

# The Park Lane (Foundation) Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110889
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	325251
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martyn Skinner

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	473
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	50
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sally Collier
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Val Cameron
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 June 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Park Lane Whittlesey Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE7 1JB

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 May 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger-than-average school in an established residential area in Whittlesey. The percentage of pupils eligible to claim free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average and very few speak English as an additional language. The overall proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, although an above-average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of staff changes, including at senior level. The current headteacher has been in post since April 2007.

A privately-run, after-school club operates on the school premises. Additional, funded provision for Nursery-aged children is managed by the governing body and was inspected as part of this inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school where enjoyment levels are exceptionally high. As one parent commented, the school is a 'happy and vibrant place'. The headteacher, well supported by her staff team, is clearly focused on meeting the pastoral and learning needs of all pupils. As a result of the strong sense of direction provided by the school's leadership, pupils make good progress on their journey through the school and leave Park Lane well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Achievement is good and standards are rising. Standards in English and mathematics in end of key stage assessments have been average in recent years. The impact of sustained good progress over the last two years is now being seen in above average standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Although progress is good overall it is not entirely consistent across the school. Leaders are well aware of the need to raise standards further in all year groups and have a clear strategy for achieving this.

The school is successful at meeting the needs of all pupils, providing a balanced and interesting curriculum which inspires pupils to do their best. The curriculum, already good, is currently evolving and not entirely consistent across the school. A whole-school approach to developing creative links between subjects is currently being explored in line with the school's aim to provide an outstanding curriculum. Teaching is good across the school and it is occasionally outstanding. Teachers work effectively to make learning interesting and they are skilful at motivating pupils to want to get better. In the very best lessons, pupils are totally engaged by the exciting content and high pace of learning.

Staff provide an exceptional level of care, support and guidance for pupils. This results in the outstanding personal development and well-being of pupils who show very positive attitudes to working together. The innovative 'zoning' of the playground on certain lunchtimes provides a good example of pupils helping each other to get the most out of their day at school. During these lunchtimes, very responsible Year 6 helpers support younger pupils in playing different games and learning new skills. The nurturing of excellent relationships between pupils is a striking feature of the school's work.

The great majority of parents express enthusiasm for current provision, which gives good value for money. They share inspectors' confidence in the ability of leaders and managers to continue to move the school forward. One comment, which was typical of many received, was as follows: 'I am very happy with Park Lane school and with the improvements that continue to be made. My child loves attending!'

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

When children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage their skills are broadly in line with national expectations, although often lower in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. Good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has had a significant impact on achievement, which is now good. This is leading to standards which are securely in line with, and in some areas above, those expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. There are very good assessment systems in place, which clearly indicate the progress made in each area of learning and inform the next learning steps. In addition, there is a strong commitment to providing an exciting, creative and safe learning environment.

This contributes to the children's excellent personal development. Adults make sure they know and value every child as an individual. Most teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is imaginative and challenging, with some outstanding practice in the Nursery. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes love learning and are inquisitive to find out how things work. Children develop the confidence to share their ideas, forming good relationships with adults and each other. Activities are well organised and the Nursery makes very good use of its outside learning area. This is shared with the Bumblebees childcare provision which also caters well for the children who attend. Reception classes are making satisfactory and increasing use of their outdoor spaces to enhance learning. Staff members build good relationships with parents and carers, providing them with a range of helpful information. The school has plans to develop this further by increasing the opportunities for the informal involvement of parents in their child's education.

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

- Accelerate progress from good to outstanding to further raise standards in English and mathematics in each year group.
- Enhance the curriculum further by building on the creative approaches already underway.

### **Achievement and standards**

#### **Grade: 2**

On entering the school, children's attainment is broadly as expected for their age. Detailed analysis of progress data shows that most pupils made good progress during the academic year 2007/08 and that this rate of progress has quickened further in the current academic year, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Evidence for good progress can be found in the improving quality of pupils' work, the good pace of learning in lessons and teacher's thorough assessments. This increased rate of progress is beginning to have a positive impact on standards across the school with the result that standards in English and mathematics in the current Year 6 are now above average. Despite good progress overall, standards are not yet securely above average in other year groups. There are no significant differences in the progress rates of boys and girls. Pupils who find learning difficult, including those with a statement of special educational needs, make good progress in line with their peers. More able pupils, including those identified as gifted and talented, also make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress. Over the last year, the school has seen a significant increase in the numbers of Year 6 pupils working at the higher level.

