



Parkside Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124197
LEA Staffordshire
Inspection number 281657
Inspection dates 7 February 2006 to 8 February 2006
Reporting inspector Doris Bell AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bradshaw Way
School category	Community		Stafford
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Staffordshire ST16 1TH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01785 617205
Number on roll	196	Fax number	01785 617205
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Steven Gibbens
Date of previous inspection	18 February 2002	Headteacher	Mr Steven Kendrick

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 7 February 2006 - 8 February 2006	Inspection number 281657
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Parkside is an average-sized primary school, where attainment on entry and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are both broadly average. A small number of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupil is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils joining the school last year, other than at the usual time, was above average. The present headteacher was appointed in January 2004, after the last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Parkside is now a good school. The upward trend in pupils' performance in the national tests since 2003 culminated in standards that were significantly above average in both key stages in 2005. Highly focused teaching, supported by thorough assessment and monitoring systems, helped the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 to make exceptionally good progress in their final two years. Writing was slightly behind reading in all age groups in 2005. The school is tackling this well. In the Foundation Stage, standards and the quality of education are good.

Because teaching is good and they are well cared for, pupils behave well, enjoy learning and achieve well. Their learning is constantly checked, and well-focused targets help them to make good progress. In some lessons, however, teachers still do not make the best use of time to ensure that the more able pupils go that step further with their learning.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher's excellent leadership and clarity of vision have very successfully created strong and effective teamwork among staff, governors, pupils and parents. All are determined to help the school to get even better. Governors and senior staff fulfil their roles well but the leadership and management of different subjects are at varying stages of development because of staff changes. Pupils' skill development, including the application of information and communication technology (ICT), is not well enough supported in some subjects. Nevertheless, the school's well-considered actions have resulted in good improvement since its last inspection. Its evaluation of the effectiveness of its work is thorough and accurate. It has the capacity to improve further and it now provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen the use of time in lessons so that more able pupils always have the opportunity to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Achieve consistency in the leadership and management of all subjects and take steps to minimise the effect of any staff changes.
- Ensure that pupils' skills, including in the application of ICT in other subjects, are developed progressively throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall good achievement for all groups of pupils is the direct result of high quality leadership by the headteacher, combined with effective teaching and rigorous assessment systems. They were key factors in the rapid progress that enabled pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 to reach such high standards in 2005 when, in both year groups, standards were significantly above average. The measures taken to foster good achievement in Year 4 are also proving effective. The school has successfully eliminated the causes of any under-achievement still evident at the last inspection. Targets have become increasingly challenging in all age groups because the school has an accurate

picture of each pupil's capability. As a result, all pupils are now making good progress, although work is still sometimes not well enough matched to the learning needs of more able pupils. The school knows and is addressing this through its robust monitoring. It is also successfully closing the gap between reading and writing that was evident in 2005. However, pupils do not develop skills systematically in subjects other than English, mathematics and science as they move up through the school. This includes ICT and the use of it to promote better learning in other subjects. The school has recently upgraded its ICT equipment in order to begin this process. Children get off to a good start and make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Most exceed the standards expected for the end of the Reception year. The astute deployment of well-briefed teaching assistants contributes effectively to the good progress made by pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. These pupils often reach the nationally expected standards by the time they leave the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development begins from the moment children start school in the Reception Year. Pupils throughout the school enjoy learning and their attendance is good. They meet the school's high expectations that they will 'Build Learning Power' by sharing, co-operating, persevering and collaborating. All of this has greatly contributed to their improved progress.

