

Parkside Community Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 118536 |
| Local Authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 339236 |
| Inspection dates | 21–22 October 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | John Mason |

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

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

| | |
|--|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 138 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Barbara Letchford |
| Headteacher | Mrs Irene Nierzwicka |
| Date of previous school inspection | 4 October 2006 |
| School address | Tennyson Avenue Canterbury Kent CT1 1EP |
| Telephone number | 01227 464956 |
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| Email address | headteacher@parkside.kent.sch.uk |

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
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**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision****Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, parents and external improvement partners. They observed the school's work, reviewed pupils' books and policy documents, discussed tracking data with senior staff and looked at nine responses to the questionnaires sent to parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- attainment, rates of progress and learning throughout the school
- pupils' personal development in the light of poor patterns of attendance
- the extent to which all aspects of provision address the widely varied learning needs of pupils
- how successfully senior leaders are sustaining improvement to raise pupils' standards in learning and personal development.

Information about the school

Parkside Primary is smaller than average. The number of pupils on roll has fallen slightly since the previous inspection. Pupils mostly come from the area close to the school, which also includes a settled Travellers' site. The proportion eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also high, despite some decline in recent years. Only very few pupils, however, have a statement of special educational needs. Very few pupils do not have English as their first language. The turnover of pupils is a little above average. The school has achieved Healthy Schools and Extended Schools (Established) accreditations and holds the Primary Quality Mark and the Early Years Kitemark.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Parkside has made significant strides forward since its last inspection and is now a good school, which strongly harbours the ambition to develop even further. Key to its success is the outstanding care, guidance and support which it provides for its pupils and, increasingly, for parents and carers who find difficulty engaging with school. Almost all pupils greatly enjoy being at school. Pupils build open and trusting relationships with adults because staff know each individual child very well and make every effort to gain their confidence and respect. Because the school sets high expectations of behaviour and social standards, pupils learn to support one another, develop warm relationships and extend their grasp of healthy, safe and socially acceptable practices well. They are proud of their school, respecting the school buildings and grounds as their own. 'The school is great,' they say, 'because you get to do lots of learning.'

The pupils' outstanding progress over several years results primarily from the school's ability to address the profound and often multiple needs of its many vulnerable pupils so skilfully. It instils excellent attitudes which help them to profit fully from good teaching and a well-tailored curriculum. Pupils are extremely keen to do well and please their teachers. Nonetheless, attainment at the end of Year 6 is significantly below average and few pupils attain the higher Level 5. Where, occasionally, indicators show that pupils' progress is slowing in any subject, staff enthusiastically embrace initiatives to address the issues. For example, where pupils' progress dipped in English in 2008 the school's effective strategies ensured that pupils achieved outstandingly well in 2009 from their low starting points. The current focus on raising attainment in mathematics is helping pupils to use number and calculate better, but pupils have greater difficulty with shapes because they find it hard to explain and describe things using mathematical language. Indeed, levels of spoken English are quite low which inhibits pupils' ability to articulate clearly what they are learning and how they will know if they have been successful in all areas of their learning. In particular, this is slowing the progress of a few of the more able pupils.

The school has a good capacity to sustain its continued improvement. The headteacher's drive and vision for the school is outstanding. She sets the tone for the high levels of care in the school, knowing each child extremely well and coordinating, with the very skilful collaboration of the extended school leader, all aspects of pupils' support. Through the concerted actions of other senior leaders and effective systems for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of provision, the teaching, curriculum and rigour of assessment are now good. The well-led Early Years Foundation Stage provides a calm, yet stimulating environment for children to make good progress, particularly in their social and linguistic development. The school has worked hard to achieve more

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stability in staffing, including effective professional development for all adults. Some recently appointed subject leaders are still finding their feet and planning for progression is not yet fully coherent in some key subjects. Despite huge gains in engaging parents and building links with the wider community, attendance, while showing signs of improvement, is still low. Tracking information clearly shows that pupils who are persistently absent do not make the impressive progress of others. Their chances of success in their futures are compromised by missing so much school. Excellent liaison with the local police, breakfast and after-school clubs and many other initiatives are all making a significant, positive impact in addressing the issue, but a period without access to an educational welfare officer has not helped.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in spoken English, so that pupils have the ability to articulate much more accurately what, why and how they are learning, especially, though not exclusively, in mathematics; thereby facilitate greater opportunities for pupils to reach Level 5 in national tests.
- Improve pupils' attendance, particularly by eliminating persistent absence, so that attendance targets are met or exceeded in order that all pupils can better realise their full potential to learn and improve their chances for the future.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils' learning and progress is outstanding because of their enthusiasm for learning and keenness to please their teachers and do well. They cooperate extremely effectively and apply themselves diligently to the task in hand. As a result, pupils' achieve outstandingly well from very low starting points, although their attainment remains significantly below average. It dipped in 2009 because the group contained a very large majority of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result of their exceptionally good progress a large majority of pupils are on course to meet or exceed challenging targets. There is no significant variation between the achievement of different groups of pupils, although the school has identified correctly the need to provide greater challenge to some groups of girls. Tracking also shows that pupils with persistent absence do not achieve as well as others. The school engages well with the Gypsy/Romany community and these pupils are doing better than these pupils do nationally.

