

Inspection of a good school: Parkside Community School

Boythorpe Avenue, Boythorpe, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 2NS

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 September 2022

Outcome

Parkside Community School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Parkside Community School. This is a school at the very heart of the community that it serves. Pupils receive extraordinary care and support to thrive and succeed. Teachers have high expectations. They support pupils to do their very best. Pupils achieve well. One pupil spoke for many when they said: 'This school gives us the education that we deserve. We are helped to feel very positive about the future.'

Pupils learn in a welcoming, calm and orderly environment. Pupils' behaviour is good. If bullying should occur, pupils have confidence that it would be resolved. They know that there are many people who they can turn to if they have a problem or concern. They said that 'it's like a family at this school'.

The school's ethos of 'caring about the choices that will shape your future' is evident. Pupils enjoy a rich range of personal development activities. The curriculum ensures that pupils gain opportunities that they may not otherwise experience. All pupils in Year 9, for example, will take part in the expedition element of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Every effort is made to widen opportunities, broaden experiences and develop new talents.

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

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Academic subjects are at the heart of the curriculum. The demands of the national curriculum are met. The curriculum is the product of consultation with pupils, parents, governors and local employers. There is a strong focus on ensuring that pupils are ready for their next steps.

Learning is well organised and planned in a logical sequence. Teachers carefully consider the knowledge and skills that pupils need. They use assessment skilfully to identify gaps in what pupils know. They support pupils to revisit important ideas so that they can confidently remember more of what they have learned. Consequently, pupils achieve well.

Many pupils enter the school with low levels of literacy. Specialist 'disciplinary literacy' support is in place to help pupils catch up. Staff adapt the curriculum to meet pupils' literacy needs in many subjects. However, in some subjects, this is not effective. Leaders are aware of this issue. They are working to ensure that the very best literacy practice becomes the 'standard practice' across all subjects.

There is a determination to ensure that all pupils can read fluently. An effective reading curriculum is in place. Work is undertaken with local primary schools to make sure that pupils have the best start. Pupils who are at the early stages of reading receive effective help. Pupils quickly gain the knowledge they need to read well. They regularly 'drop everything and listen' to an adult read. Pupils appreciate this time. They enjoy stories that go beyond their own experience. Pupils said that they 'enter a different world'.

Pupils with SEND achieve well. The support that teaching assistants provide is effective. Many parents praised the effective guidance, care and support that the school provides. They said that it had made a significant difference to their child.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on pupils' attendance. Leaders are still dealing with this legacy. A team of specialists work with pupils, parents and carers to support good attendance. Hands-on support such as the 'Parkside pick-up' is provided. Even so, some pupils do not attend school regularly enough.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is a strength. Careful planning has made sure that the curriculum meets pupils' needs. Pupils learn about healthy relationships. They learn how to keep safe when online. They receive good careers advice and guidance. Anti-discrimination is a key priority. Pupils know about the protected characteristics. They are introduced to many faiths, religions and cultures. They said that they learn the right things at the right time, in an equal environment.

Staff said that they feel lucky to be part of such a special school community. They feel supported and valued. They are very proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is evidence of a strong safeguarding culture. Leaders have a palpable moral purpose to serve the school community well. This is reflected in the safeguarding arrangements. Concerns are quickly identified. Specialist staff and outside agencies work together to safeguard the most vulnerable. Detailed records are kept.

Preventing harmful sexual behaviour is a whole school priority. Staff have received the appropriate training. Pupils learn about this issue in PSHE. They know the importance of consent. They know it is important to 'speak out'. This issue continues to be a focus of leaders' work.

Leaders make sure that the appropriate checks on staff's suitability to work with children are undertaken.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In many subjects, the curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with low literacy starting points. In some subjects, this is not effective. Some pupils do not acquire the knowledge and skills that they could. Leaders should ensure that all pupils benefit from a curriculum that is expertly adapted across all subjects to meet pupils' literacy needs.
- Too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough. They are missing out on a good quality of education. Leaders must continue their work to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.

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 April 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

Unique reference number	112961
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10227902
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	589
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jean Horton
Headteacher	Ben Riggott
Website	www.parkside.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 April 2017

Information about this school

- The school uses Blend Youth Project and Duke's Barn alternative provision. These providers are unregistered.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, governors, subject leaders and groups of staff. The lead inspector spoke with the local authority school improvement adviser, the chief executive officer of Embark Multi Academy Trust and the headteacher of another Derbyshire secondary school.
- Inspectors undertook deep dives in English, mathematics and history. As part of the deep dives, inspectors spoke with curriculum leaders to review the curriculum, visited lessons and considered the quality of pupils' work. They spoke to pupils and teachers.

- Inspectors held a series of meetings with leaders and pupils to discuss the school's safeguarding arrangements. They spoke with pupils. They scrutinised a range of records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors observed pupils at different times of the school day, including lunchtime and breaktime.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff, pupils, parents and carers through discussions during the inspection and the Ofsted online surveys.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Dick Vasey

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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