

# Parayhouse School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135175
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hammersmith and Fulham
<b>Inspection number</b>	316320
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	James Bowden

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7-16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	42
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Graham Lister
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sarah Jackson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	New Kings School Annex New Kings Road Fulham London SW6 4LY
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7751 0914
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7751 0914

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Parayhouse caters for learners whose complex special needs cannot be met in local authority maintained schools. The great majority has speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and moderate learning difficulties (MLD). Many also have a range of additional difficulties. Approximately a third has social, emotional and behavioural (SEB) difficulties. Learners may enter at any time during their school career subject to the school's admissions policy and where vacancies arise. All then remain at the school until the end of Year 11. All learners have a statement of special educational need and almost all are funded by a range of local authorities from across Greater London. The school's premises are shared with a London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham mainstream primary school.

There are generally far more boys than girls on roll, as is commonly found in such schools where learners have complex needs. Over a half is of White British origin and a quarter is of Black origin. The remainder comes from a wide range of ethnic minority groups. Approximately a fifth of learners do not have English as their first language. Two are looked after by a local authority. Four out of ten are entitled to free school meals, which is higher than the national average.

The school has its own governing body that reports to the Board of Trustees of the owners. It gained Investors in People (IIP) status in 2006. This is the school's first inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school provides very effectively for its learners and meets fully its aim of enabling them to become effective communicators, to develop optimum social skills and to acquire a confident and independent approach to learning that will ease their transition to further education. It is a calm and stimulating environment and has significant strengths. A major strength is the close-knit multi-professional team working in the school. This, along with the school's extensive work in partnership with other schools and organisations, enhances considerably the quality of learners' well-being and progress throughout the school. The school also works closely with parents and carers who are appreciative of its work, as shown by the positive comments from the very large majority who returned the parental questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection. One commented, 'I feel that the care, support and expertise of the school and the staff have given our child the prospect of a positive future in society that he wouldn't have otherwise had.' Many parents and carers regularly attend school special events and other activities throughout the year, which supports their child's personal development.

Learners' personal development, including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, is outstanding. They enjoy their education and, in a discussion group with the inspector, said the school is a friendly and safe place to be. Older learners appreciate the useful careers advice they receive and the opportunities they have to help their younger peers. Their confidence and self-esteem improve considerably as they move through the school, which prepares them well for the next stage of their education. The school also provides outstanding quality care, guidance and support for learners' personal and academic development. It is highly successful in supporting each individual in very specific ways. All, including the most vulnerable, are extremely well looked after in a safe, healthy and caring environment, which fosters excellent behaviour. The dedication, enthusiasm and commitment of all staff in working with learners underpin this aspect of the school's provision.

Achievement overall is good. On entry, almost all learners operate at 'P' levels, which are the levels that are below the standard National Curriculum levels in schools. In 2007, some moved on to National Curriculum Level 1 by the end of Year 6 and level 3 by the end of Year 9. By the end of Year 11, all learners gained accreditation at either GCSE foundation level or entry-level certification in a range of subjects. All make good progress in improving their language and communication skills in relation to their starting points.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and all other adults in lessons know their learners very well, working together very effectively to ensure learners make progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs). However, sometimes the work planned does not always challenge the full range of capability in classes, particularly for the few more capable learners. The curriculum is good because it meets the needs of learners, supporting well their academic progress and personal development. A particular strength is the wide range of enrichment activities within the school and opportunities for educational visits, including residential experiences for all learners both locally and in France.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides a very clear direction for the school and focus on improving the quality of education it offers. Consequently, there is a very strong ethos, which promotes learning, achievement, and high quality integrated care and education. Robust self-evaluation has enabled the school to identify accurately its strengths and areas for improvement. Governance is effective and sharply focused on supporting the

school's development. The school recognises that the board of trustees is small in number and, accordingly, has a limited range of expertise at its disposal. This limits its capability to work effectively with the school's governing body in its role as a critical and supportive friend of the school. The school's track record of improving learners' achievement, the consistency of all learners progressing to further education or training at the end of Year 11 over the past three years, and the clear direction set for further improvement show there is good capacity to improve further.

