



# Park High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 102236  
**LEA** Harrow LEA  
**Inspection number** 276683  
**Inspection dates** 1 March 2006 to 2 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Michael Lynes HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Thistlecroft Gardens
<b>School category</b>	Community		Stanmore
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	12 to 16		HA7 1PL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02089522803
<b>Number on roll</b>	1125	<b>Fax number</b>	02089526975
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Dr J Wise
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 April 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr A Barnes

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
12 to 16	1 March 2006 - 2 March 2006	276683

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Park High is a larger than average, popular school. About half of the students are of Asian origin and almost all students speak English fluently. Very few are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of students who have statements for special educational needs or who have learning difficulties is similar to the national average. The school was designated as a Technology College in 2002. It holds the Charter Mark which recognises the positive way in which it responds to the views of its community. The Hay 'Transforming Learning' project and the 'Building Learning Power' programme are significant aspects of the curriculum.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Park High is a very effective school. This is consistent with the school's own view. The leadership team and governing body have a shared and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Parents are extremely supportive. Examination results are good and the achievement of students is good and improving. This is due to the innovative curriculum which focuses the whole school community on really improving teaching and learning. These innovations do not have consistent impact on teaching and learning in all subjects, for example in English, science, design and technology, and modern foreign languages. When assessing work not all teachers set targets for students that explicitly explain how they can improve their learning. The school's specialist status for technology has helped improve provision in science, mathematics, design and technology and ICT. The wide range of extra curricular activities is a real strength and highly appreciated by students. These activities are very well attended. The school works very well with other organisations to ensure that students receive an outstanding level of care, guidance and support. Leadership and management have a clear focus on promoting the personal development and well-being of every student. Senior staff really listen to students' views and act upon them. As a result students feel that their needs and views are a high priority. Students enjoy coming to the school and develop a real sense of pride and commitment to it. They are confident, articulate and feel a deep sense of engagement in improving their own learning. The school provides good value for money and outstanding capacity to improve further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

Subject leaders need to ensure that the innovations in teaching and learning continue to raise achievement by consistently: \* sharing the good practice in both assessment and teaching and learning evident in most departments across all departments\* make better use of target setting with students so that they are very clear about what they need to do to improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement and standards are good. Students' attainment when they first attend the school is slightly higher than the national average. Progress was satisfactory in 2005, particularly in Key Stage 3. Inspection evidence shows that progress is now good at both Key Stages 3 and 4, because of the improved tracking of students in most departments. In 2005, National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 were above the national average. Students achieved better results in English and mathematics than they did in science. The realistic but challenging targets set by the school were exceeded, except in science where results were just below the target set. Standards reached in GCSE examinations were also above average and the school exceeded or matched its targets in most subjects. Staffing difficulties have impaired progress in

some subjects, particularly in design and technology and modern foreign languages. There was some underachievement for students with learning difficulties and lower attaining boys in 2005. However, better checking of students' learning has improved teachers' understanding of their needs and these groups now make good progress. This tracking of students' progress could be improved in English, design and technology, science and modern foreign languages. Test and examination results have improved steadily since the last inspection and inspection evidence confirms the school's predictions that they will improve further in 2006.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Students' personal development and well-being are outstanding. The school is an orderly and hardworking community. Attendance is excellent. A particular strength of the school is the influence of the 'student voice'. Students have positive attitudes to their learning and are attentive, well behaved and clearly demonstrate their enjoyment for learning. There is a good programme of careers education in each year group. Students are also well aware of the importance of a healthy and active lifestyle. The students are polite and courteous and behaviour is excellent. The relationships between students and teachers and between the students themselves are also excellent. The students are most positive about peer mentoring and understand the benefits of mentoring work both ways. The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is well developed and reflects the school's strong, caring ethos. The students say they feel safe in school and that any poor behaviour or bullying is dealt with immediately and effectively. There is a very good awareness of cultural and religious diversity. This was demonstrated particularly well during a Year 9 Assembly about Lent, which very effectively embraced a multicultural dimension. Students are well represented by the School Committee, who take their responsibilities very seriously. The committee has been instrumental in securing the Healthy School Achievement Award and in forging very effective links with the community through events such as the Senior Citizens' party and charity days. As one student said, 'The school respects the committee'. The school effectively uses external business expertise to help students develop an understanding of the place of work. Students participate enthusiastically in a wide range of work related learning. The impressive partnership between students and teachers has a very positive impact on achievement. This partnership is enhanced through the students' enthusiastic involvement in the 'Building Learning Power' project and the Hay 'Transforming Learning' programme.'