Behaviour is good overall. In class, where there is a favourable ratio of adults to pupils, it is very good, making a significant contribution to pupils' learning and their enjoyment of school. Pupils enjoy taking on wide-ranging responsibilities around the school. The school council represents the concerns of pupils well. Older pupils contribute effectively to integrating all pupils in play activities in lunch breaks and volunteer for other responsibilities around the school. Interest and applause for even the youngest in an assembly presentation was heartfelt and sincere. As a result, pupils feel safe in school and are confident that they can turn to adults to resolve any concerns they may have. Pupils are proud of the school and its bright, welcoming environment. They are duly

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concerned and upset when they hear reports of anti-social behaviour, such as out-of-hours vandalism, making an impact on their school. They enjoy excellent relations with the community police support service, enthusiastically contribute to the development of a park in the local community, and take a keen interest in learning about the wider national institutions and international communities which the curriculum increasingly promotes. They have a good understanding of healthy life options. The majority take healthy school meals and they understand from their work on the school allotment about when foods are fresh and which foods are healthiest. They participate enthusiastically in the good opportunities for sport, dance and music. Their social, moral, cultural and spiritual values develop well. Most pupils are rising well to the challenge of improving their chances for the future, but because absenteeism is too high and many pupils find difficulty expressing themselves effectively, their preparation for future work opportunities is satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 4 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 1 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 4 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

Key to the good teaching are the strong relationships between adults and pupils, which

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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underpin pupils' understanding of what they have to do. Teachers plan interesting tasks which engage and motivate pupils well. Good assessment practice and careful, regular tracking of how well pupils are doing helps teachers to adapt their planning to address any aspects which pupils find difficult. Teachers indicate well what pupils need to do to improve their learning and older pupils in particular understand clearly what their teachers have told them to do. Written work is marked regularly, usually with helpful pointers on how to improve. However, marking does not always prompt pupils sufficiently to correct errors. Resources, including new technology, are generally well used, but in mathematics they are not used creatively enough to appeal to the different ways pupils learn. In general, pupils are still very reliant on guidance from their teachers and do not develop skills soon enough to help them fully understand how, what and why they are learning so that the more able pupils in particular can take greater responsibility for their own learning and aspire to higher standards.

The curriculum is well planned to meet the very diverse learning and developmental needs of pupils. It responds promptly and effectively to new priorities identified by senior leaders. For example, effective one-to-one mathematics tuition has been introduced for pupils in Year 2 who have a particular weakness in working with numbers. Some staff lack clarity in planning activities in mathematics which are well pitched to different pupils' abilities and promote consistent progression in learning. A stimulating range of trips, announced well in advance to enable families and carers to plan for all pupils to benefit from them, enhances the curriculum and enables pupils to have cultural and sporting opportunities which reach well beyond the communities where they live. These often inform 'Learning Journey' books which are used in all years to promote pride and high standards in pupils' written work, an aspect which has much improved in the last year. Many pupils exploit the good range of opportunities for sports, music and dance and take a keen interest when visitors speak in assembly. There are currently too few opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their skills in English and mathematics by linking subjects together more creatively.

Staff treat all with great dignity and respect. Support for the many pupils with additional educational needs is very well targeted. The school goes the extra mile to help resolve often significant issues which can have an impact on pupils' well-being and learning. Vulnerable pupils, whatever their concerns, receive excellent support and the school makes outstanding use of external agencies. Popular breakfast and after-school clubs are very warm and welcoming and do much to ease the daily transition between home and school. Parents and carers are growing in confidence in engaging with the school, as successful initiatives draw them into school to share in their children's learning. Despite the school's many creative and rigorous efforts, attendance targets were not met last year, in part due to a period when the local authority was unable to provide an educational welfare officer.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders are ambitious, persistent and creative in realising a vision for pupils to overcome disadvantage and to do as well as they possibly can. The whole staff is united around this vision. Rigorous monitoring of provision is improving the overall quality of teaching. Staff take advantage of good opportunities for further professional development to improve their skills. The school is aware that subject leaders who are new to their responsibilities have not yet had sufficient opportunity to review the impact of initiatives to improve teaching and planning in their areas. Because the school analyses increasingly sophisticated tracking data well, it evaluates its strengths and weaknesses accurately. Pupils' safety and well-being are given paramount attention, with robust systems for safeguarding pupils. Links with external agencies, other schools and partners are outstanding in promoting the well-being of pupils. They also broaden opportunities for learning and open pupils' eyes to opportunity, culture and traditions in the wider world. This, together with secure planning and audit of provision, ensures that the school's contributions to tackling discrimination and to promoting community cohesion are also outstanding. The governing body has been very supportive of initiatives to refurbish the school, including an area for conferencing and extended school provision which is also used by the wider community. Parental representation has increased of late, but there is a perception among staff that some governors do not involve themselves in the work of the school as much as they should. The school does not engage consistently enough with those parents and/or carers who condone their children regularly missing school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|---|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |

