

Inspection of Parklands Primary School

Spinney Hill Road, Northampton NN3 6DW

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Under the guidance of the Preston Hedges Trust, Parklands is flourishing. With the aim of 'Fun, Creativity and Achievement', leaders have swiftly brought about change and raised standards.

The six values at Parklands are not just words. One pupil summed it up perfectly when they said, 'We don't have rules here, we live by our values.' Pupils strive to show respect, kindness, independence, determination, perseverance and aspiration. By doing so they earn coloured badges, which they wear with pride. In the early years, children learn the school's values through everyday activities, such as not giving up when fastening their coats and independently changing into wellies for the sand pit.

Pupils feel happy and secure. They told inspectors 'Parklands is a safe place to be, the teachers give you a boost about everything' and 'There are so many good things about Parklands, I love it all.'

Pupils have inclusive and welcoming attitudes. They show good manners and respect towards staff and each other. Leaders have empowered pupils to sort out any issues they might have by following the '3 Steps'. Pupils know that bullying is never tolerated and that, if it happens, it will be dealt with seriously by all members of staff.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that clearly sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn in each subject as they progress through the school. Teachers closely follow these curriculum plans, so that pupils meet new ideas in a logical order. Lessons are adapted when they need to be, so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) take part in all aspects of the curriculum. The leader responsible for pupils with SEND ensures that these pupils receive support that is closely matched to their individual needs.

Developing pupils' spoken language is an important part of the curriculum at Parklands. In the early years, there is a sharp focus on communication. Staff take every opportunity to hold conversations with children to improve the children's language skills. Pupils make good use of the vocabulary boards in their classrooms. As a result, they express themselves correctly, using precise, technical language. In science, for instance, pupils confidently use terms, such as air resistance, gravity, Newton, opaque, refraction and shadow.

Teachers revisit important knowledge and skills to help pupils add it to their long-term memories. Pupils told inspectors 'We look back on things we've done this year and in the other classes. In mathematics, for example, there are always five to six questions at the start of a lesson to get us thinking about we have done before.'

However, the checks that teachers carry out do not always give them a precise understanding of what all pupils know and can do in every subject. Where this is the case, teachers cannot address misconceptions quickly.

Leaders have made sure that phonics is taught consistently well throughout the school. Staff have all received training on the school's new phonics programme. They use the same methods in all classes to help pupils sound words out. The books that pupils read at home are closely matched to the letter sounds they know. However, some pupils do not read as fluently as they might. This is because they sometimes sound out words when they do not need to. Some staff do not make sure that pupils know what fluent sentence reading should sound like when they listen to pupils read.

Leaders have made reducing the persistent absence of some disadvantaged pupils one of their top priorities. They have put clear procedures in place to get this group of pupils to come to school more often. However, leaders know they still have some way to go to get the attendance of all disadvantaged pupils to where they want it to be.

Careful consideration has been given to pupils' personal development. Pupils know that healthy relationships are built on honesty and trust. They are knowledgeable about British values and why they are important. Pupils can take on a range of leadership responsibilities. These include being a reading ambassador, a sports leader, part of the 'Global Guardians' or a member of 'United Parklands'.

During a time of change and improvement, leaders have considered the well-being and workload of staff. They have created a unified team, who are focused on achieving the trust's vision. Those in the early stages of their teaching career value the support they are given. As one member of staff said, 'We're a little family here.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to spot if a pupil is at risk of harm. They report concerns quickly. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding ensure that pupils receive the support they need. They put pupils' views at the heart of what they do. Governors check on the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures.

Pupils are taught what it is like to feel safe and unsafe. Pupils know that all adults at Parklands are there to help them if they need it. They know that the door of the school's senior welfare officer is always open to them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, assessment is not aligned closely enough to the curriculum. Where this is the case, teachers do not always have a precise understanding of what all pupils know and can do. Leaders need to refine their approach to assessment, so that teachers closely check on pupils' progress in all subjects and quickly address misconceptions where they arise.
- Some pupils in the early stages of reading do not read as fluently as they might. This is because pupils sometimes sound out words when they do not need to, and staff do not always make sure that pupils know what fluent sentence reading should sound like when they listen to them read. Leaders should ensure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading fluency, so that pupils who find reading more difficult get the help they need to become fluent readers as quickly as possible.

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

Unique reference number	146283
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10254732
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	409
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Brinkley
Principal	Carmilla Cassidy
Website	http://parklands.northants.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Parklands Primary School converted to become an academy school in September 2018 as part of Preston Hedges Trust. When its predecessor school, Parklands Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection of Parklands Primary School. Inspectors discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science, art and design and geography. For the deep dives, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the executive principal, the principal, the assistant principals, curriculum leaders and a sample of teaching and support staff. Inspectors met with the leaders responsible for the early years, pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- The lead inspector met with the designated leader for safeguarding to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, records of governance, and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- The lead inspector met with trustees, as well as the chief executive officer from the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Shaun Carter, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Matthew Rooney	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Oliver	Ofsted Inspector
Dawn Ashbolt	His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023