

Inspection of The Park School

Onslow Crescent, Woking, Surrey GU22 7AT

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| Inspection dates: | 1 and 2 October 2024 |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

The headteacher of this school is Zara Wright. This school is part of the Weydon Multi Academy 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), John Winter, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ralph Johnson.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where pupils come first and adults make decisions in pupils' best interests. Staff expect the very best from pupils both in their work and conduct. They skilfully foster pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. Adults take time and care to get to know pupils and help them succeed in all aspects of their education. Professional relationships between staff and pupils are trusting and respectful. Pupils feel happy and safe. There is very occasional bullying, but staff deal with it straightaway.

The school goes the extra mile to make sure that pupils benefit fully from the wide range of interesting opportunities provided. For example, pupils revel in taking part in the origami, sports, gardening, singing and boccia clubs. They develop their leadership skills through taking on various roles, such as school councillors and mentors. Pupils relish going on a wide range of interesting trips. For example, they visit the theatre, art galleries, museums, an adventure centre and the tennis club. Older pupils thoroughly enjoy participating in outdoor expeditions.

The school's careers programme is well thought out. Staff give pupils insight into a wide range of future jobs and post-16 options, ensuring that pupils receive independent and impartial guidance.

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

Leaders, governors and trustees are steadfast in their aim to set high standards in all areas of the school's work. They have left no stone unturned to ensure that this school moves from strength to strength. The trust and the local governing body have an accurate oversight of the school's work, which they use to support and challenge leaders effectively. Staff are conscientious and morale is sky-high. They value the support and training provided by the trust. Most parents and carers would recommend the school to others. One parent echoed the views of many by saying, 'We have been absolutely blown away with the school and could not ask for more.'

Across all subjects, pupils learn a well-crafted curriculum. It sets out clearly the important knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which it should be taught. The curriculum has in-built flexibility so that pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are met effectively. For instance, teachers work well with a range of specialist staff and therapists. They continually review and adjust the provision to cater well for each pupil's education, health and care (EHC) plan targets and starting points. Pupils leave school with a suitable range of appropriate qualifications that set them on the path for future success.

Pupils are courteous and well mannered. They look forward to their lessons. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to encourage pupils to discuss their ideas in different subjects. However, sometimes, teachers do not check and help pupils to make links with what they know already. This hinders pupils from remembering important knowledge.

Reading is a top priority. The school introduces pupils to everyday routines of reading. This includes reading texts for research, finding information online or listening to stories. The school's design of the curriculum ensures that pupils read a range of appropriate texts and build up their reading and comprehension skills well. Staff quickly identify and support pupils who need help to catch up with their reading.

Pupils' attendance is high. Robust and effective systems are in place, including working closely with families and other agencies to ensure pupils attend school regularly and on time.

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of the school's work. For instance, pupils raise funds for the charities they support and collect donations for the local food bank. They debate and discuss maturely their views on topics, including disability, gender identity and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. Pupils are taught important life skills to build their independence. For example, pupils visit the public library, post office, the café and supermarkets. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, teachers do not help pupils to make links with what they have learned previously. As a result, some pupils do not remember and secure important knowledge as well as they could. The school should ensure that teachers have the knowledge needed to ensure that pupils remember prior learning sufficiently well.

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

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| Unique reference number | 147524 |
| Local authority | Surrey |
| Inspection number | 10341876 |
| Type of school | Special |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 109 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Ralph Johnson |
| CEO of the trust | John Winter |
| Headteacher | Zara Wright |
| Website | www.thepark.surrey.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school converted to become a sponsored academy school in April 2020. When its predecessor school, The Park School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders took up their posts in September 2024.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements

(quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees, who is also the chair of the local governing board, the vice-chair of governors, a trustee and one other governor. She also met with the CEO, the chief operating officer and the executive director of academy improvement.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, and art and design. 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. The lead inspector spoke to a group of pupils about their learning in other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during visits to classrooms, during breaktimes and as pupils moved around the school. They also considered the responses to the online pupil survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Shazia Akram, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alan Johnson

Ofsted Inspector

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