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Relationships between teachers and students contribute positively to students' motivation and progress. Planning is clear, expectations appropriate and learning styles are carefully considered in order to best

meet the needs of the students. Consequently, student progress is good. Students with statements of special educational needs and learning difficulties receive effective support from classroom assistants. The school continues to develop innovative improvement programmes that fully involve student views and they are increasingly taking responsibility for their own learning. They have had a positive impact on both teachers and students' attitudes to learning and progress in lessons. Assessment strategies have developed well and opportunities are effectively used by most teachers who have a clear view of student progress and achievement. The focus on 'assessment for learning' in many departments and the emphasis in lessons on levels of work has helped clarify for teachers and students what students need to do next to improve. However, not all subject leaders monitor this robustly and this leads to some inconsistency in students' progress in some subjects.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a broad and interesting curriculum. The school effectively matches the curriculum to most students' needs. There are successful links with other schools and the community that enhance the curriculum. Statutory requirements are met and the increased emphasis on vocational opportunities has offered a range of additional experiences for many students. The personal, social and health education programme has an increased focus on essential life skills and students are benefiting from the practical elements that help them prepare for the next stage in their learning. There is good support for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum and the 'e-learning' programme offers students additional opportunities that effectively supports their achievement. The curriculum is effectively reviewed annually and students, parents and governors are fully consulted. Students appreciate being consulted and are happy that their views become incorporated into lessons.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The care, guidance and different types of support given by the school are exemplary. Students feel safe in school, and the arrangements for safeguarding them are excellent and highly effective. They are confident that they can speak to teachers openly, and that any problems will be dealt with effectively. There is good extra help for students with personal or additional learning needs. Individual attention from the Learning Development department helps them to fit into school well and to make good progress. The school has an excellent programme for personal, social and health education. This has been developed significantly over the past year, taking into account students' views on relevant topics. A very enthusiastic and committed student advisory group has taken a leading role in this work. One student remarked that he felt 'passionate' about the programme. The school reviews student achievement closely. The role of the form tutor is critical to this, and arrangements are working well. Information is used constructively to adapt teaching strategies. Students are also

actively involved in assessing their own progress. Most have a good idea of how well they are doing, and of study priorities. Academic guidance is a relative weakness in some subjects but this does not negatively impact on the outstanding care and support that almost all students receive.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher has an innovative and successful approach to raising standards. For example, the 'Building Learning Power' and the staff professional development programme are beginning to raise achievement across the school. These initiatives have focussed the school's attention on improving learning for all students. The way in which the governing body has been involved in these developments is an example of their outstanding work. They provide challenge, rigour and a clear strategic direction. The headteacher is well supported by a very able senior leadership team. Resources are used well. The whole school community is effectively consulted on key issues. For example, governors, parents and the local authority were consulted before the innovative professional development programme for staff was instituted. Students feel genuinely involved in every aspect of the school and really enjoy learning at Park High. The school's self-evaluation effectively identifies the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Some weaknesses in subject leadership have been effectively tackled and these departments are now improving. However, some aspects of the student checking system are not monitored rigorously enough. Issues from the last inspection have been dealt with effectively. The provision for ICT has improved, marking is now more consistent and students with special educational needs and learning difficulties now make good progress. Attainment in modern foreign languages has not improved, though the recent appointment of an effective head of department has led to better teaching. These successes are indicative of the outstanding capacity for the school to improve further.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I want to thank you for the open and honest way you communicated your thoughts and feelings to us on our recent inspection of your school. The inspectors really appreciated how clearly you could tell us about what you liked and what you thought could be improved at Park High. We were impressed by how much you felt involved in important initiatives such as the 'Transforming Learning' and 'Building Learning Power'. We were particularly struck by one of your comments that you were 'passionate' about the personal, social and health programme. I am sure you realise that the way in which your teachers take account of your views and feelings is outstanding.

As you will see when you read the inspection report we agree with you that Park High is a good school. We think that the ways in which your personal development is nurtured and the care and support you receive is excellent. We think your exam results are good but that some of you could achieve even more. We have asked your teachers to use the progress checking system to tell you very clearly what you should do to get to the next stage in your learning. You need to get fully involved by asking them to do this in all your subjects. As one of you told us: 'We are the ones that know how we learn best and now we get a say in how we are taught'.

Thank you for helping to make our visit to your school such an enjoyable and interesting experience. I wish you all the best for your future.