

Education and boarding residential inspection summary for Parkwood Hall Co-Operative Academy

Beechenlea Lane, Swanley, Kent BR8 8DR

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

Outcome

The education overall effectiveness judgement is: 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 judgement for the experiences and progress of children in the residential provision is: good

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.

The inspectors made **two recommendations** to help the school improve in relation to the curriculum and how it is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils.

What is it like to stay at this school?

- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time in residential care. They present as happy, safe and well supported and cared for by a staff team whose members have detailed knowledge of their individual care and communication needs.
- As a result of improvement made since the last inspection and an increase of staff-to-pupil ratio, pupils have made significant progress. For example, pupils who previously were unable to communicate verbally are now learning to talk and pupils who previously displayed behaviours that challenged over a sustained period have experienced a reduction in such behaviours. All pupils have experienced improved levels of engagement with staff.
- Pupils are supported by staff who have innovative skills and ideas. Staff are provided with clear methods to support pupils through detailed positive behaviour strategies that inform pupils' care plans. These innovative approaches are used to further support and help children to explore issues that may be sensitive. For example, a puppet called Grandpa Burt is used as an aid to help children communicate more openly. This has helped some children to not feel ashamed or embarrassed about some topics they want to talk about.
- Parents are generally positive about the experiences that pupils receive. They talk about good communication and are of the view that the residential part of the school gives pupils positive opportunities and experiences.
- Education plans and targets for pupils are included in their residential care plans. This allows staff to continue to work on pupils' educational targets during social times.
- Pupils talk passionately about the experiences they have in the residential provision. There is a wide range of games available as well as resources on site, such as adventure playgrounds and cycling areas. Staff have registered and set up a Scout group. This has allowed pupils to feel connected to the wider Scout community. The school Scout group has been identified as an exemplar of how to make Scouting inclusive.
- Prior to a pupil moving into the residential provision, residential leaders complete thorough assessments. These include assessments of the known and presenting risks of the new pupil and include consideration of what this may mean for other pupils already staying in residential care. When leaders conclude that they are unable to safely meet the needs of a referred pupil, a comprehensive response regarding the reasons why is provided.

- Pupils are supported to develop independent skills. All pupils are encouraged to carry out daily chores. Pupils also obtain independence skills through partaking in daily routines, such as preparing food and tidying their bedrooms.
- The residential part of the school is appropriately decorated in terms of pupils' bedrooms and communal areas. Pupils are consulted about their wishes and their bedrooms are designed in accordance with their individual choices and needs. While the majority of the environment is well decorated, the corridors and entrance areas show signs of age and disrepair. Some damage identified was in place at the time of previous inspection. This is the first thing pupils see when coming home from school and detracts from a homely environment.

The school **does not meet the national minimum standards for residential special schools** relating to staff recruitment and checks on other adults.

The inspectors made **one recommendation** to help the school improve. This was in relation to the decoration of the environment in residential provision.

- View the full inspection report for the education provision:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/25/141957>
- View the full inspection report for the boarding residential provision:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/10/1159380>



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