

Inspection of a good school: Park Way Primary School

Park Way, Maidstone, Kent ME15 7AH

Inspection dates:

9 and 10 July 2024

Outcome

Park Way Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils work hard to embody the school values of respect, resilience and responsibility. They are kind and accepting of others. Pupils concentrate deeply in lessons to meet the high expectations of teachers. All pupils have opportunities to develop their skills of leadership. They act as play leaders to organise games at play time or represent their class on the school council. The school council has a clear impact on the school. For example, the council recently planned the redevelopment of pupils' toilets. Pupils are happy and feel safe. They know that teachers will deal with any concerns they may have. Pupils behave well and the school is calm and orderly as a result.

Pupils understand and appreciate diversity in the school community and beyond. They learn about all major world religions and visit local places of worship. Pupils celebrate the diversity in their own school. For instance, as part of the school's diversity week, parents and pupils shared their own cultural traditions and foods. Pupils also learn about other cultures through dance workshops. They are encouraged to consider the views of others and celebrate their differences. Pupils also contribute positively to the wider community. They undertake a range of charity work for local and international causes.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has planned an ambitious curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils, including those in mixed-age classes. Staff identify clearly what pupils should learn and the order they should learn it in. In most subjects, teachers help pupils make connections between new and previous learning. As a result, pupils remember the important skills and knowledge they learn.

Teachers check pupils' learning frequently and precisely. Staff address any misconceptions and identify gaps in learning quickly. They use this information to plan activities that help pupils catch up and keep up with their learning. In most subjects, teachers have secure subject knowledge. They select interesting resources that help pupils to learn new facts

and skills. However, in some subjects, teachers do not explain what pupils are learning clearly enough. Consequently, some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. They are well prepared for their next steps. For example, pupils in early years know key number facts to ten and beyond. Pupils write accurately and this becomes increasingly sophisticated over time. The school has addressed a dip in national test results in phonics and the multiplication tables check swiftly and effectively.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils, including those with SEND, precisely. They ensure that this information is clear and shared with staff. This allows staff to amend and adapt activities appropriately. Skilled additional adults support pupils well.

Staff ensure that the vast majority of pupils are fluent readers by key stage 2. Children in early years enjoy a strong start. Well-trained staff deliver the chosen scheme consistently well. Staff select the books that pupils read thoughtfully and these help pupils to practise their reading. Older pupils read widely and enjoy the books they read. They leave the school as confident and fluent readers.

The school helps pupils to follow routines and develop positive attitudes to learning. This starts in early years, where pupils show high levels of concentration. Classrooms are purposeful environments due to pupils' commitment to learning. Leaders analyse attendance and punctuality thoroughly. They identify those pupils who require additional support to attend school regularly. As a result, pupils' attendance has improved over time.

The school has prioritised pupils' personal development. Pupils' learning is enriched by a range of trips and visits. For instance, pupils visit Leeds Castle to deepen their understanding of local history. They also develop their resilience on the school's annual residential trip. Pupils enjoy the rich offer of clubs. For example, pupils participate in activities such as bouldering, orienteering and archery. They also have the opportunity to learn ballet and to play a range of musical instruments. Pupils share these talents through performances in local care homes and professional venues in London.

Governors share the same high levels of ambition as leaders. They ensure they have a strong understanding of the school and hold leaders to account well. Staff are proud to work at the school. They receive high-quality training and clear guidance to carry out their work effectively. Leaders work hard to include and inform parents. For example, recent phonics workshops helped parents to support pupils' reading. Parents now know more about the school's phonics approach.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not always explain what they want pupils to learn clearly enough. As a result, these pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders must ensure that teachers have sufficient knowledge of the subject and chosen curriculum to explain learning clearly and design activities that allow pupils to deepen their learning.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2015.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	118302
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10321847
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	315
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Dobbs
Headteacher	Karen Dhanecha
Website	www.park-way.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2018

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school manages wrap-around breakfast and after-school clubs for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of the school's education provision.
- This is the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher as well as with other leaders and staff. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. They also sampled pupils' work from geography and religious education. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector considered the views of parents and carers through their responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The lead inspector spoke to staff and pupils during the inspection and took account of staff responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Gavin Thomas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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