

# Parkside Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124197
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328076
<b>Inspection date</b>	5 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rajinder Harrison

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	185
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	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steven Gibbens
<b>Headteacher</b>	Annette Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 February 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>	Bradshaw Way Stafford ST16 1TH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01785 617205
<b>Fax number</b>	01785 617206

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the rate of progress to establish whether it is at least satisfactory in all year groups and all subjects
- pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships
- the quality of teaching and curriculum provision, particularly in mathematics
- the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management in securing sustained improvement.

Evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, sampling pupils' work, discussion with pupils, staff and the governors, scrutiny of the school's documentation including self-evaluation and questionnaires returned by parents.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds but a small proportion represent a diverse range of minority ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average, and an above average proportion have statements of special educational needs. These pupils' needs cover a wide range, but are mainly in the category of speech and language, emotional and behavioural and moderate learning difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of one Reception class. The school has had three headteachers in the past three years and a high number of other staff changes. Nursery provision on the same site is provided independently, and the report is available on the Ofsted website.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Children start school with levels of attainment that are generally expected at this age. Good teaching and interesting activities help them achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, they attain above average standards in the early learning goals at the end of the Reception Year. This level of good progress is not maintained in Years 1 to 6 because teaching here is only satisfactory. A general decline in standards since the last inspection resulted in the school's below average performance in national tests and assessments in 2008. Improvements have been made in assessment and tracking systems and in teaching over the past year. As a result, pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are working at broadly average levels. Pupils' performance in literacy is better than in numeracy. The school is working in close partnership with the local authority to address this. Standards are improving in literacy because the school now follows a consistent programme to teach word-building skills in every class and gives more time to reading and writing. Pupils who find learning difficult receive satisfactory individual support so that they achieve as well as their classmates.

Teachers' knowledge of teaching basic skills is sound and some teaching is good. However, in too many lessons teachers' expectations are not high enough, and so progress through the school is inconsistent. The more able are not challenged to achieve as much as they should because pupils of all abilities occasionally do the same tasks. This means that pupils' achievement is no better than satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory. While enrichment activities are good, pupils have too few opportunities to carry out problem-solving and investigation activities to improve their performance in mathematics. Care arrangements are good, as are the procedures to safeguard pupils' welfare. The school ensures that adults who come into contact with pupils are vetted appropriately. While pupils' progress is monitored satisfactorily to set individual targets, these targets lack challenge. Occasionally, the assessments are not entirely accurate, so pupils who fall behind are not identified early enough to intervene so they catch up quickly. These delays result in pupils making uneven progress, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Teachers do, however, mark pupils' work carefully and give them good guidance as to how they might improve.

The school provides a friendly, supportive environment where pupils gain confidence and independence quickly. Pupils attend regularly, enjoy learning and are happy at school. They feel safe at school because they form good relationships and trust the adults who work with them. This trust and mutual respect encourages pupils to do their best even when the work lacks interest and challenge. They are kind to others and enjoy taking responsibilities. They make a satisfactory contribution to the community. Their understanding of global issues such as the importance of caring for the environment is good. School council members represent well pupils' views regarding playground activities and fundraising events. Pupils understand well that staying fit and healthy is important and many enjoy clubs such as circus skills to extend their agility. They choose healthy options at lunchtimes and bring healthy snacks for break times. The behaviour of most is good, but a few occasionally find it difficult to cope, and their lapses in behaviour hinder their learning. The school is taking effective measures to support these pupils so that they have the skills and confidence they need to work successfully alongside their classmates. Parents feel welcome in school and comment favourably about the improvements they have seen over the past year.

Following considerable staff changes, the headteacher has established effective teamwork amongst the staff. Her good leadership and management skills have enabled her to identify the most urgently required actions to raise standards. The leadership team gives sound support in monitoring the school's performance. While monitoring takes place regularly, it lacks rigour in checking that all pupils work to their full potential and that teachers are held to account regarding the progress pupils make in their classes. With good opportunities for staff to develop their skills, weaknesses in teaching have been largely eradicated and standards are rising. Staff and governors ensure a friendly school environment where pupils feel safe and valued. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. It promotes good relationships with parents, the local community and nearby schools. It is exploring ways to promote further links with communities that represent a range of ethnic and religious backgrounds. The school's self-assessment is accurate and it has satisfactory capacity to make further improvements.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because staff have high expectations of them and provide good support for those who need extra guidance. Care and welfare arrangements are good. Adults pay considerable attention to children's well-being and consequently children are very happy and confident. They thrive in the supportive atmosphere where routines are well established. They work happily with others and respond enthusiastically during class discussions. Parents praise the school for helping their children succeed, making comments such as, 'My child loves school.' Parents are confident they can discuss any concerns with staff because they say staff are very approachable and helpful.

Leadership and management are good and all staff are involved in planning and teaching. Children take great delight in exploring the many imaginative activities that are organised well. Staff make good use of all the spaces inside and out for children to explore freely. Independent tasks are balanced carefully with those that staff direct. Staff assess children closely by observing and talking to them about their work. Early assessments quickly identify those children who need additional support. While children start school with skills that are broadly as expected, their literacy skills are generally weaker. Developing these skills is a priority and children are sensitively guided to activities that focus on these, even if they find them challenging. Occasionally, the more able are not challenged enough.

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

- Raise standards and improve achievement in mathematics by providing pupils with opportunities to use and apply their knowledge of number in problem- solving and investigative activities.
- Ensure that assessments are accurate and use the information to set challenging targets for all pupils, especially for the more able.
- Improve monitoring and evaluation procedures to check that pupils are working to their full potential and to ensure that teachers are held to account regarding their progress. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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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?	3
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	3

### 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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

<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>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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**

6 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parkside Primary School, Stafford, ST16 1TH

You may remember that three inspectors came to visit your school recently. I am writing to tell you what we found.

Thank you for welcoming us and for being so friendly. We enjoyed talking to you about school, the good friends you make and the work you do. We know the school is a happy place. We know the school takes good care of you because you told us that you feel safe at school and that staff help you if you have problems. We could see that you really like school and that you try your best and join in everything the teachers ask you to do. It was really good to see how well children in the Reception class do and how nicely they work and play together.

It was lovely to see you eating so nicely together at lunchtime and enjoying healthy food like fruit and yoghurt in your lunchboxes. We saw you looking after each other kindly, for example when children have bumps in the playground you find an adult to help out. You know how to look after yourselves and understand the need for regular exercise. While most of you said behaviour was good, a few said some children did not behave well. We think the school is doing a good job in trying to help you all to behave well.

The school provides you with a sound education but we think some things could be better. We think that you could achieve higher standards, particularly in mathematics. To help with this, we have suggested that you do more problem-solving activities. We have asked teachers to make sure that they use the information they have about how well you are doing to plan the right work for you, particularly if you are quick to learn. We have also asked your school leaders to check that all of you achieve the best you can all the time.

There are things you could do to help, too; for example, you can make sure you always try to do your best work. We hope that you will all do well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison

Lead inspector