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

- Ensure that there is more challenge in lessons for the more capable learners.
- Increase the size of the board of trustees and broaden its range of expertise.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Although standards overall are very low because of the extent of learners' special needs and, for some, their negative experience of mainstream education, the progress they make is good. In relation to their starting points, they are meeting the expected rate of progress for learners with their particular needs and, in relation to the targets set for them in their IEPs. National comparisons are difficult to make because of the range of learners' difficulties within special schools. However, the school's participation in a national project comparing the progress of learners in other special schools shows that, in 2007, some learners made greater progress than expected for learners of the same ability in the national cohort, particularly in English, science and, to a lesser extent in mathematics.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Learners eat fresh and healthy food cooked on site and numbers taking school lunches increasing. They relish the opportunities for physical exercise, such as the whole school fitness sessions, held four mornings per week, and involvement in competitive sporting activities. Learners say they enjoy the wide range of extra activities the schools provides. During the inspection, younger learners who had been invited to the host primary school for the visit of a string quartet, were enthralled by the music and the explanations provided by the musicians. Learners respond very well to the school's rewards procedures, being very keen to gain merit marks in lessons and for their week's efforts, and fitness trophies. Attendance is good. Any authorised absence is mainly due to medical needs and unauthorised absence is low. Behaviour in and around the school is excellent, learners having been involved fully involved in deciding the school's rules and producing posters around the building to explain these. They are successfully involved in the school community, for example, through the school council. They are regularly involved in fundraising events for national and international charities. Learners are well prepared for their future because they have been enabled to make choices, are improving their language and communication skills, numeracy skills and ICT skills as well as developing their independence and social skills.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good working relationships between teachers, learners and all other adults in the room underpin the quality of lessons. Learners receive good quality support, including, where appropriate, one-to-one support, 'signing' or the use of specific communication aids. Learners are particularly appreciative of the extra support from other adults in lessons, one commenting, 'They explain in a way we understand, they understand us.' In a good mathematics lesson, 'yellow class' learners were working at three different tables where the work on weighing was matched well to their capabilities. Effective and challenging questions, as well as constructive praise, helped ensure learners were on task and making good progress. Though teachers' planning has a focus on ensuring all learners progress as well as they should, the work set does not always challenge higher attaining learners enough. There is also inconsistency in the quality of teachers' summing up of learning outcomes at the end of lessons and learners' involvement in this.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The National Curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of all learners and the whole school day is regarded as time for learning. There is a clear focus on communication, language, literacy, numeracy as well as on learners' personal skills, attributes and development. Teachers' use of ICT, including the shared use of a computer suite, enlivens learning as well as the curriculum, which in turn enhances learners' engagement and enjoyment. This ensures they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. A particularly strong enrichment programme successfully broadens learners' experience and enjoyment of their education. The school makes best use of its accommodation and shared facilities with the host primary school. Bright and colourful displays, including learners' work enhance the quality of the learning environment. A lack of a hall for sole use of the school and a dining area inhibits the spontaneous and flexible use of space and means that learners have to spend snack and lunch breaks within their classrooms.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The wide range of support and guidance offered by the school results in learners who are happy to attend and behave well, and who develop in confidence and independence as they progress through the school. Close working relationships with a wide range of other specialist agencies and professionals contribute extensively to learners' development and well-being. The school has been particularly successful in ensuring minimal unauthorised absence. There are also excellent working relationships with and involvement of parents and carers, which supports their children very well. The school tracks closely learners' personal development as well as their individual performance in relation to 'P' levels, National Curriculum levels and IEP targets. Because of this, the school has been able to identify areas for improvement in learning. This has enabled the school to plan overall priorities and, set targets, as well as providing individualised programmes to meet learners' precise needs.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Effective self-evaluation has enabled the school to identify accurately its strengths and areas for improvement. There is robust monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. This ensures that achievement, and high quality personal development, are at the forefront of its work, for example, through whole school strategic planning days. Strong liaison and collaboration between all staff ensure that every learner really does matter, improving their life chances beyond the school. The board of trustees is effective in its role as a critical and supportive friend of the school. However, it has identified a need to increase its membership and broaden its expertise to enable it to work more effectively with the school's governing body in supporting further the school's development.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

03 July 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Parayhouse School, London, SW6 4LY

I recently spent a day at your school seeing you in lessons and joining you in other activities. Thank you for making me feel so welcome. I also chatted to a small group of you who told me what you thought about the education you receive. I was impressed with your friendliness and your openness in chatting about your interests and life in the school. You have good positive attitudes and clearly enjoy your education. I was also glad to hear how much you enjoy the extra support from all the adults who work with you and all the activities and visits in which you take part.

You receive a good education. This is because:

- all the staff have your best interests at heart and make every effort to make sure you will do well in the future
- the school makes sure you are safe and well cared for and, use lots of other people to help you
- you make good progress and your self-confidence and communication skills improve greatly as you grow older
- you are involved in the life of the school and have opportunities to help others
- teachers make your lessons interesting
- the curriculum is interesting and includes some very good extra activities for you to take part in
- the leaders of the school have plans to make things even better for you.

To make things even better for you the school should:

- make sure that there is more challenging work for those of you who finish the normal work easily.

To make things better for you those in charge of the school should:

- have more expert people join them in order to make the school even better.

Once again, many thanks for making me feel welcome and good luck for your future.

Yours sincerely

James Bowden

Lead Inspector