

Inspection of Parklea Primary School

Cranbrook Drive, Sundon Park, Luton, Bedfordshire LU3 3EW

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and most attend happily. They love to learn and work hard. Pupils' knowledge is improving thanks to improvements the school has made to the curriculum. Where these improvements are in place securely, pupils achieve well. However, pupils in the past have not benefitted from these improvements. They have not achieved as well as they should in national tests.

Pupils try hard to live up to the school's high expectations. They show good manners, such as holding open doors for others. Most pupils behave well. Consistent approaches to behaviour help pupils who need extra support. Pupils know who to speak to if they have any worries.

Pupils have an active role in the school. They benefit from the different opportunities they have to hold positions of responsibility. Representing the school is important to them. School councillors provide a link between pupils and the school. They suggested setting up lunchtime clubs, for example.

Pupils learn to consider how others may feel and think. Staff show how to do this throughout the school day. Pupils are compassionate towards others. Pupils feel included and valued, including those who join part-way through the school year.

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

Merging Parklea from two schools, across two sites, was more challenging due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this has been achieved successfully.

The school has recently re-designed its curriculum. The school's curriculum planning is well-considered and develop pupils' knowledge in a logical sequence. This begins with learning in Reception class. In most subjects, teachers have clear procedures to follow. They have received well-considered training in how to teach each subject. Teachers have a strong understanding of what will help pupils to learn well. Pupils' knowledge is developing securely with this effective teaching. However, this has not yet impacted published outcomes. Some pupils have gaps in prior knowledge. Pupils have effective support to fill these gaps.

In some subjects that are newer or being reviewed, the school does not have as clear an understanding of staff's subject knowledge. Where staff have not had precise training or guidance, their subject knowledge can vary. This leads to instances where gaps in pupils' understanding, or misconceptions are not routinely identified and addressed. This means pupils do not secure their understanding of important content as well as they could.

Reading is a high priority. Children start learning to read as soon as they begin in Reception classes. Staff are well-trained to teach reading. They know how to make sure pupils remember the sounds they are learning. The programme the school is using has developed over time. However, previously, pupils were not reading books

that matched their phonics knowledge. They did not get the practice they needed to become fluent readers. This has changed. Pupils now read books that are matched well to their knowledge. This means they can practice their reading skills often and they can mostly keep up. Older pupils who are not yet fluent readers receive extra support tailored to help them catch up with their peers.

Skilled staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Staff work closely with parents and external agencies. The staff know the pupils well. Consequently, they can provide pupils with accurate guidance when they need it. The school has high expectations for pupils with SEND. They make strong progress.

Children in the early years listen carefully during class learning sessions and confidently complete independent tasks. They get on well with each other. Well-trained staff support children to learn and develop their language and communication skills. This prepares them well for Year 1 and beyond.

Pupils behave well. Classrooms are calm and orderly places, where pupils can learn successfully. In the playground, pupils know they can ask adults for help when they have minor disagreements. For a few pupils who find it harder to manage their behaviour, staff provide effective support to help them.

The curriculum extends beyond the academic. The varied clubs and trips enhance the learning that the pupils carry out in school. The school prepares pupils well for their futures. Pupils learn about equality and diversity. The carefully planned assembly themes reinforce these important values. This helps pupils understand and respect differences.

The school has a new leadership team. Alongside the governors, the school accurately understands its strengths and areas to work on. These actions have positively impacted on the standard of work the pupils produce and their retention of knowledge. Staff have been a core part of this work. The school has placed a high priority on maintaining staff well-being when making necessary changes.

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 few subjects, the subject knowledge of staff varies. This leads to occasions where staff do not identify gaps in knowledge or misconceptions that pupils have. This means pupils do not secure their understanding of important knowledge as well as the school expects them to. The school should ensure staff are provided

with the ongoing training and guidance they need to identify and address misconceptions and gaps in knowledge pupils have.

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	109556
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10294919
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	539
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Hammond
Headteacher	Stephen Spooner
Website	www.parklea.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	30 and 31 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In September 2019, Parklea Primary School opened. It was an amalgamation of Cheynes Infant School and Sundon Park Junior School. The school is on two-sites. The January 2018 inspection was of Cheynes Infant School only.
- Most of the leadership team is new since the previous inspection.
- Since the last inspection the number of pupils on roll has grown.
- At the time of this inspection, the school was not making use of 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.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents provided by the school, including development plans and the school's self-evaluation form.
- 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, including attendance, that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading; mathematics; computing; science; and history. They scrutinised work, visited lessons, looked at workbooks and spoke to pupils. The lead inspector listened to several pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors also gathered evidence about the curriculum in personal, social and health education, writing, art and French by meeting with leaders, looking at workbooks, and talking to pupils.
- The inspectors considered the 51 responses and the 39 free-text responses made by parents to the survey, Ofsted Parent View. Two inspectors met with parents at the end and the start of the school day. The inspectors also considered the 59 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jessie Linsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Judith Sumner

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