Pupils take responsibility, contribute to the community and are fully involved in decision making through, for example, the well-established school council and pupil questionnaires. They know that their views are valued, for instance, in helping to design the outdoor environment. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, and of why it is important to eat healthily and take regular exercise. All of this, combined with their good basic skills in literacy and numeracy, ensure that they are well prepared for life beyond school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Effective teaching, including accurate assessment and the rigorous tracking of pupils' progress, has secured good achievement for all pupils. The pupils' individual targets arise from what they have learned previously, and pupils are unanimous in their view that this helps them to make better progress. They are right. By meeting with each pupil to discuss and agree targets, teachers ensure that the pupils know how to improve. Pupils explain this well, describing the targets as 'challenging and making the work hard, but not too hard', and showing that they know how to progress from one level to the next. Teachers' marking is good. Pupils are successfully encouraged to evaluate their own and each other's work by using the checklists provided for them. Their progress is also aided by regular, carefully selected homework, which they appreciate.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work rate and behaviour, to which the pupils respond well. Most lessons proceed at a good pace, with activities that match pupils' different learning needs well. Occasionally, however, teachers do not use the time well enough and miss opportunities to help more able pupils make the faster progress of which they are capable. Well-briefed teaching assistants provide good support for different groups of pupils at different times.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The emphasis on improving pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy within an overall satisfactory curriculum has successfully raised achievement in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. All aspects of other subjects are taught adequately but as yet, insufficient attention is given to the step-by-step acquisition of skills within them, particularly the use of ICT. Staff have had training on these matters and the school plans to take action based on that training.

A good programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education underpins the pupils' capacity to stay safe and healthy. A large number of pupils participate in the good range of extra-curricular sports and arts activities provided for them. The curriculum is enriched by many visitors and by a good range of visits, including a residential experience for Year 6 pupils and the teaching of French in Years 5 and 6.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good care, support and guidance offered to the pupils helps them to do well and contributes to the school's improvement. Almost all parents recognise this and appreciate how well the school looks after their children. The school makes every effort to seek parents' views and to involve parents in supporting their children's learning.

Staff have a very good awareness of the needs of individual pupils and all child protection, health and safety procedures are fully in place. The school works well with external agencies and other schools to ensure that all pupils are well supported. Its good assessment systems effectively track pupils' progress and the targets that emerge from these provide good guidance to pupils to help them to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher's excellent leadership and clarity of vision are particular strengths that have relentlessly driven the school's good improvement since the last inspection. Very strong teamwork is now evident amongst staff and governors and there is good consultation with parents and pupils. All are fully committed to sustaining the high standards reached in 2005. All checks on the school's work have been used effectively to improve teaching and learning. For

example, areas for development form the basis of clearly defined performance management targets for staff.

Subject leaders fully understand their roles and responsibilities but they are at different stages in carrying them out. The development of their roles has been hindered by several changes of staff. However, staffing is now stable, and the headteacher and governors are considering sensible ways of minimising the effect on subject leadership of any staff changes or absences in the future.

Governors take their roles very seriously. They keep a close eye on pupils' achievement, often asking searching questions, for example, to ensure that spending is improving learning. The school improvement plan provides a very useful agenda for further development. It clearly encapsulates the school's reflective and accurate evaluation of its own work and its determination to become an even better school. The school rightly tackled its most important weaknesses first. Having significantly improved standards in English, mathematics and science, it is now tackling other subjects in a systematic way, sensibly starting with ICT. All of this successfully demonstrates the school's capacity 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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	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

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for making us so welcome in your school and for talking with us about your work. You clearly enjoy school very much and appreciate how much the school does to help you make good progress. We found that you were right in thinking that the school has improved a great deal in recent years. You go to a good school that has many good points and also some areas that need more work.

The good points:

- Almost all of you are now making good progress. Those of you in the older classes are catching up very well indeed with work you missed when you were younger.
- As you said, your teachers set challenging targets for you but they always help you to reach them. You are right to appreciate this.
- Your behaviour is very good. This is helping you to 'Build Learning Power' and you very clearly understand what this means.
- You are happy and confident to suggest improvements because you know you are safe and well cared for and that your opinions matter.
- Your headteacher leads and manages the school very well. He and all the staff and governors are very determined to make it better and better.

We have asked your school to help you to do even better by:

- Checking that teachers always use time well in lessons to make sure that every pupil, from those who find learning difficult to the most able, always makes good progress.
- Finding ways to ensure that if some teachers are absent, or there is a change of teacher, the subjects you are learning continue to be properly led and managed.
- Improving the way different subjects are planned and taught so that step by step you acquire good skills in all of them, including using computers better to help your learning.

We hope that, as a result of these improvements, you will make even better progress in the future and that you will develop a lifelong love of learning.