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|---|----------|
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills for learning which are very low with particular weaknesses in social skills and communication. Only a small minority have the skills expected for their age. Good provision, with good levels of adult support, and a bright, stimulating environment help children to settle quickly in the calm and orderly Nursery and Reception classes. Children make good progress linking letters and sounds and the more able develop confident basic counting skills. Nonetheless, by the time the children enter Year 1, their skills are still low compared with children of the same age nationally and only a minority reach a level where they can write in a recognisable form. Good management has established a year-on-year trend of improving standards. Adults make accurate observational assessments which lead to good planning to meet the developmental needs of the children. Identification of additional support is prompt and parents are mostly well involved. Home visits strengthen ties with families for children in the Nursery and active involvement in a district project for early years settings secures good links with other providers. A good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activity ensures children are happily active in their learning and play, but the lack of a covered area for the Reception class limits some opportunities for these children. Children develop good habits for health and hygiene, washing their hands at appropriate times and enjoying healthy snacks and plenty of exercise.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |

Views of parents and carers

The small sample of questionnaire returns makes for unreliable interpretation of the table below. Where this may indicate some concern with the school's ability to deal

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effectively with unacceptable behaviour, conversations with parents, carers and pupils showed these concerns are largely unfounded. Unacceptable behaviour does occasionally occur, but effective systems are in place, including the very rare exclusion of a pupil, to resolve issues with minimum detriment to pupils' enjoyment of school or their learning. Overall, parents addressed by inspectors spoke very highly of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Parkside Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received nine completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 138 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 7 | 78 | 2 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 4 | 44 | 5 | 56 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 2 | 22 | 7 | 78 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 5 | 56 | 4 | 44 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 3 | 33 | 6 | 67 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 3 | 33 | 6 | 67 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 3 | 33 | 6 | 67 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 2 | 22 | 7 | 78 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 2 | 22 | 7 | 78 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 2 | 22 | 4 | 44 | 3 | 33 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 2 | 22 | 7 | 78 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 4 | 44 | 5 | 56 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 5 | 56 | 4 | 44 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 39 | 58 | 3 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 13 | 50 | 33 | 4 |
| Secondary schools | 17 | 40 | 34 | 9 |
| Sixth forms | 18 | 43 | 37 | 2 |
| Special schools | 26 | 54 | 18 | 2 |
| Pupil referral units | 7 | 55 | 30 | 7 |
| All schools | 15 | 49 | 32 | 5 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parkside Community Primary School, Canterbury, CT1 1EP

Thank you for making the two inspectors who visited your school this week so welcome. We both really enjoyed talking to you and sharing with you your pride in your school and in your learning.

We believe that your school is a good school because the adults in the school take such great care of you. They make sure that you are safe, healthy, enjoy school and, above all, help you to make super progress in your learning. They teach you well and provide lots of varied activities which open your eyes to new and exciting things. The school is well led by Mrs Nierzwicka ('Mrs N') and her team who are very committed to giving you the best education available and improving the school for you.

You do not yet reach standards in your work that we would see in most primary schools, so we have asked the school to set you some big challenges to help you manage to do this.

We would like to see more of you reaching Level 5 when you do your tests at the end of Year 6. To do this, we are asking your teachers to help you to be able to talk much more accurately about what, why and how you are learning. This will make you become less reliant on your teachers so that you can also learn much more by yourselves. We have also asked the school to help you to improve the standard of your mathematics.

When you enjoy school so much and learn so well, it may seem strange that not all of you attend school as regularly as you should. So we also want teachers and others to work even harder with your parents or carers to help raise the level of attendance.

Regular attendance, like punctuality, is such an important thing when you grow up and have to go to work that you need to develop the right habits now when you are young. Of course, it means that you and all your classmates will learn faster and enjoy school even more, too.

Wishing you all every success at Parkside

Yours faithfully

John Mason

Lead Inspector

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