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

#### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are very friendly and courteous. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. From good beginnings in the Nursery they quickly grow in self-awareness and can reflect upon their feelings and actions in a positive manner. Pupils take their work seriously and talk enthusiastically about it. They strive to do their best and welcome high levels of challenge. A variety of opportunities is provided for pupils to use their initiative and become independent learners from an early age, and this contributes significantly to their overall personal development. Enjoyment of school is excellent. Pupils are keen to earn points for their 'teams' and are proud to have their achievements recognised in assemblies. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and behaviour across the school is exemplary. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy living and how to stay safe. There are many opportunities

for older pupils to take responsibility. Good examples of this are seen in the way Year 6 pupils help in the dining hall and the way that Year 5 pupils contribute as reading buddies for Year 1. The school council represents the pupils' views well and helps to shape developments, such as by introducing a 'Golden Apple' award for pupils who bring healthy snacks for playtime. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the local community and raise funds for local and national charities. Improving standards in literacy and numeracy, combined with good information and communication technology (ICT) skills, prepare pupils well for future success. Attendance is above average. However, progress is disrupted by the higher than expected number of parents who take their children on holiday during term time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils make good progress across the curriculum because teaching is good. Strong relationships between staff and pupils are at the heart of the good, and occasionally outstanding, teaching in the school. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together, with teaching assistants providing good support in each lesson. Throughout the school, work is well matched to pupils' needs, so that more able pupils are appropriately challenged and those who find learning difficult are effectively supported. Pupils understand their learning targets and teachers provide detailed guidance on how to improve their work. Their approach ensures that pupils are well motivated and actively participate in lessons, greatly enjoying many in-depth activities such as an exciting enterprise project or planning a sports tournament. As a result, they speak with enthusiasm and in great detail about the content of their lessons. Across all curricular areas, pupils understand the importance of making good progress and they are continually striving to improve their own performance because teachers make their expectations clear.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

There are very thorough planning systems in place to ensure pupils receive balance and breadth in their experience of the curriculum. An emphasis on meaningful links between different subjects results in a rich curriculum with plenty of 'hands-on' activities. Themed weeks play an important role in deepening understanding and increasing enjoyment. There is some inconsistency in the way teachers approach their planning for a more creative curriculum. The school recognises this and is determined to build on the creative learning approaches already under way to respond more fully to the interests and aspirations of all pupils. Nearly half of all pupils take part in the very wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as cookery and French clubs. Links with a specialist sports college enhance the opportunities in physical education, and achievement is particularly strong in this area. The school makes very effective use of technology with a regularly updated website and an individual webcast for each class. This emphasis is seen in the confident use of ICT by teachers and pupils in lessons. The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well because of the many opportunities to share and discuss their ideas and to work collaboratively.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

Outstanding care, guidance and support underpin pupils' learning and good progress. Many parents comment on the outstanding pastoral care pupils receive. Staff know the pupils' individual needs exceptionally well and are sensitive to the particular challenges some face in their personal lives. The school has good partnerships with outside agencies which help more vulnerable pupils overcome barriers to learning. Pupils feel safe in school and parents commented on how well looked after they are. The school has a strong ethos of mutual care and respect for all, which is seen in the way pupils look after each other. Appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place and risk assessment is embedded within school routines. Pupils are encouraged to access the internet to enrich their learning opportunities and the school is extra vigilant in promoting safety when working on the internet. There are comprehensive tracking systems in place for checking how well pupils are progressing and for identifying and addressing potential underachievement. Pupils have many opportunities to evaluate their own work and to identify their own learning needs. Pupils who find learning difficult, as well as those identified as gifted and talented, are well catered for by suitably focused tasks and activities.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The school is led well by a highly committed headteacher. Good communication of a clear vision for the school ensures that all staff share the responsibility for raising standards. For example, senior leaders are fully involved in strategic planning and lead focus groups, where all members of staff have an opportunity to contribute ideas. Teachers are held accountable for their pupils' good progress and are helped to secure this through monitoring and constructive feedback and training. There are very good systems for evaluating the effectiveness of the school's work so that leaders are well aware of the school's strengths and areas to develop. Governors make a satisfactory contribution to school improvement and are becoming increasingly effective. Leaders and managers ensure that safeguarding requirements are fully met. The school makes a good contribution to promoting community cohesion and leaders are committed to developing this aspect of their work. The school has effective partnerships with parents and carers, other schools, outside agencies and community groups. These partnerships help to ensure that all pupils are included in the life and success of the school. Leaders and managers are well aware of the next steps that need to be taken and have shown evidence of a good capacity for further improvement.



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## Annex A

## 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	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

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

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which 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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	3
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

**Annex B**

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

14 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Park Lane (Foundation) Primary School, Whittlesey, PE7 1JB

Thank you very much for the way you helped us with the inspection of your school. You were very friendly and told us lots of interesting things about what you most like about your school. We agree with you that you are at a good school where you are being extremely well cared for.

We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour and we think you are doing a brilliant job in keeping yourselves safe and healthy. You also work really well with each other and you are making good progress in your learning.

Your headteacher and all the staff work well together as a team. Like us, they think the school can be even better. To achieve this, we have asked them to do two things. These are:

- to help you make even better progress in English and mathematics
- to make your learning even more exciting across all the different subjects.

We think these are both things you are going to enjoy, but you'll have to work extra hard on the first one!

Finally, we would like to congratulate you on how well you are doing. Both you and your parents should be proud of your achievements. We hope you continue to make the very best of your time at Park Lane.

Yours sincerely

Martyn Skinner

Lead inspector