

# Inspection of a good school: Park Gate Primary School

Northmore Road, Park Gate, Southampton, Hampshire SO31 6LX

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Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2023

## **Outcome**

Park Gate Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

From the moment pupils start at the school they learn to show respect for everyone and everything by following 'The Park Gate Way'. Pupils receive an engaging education, surrounded by classmates who want to achieve their best. Teachers have thought about every lesson carefully, and they want pupils to get as much out of every moment as possible.

Leaders are eager to celebrate pupils who teachers say have shown a school value, such as resilience, kindness or trust. Leaders call these pupils the 'values ambassadors' for the week. Adults also model these expectations throughout the school day, and together they create a very happy atmosphere. Pupils say bullying does not happen, but when a rare unkind thing does happen, adults deal with issues fairly and swiftly. Should a pupil struggle with these behaviour expectations, caring and determined staff help them to understand what needs to happen next time.

Pupils want to help others and show their own leadership skills. For example, house captains relish supporting younger pupils and are strong role models for them. They undertake their roles with maturity and know the impact they have on others.

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

Leaders have a strong ambition for all pupils to follow a broad and engaging curriculum. Every subject now has clear knowledge and skills that leaders want pupils to learn. However, some subject curriculums have had more time to embed than others. As a result, pupils have not yet had the opportunity to attain the full knowledge and skills that leaders want for them. Therefore, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Leaders prioritise pupils' learning of reading. Teachers waste no time, and phonics lessons start as soon as possible in the school year. Pupils love reading, and they engage in phonics and reading lessons very well. Pupils of all ages read books that are well matched to their reading ability.

Teachers across the school use effective strategies consistently when delivering lessons. This helps to ensure that pupils retain the key knowledge and skills learned. For example, consistent questioning techniques enable teachers to check how well pupils learn. Staff are clear about the phonics that they expect pupils to use. Teachers persistently repeat the same phrases in lessons to embed learning, such as how to find a fraction of an amount. In wider subjects, such as history, pupils recall periods of time they have learned, as well as making links to concepts such as monarchy.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are at the heart of this inclusive school. Effective systems help to identify individual needs that pupils may have. These needs are then met through carefully planned support. However, parents do not routinely get a written copy of the latest support their child with SEND is receiving. This means parents cannot play a full part in supporting their child's learning.

Pupils' behaviour is calm and orderly. They engage well in their activities, creating a purposeful learning atmosphere in classrooms. They also behave well in the dinner hall and out on the busy, but well-organised, playground. Some pupils need more support to control their emotions, and skilled staff provide this.

Leaders have developed a curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) that is relevant to the needs of the pupils. Leaders give considered thought to pupils' wider understanding of diversity, history and careers. For example, leaders develop pupils' appreciation of celebrations from different cultures. They also encourage pupils to consider modern moral issues. For example, they debate whether the methods used by some key historical figures would be acceptable in today's world.

The school provides a well-considered range of wider experiences for pupils. Leaders choose school trips with care, and they aim to balance educational merit of a visit with its cost. Sporting, musical and creative opportunities are developing very well. Staff and pupils are proud of recent sporting achievements. Leaders also give pupils plenty of opportunities to sing and play to audiences.

Governors assure themselves that leaders are doing the very best for pupils, their parents and staff. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive and are proud to work at the school. This culminates in parents being very happy. As one said, 'I cannot speak highly enough of the school. My children have had a fantastic learning experience to date. I know they will leave Park Gate Primary School as better people, as well as better learners.'

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A clear and strong safeguarding culture is in place. Training is thorough and regular. Staff are well aware of the signs of possible abuse or neglect and know how to report it. Leaders do not hesitate when they need to take further action to keep a pupil safe. This helps to ensure that pupils and their families receive the help they need. Governors take their role as assurers for the safeguarding culture seriously.

Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. This includes elements of both their physical world and while online.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- While leaders have made considerable developments to what pupils will learn in all subjects, the curriculum has not yet been fully embedded. This means that pupils are yet to acquire the full subject-specific vocabulary, knowledge and skills that leaders intend. Leaders need to ensure that teachers continue to implement the intended curriculum effectively, and they should routinely check how well pupils are learning essential knowledge.

## **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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2017.

## **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' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 116033   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Hampshire  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10256441   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 389  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Val Morgan   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Lindsay McCarthy   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.parkgateprimary.co.uk">www.parkgateprimary.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 3 October 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005                |

## Information about this school

- The school currently uses two unregistered alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector also met with a representative from the local authority and other leaders within the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- In addition, the inspector also looked at other curriculum areas including PSHE, art and design and languages.
- The inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records, interviewing staff, and through discussions with pupils.
- The inspector considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted’s parent questionnaire, Parent View. They gathered the views of pupils and staff through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school’s documentation, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Parker, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

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