible.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects the curriculum is not coherent and well sequenced. There is not enough support and guidance for teachers on precisely what should be taught and how. The school should continue with their plans to develop the curriculum further and train teachers in its delivery. This will help to ensure that teaching is more consistently effective.
- Information about pupils is not used consistently well to inform teaching. This includes information from assessment as well as EHC plans and individual education plans. The work given to pupils is sometimes not accessible to them or it is not sufficiently challenging. The school should ensure that teachers and support staff understand how to use the information available to them when planning their lessons.

## 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 predecessor school to be good in November 2014.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141957
<b>Local authority</b>	Kensington and Chelsea
<b>Inspection number</b>	10290282
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Academy special converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	119
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	36
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Philip Osman
<b>Principal</b>	Simon Collins
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.parkwoodhall.co.uk">www.parkwoodhall.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is a special school that caters for a wide range of needs, including autism and moderate and severe learning difficulties. Many of the pupils also have associated conditions, including speech, language and communication and social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils at the school have EHC plans.
- The school has a capacity of 80 pupils but has currently got 119 on its roll. It is currently in discussions with the Department for Education to increase its capacity to 120 pupils. There is no indication that the current site or staffing are not suitable for the number of pupils currently on roll.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

- Since the school was last inspected, there is a new principal. There have also been several other changes in the senior leadership team, including a new designated safeguarding lead.
- Inspectors were aware during this inspection of a serious incident involving a child who used to attend this school that had occurred since the previous inspection. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the incident were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.
- The school includes on-site boarding provision, which is currently used by 11 pupils.
- The school currently uses three unregistered alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- 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.
- This inspection was carried out at the same time as an inspection of the boarding provision. The inspectors only inspected the education provision at this school.
- Inspectors met with a range of leaders, including the principal, the designated safeguarding lead and other members of the senior leadership team. The lead inspector also spoke with representatives of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication, literacy and language; physical development; and personal development. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited lessons and discussed the curriculum in some other subjects, including mathematics.
- 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.

## Inspection team

Chris Ellison, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Louise Ling

Ofsted Inspector

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