

Parkland Primary School South Wigston

St Thomas Road, Wigston, Leicestershire LE18 4TA

Inspection dates

27–28 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and her senior team provide a strong sense of purpose and vision for the school. They lead by example and are highly regarded by staff and parents.
- Members of the school advisory board know the school well. They ask the right questions to challenge and support the school's leaders.
- As a result of effective mentoring and high-quality training, senior leaders have secured improvements across key stages and subjects. Regular monitoring and review have ensured that their actions have been effective.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and the teaching of reading is improving rapidly. Pupils gain a secure grounding in phonics in the early years and are becoming increasingly confident and competent readers. At times, however, they lack the vocabulary to fully understand more challenging texts.
- Current pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment is rising across the school.
- Children in the early years make a very good start to school life. They enjoy a variety of well-planned activities that motivate and interest them. They make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils enjoy an exciting and interesting curriculum that inspires them to learn. The curriculum makes an important contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical well-being.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and their conduct around school is good. Relationships are warm, and pupils show care and concern for others.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They know they can rely on staff to help them. Parents agree that staff look after their children well.
- In some lessons, particularly in mathematics, the most able pupils are not set tasks that make them think deeply enough.
- Middle leaders, some of whom are new to their roles, are keen and committed to improving pupils' outcomes further. They regularly check on teaching and pupils' workbooks. Nevertheless, they do not use the school's assessment information well enough when planning improvements.
- Leaders' improvement plans target the correct areas but do not always have measurable success criteria by which to judge how successful they have been.
- Pupils' attendance improved last year but has fallen again despite the school's efforts. Some disadvantaged pupils do not attend school regularly enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that more pupils make rapid progress, by ensuring that teachers:
 - share existing good practice and consistently set challenging tasks for the most able pupils, particularly in mathematics
 - regularly expose pupils to a rich and wide range of vocabulary so that they are able to tackle complex texts more successfully.
- Further improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - extending the skills of middle leaders in using the school's assessment information to plan improvements for all groups of pupils
 - setting more measurable milestones in school improvement plans so that leaders can check on the full impact of their actions.
- Improve attendance further by:
 - continuing to work with those parents who are not ensuring that their children, particularly those who are disadvantaged, attend regularly
 - working closely with other schools in the trust to identify further ways to address this issue.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and her senior team have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They have reviewed and developed their approaches so that there is a shared understanding of how things are done at Parkland. Leaders' well-planned actions have secured the commitment of staff and pupils to the culture of high expectations and enabled everyone to contribute to the school's further improvement.
- Senior leaders are highly skilled and work very effectively together as a team. They provide support, challenge and training for staff to help them improve. Teachers' professional development is further enhanced by opportunities to work with other schools in the trust. Staff say there is a positive culture of collaboration and support. This motivates them to develop their skills further and to provide the best for pupils.
- Middle leaders, some of whom are new to their roles, check regularly on the quality of teaching in lessons and how well pupils are learning. They use this information to help them plan further training. They understand aspects of the school's assessment information and can utilise it to identify pupils' performance within the school, but they do not yet have a clear enough view of how this compares with the national picture for groups of pupils, particularly the most able and disadvantaged pupils. As a result, their actions are not as effective as they could be in accelerating progress.
- The curriculum has been carefully planned to capture and maintain pupils' interest. Pupils say 'Learning is fun.' The topic-based approach allows pupils to use what they learn in subjects such as history to develop their writing skills effectively. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of educational visits to places of interest, such as Warwick Castle. Pupils also benefit from numerous visitors to the school. For example, the annual Aspirations Week enables pupils to meet researchers and students from the local university, as well as finding out about a variety of possible career choices.
- The headteacher and her team have created a very caring school where each child is valued as an individual. The good relationships between leaders, staff and pupils have created a positive environment for learning. The strong pastoral team often goes 'above and beyond' to support pupils and their families when they experience difficult circumstances.
- Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school. Although the proportion who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, was relatively small, many commented on the improvements they had seen since the headteacher took up her post.
- The sport premium funding is used very effectively. The quality of provision has been recognised with a national award. The leader has an accurate view of this area of the school's work and has developed clear plans for further improvement. She has successfully focused on increasing the offer of, and participation in, extra-curricular activities, particularly by disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Pupil premium funding is also used effectively. Leaders have researched and implemented methods that have been found to be effective elsewhere. Smaller class

sizes and bespoke teacher-led intervention sessions are leading to much more rapid progress for this group of pupils. The school has taken a range of appropriate actions to improve attendance, but some disadvantaged pupils are still persistently absent. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress because the leader frequently checks on how well they are learning and makes changes where necessary.

- Leaders ensure that pupils have a broad range of opportunities to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. Visits to different places of worship feature highly in the school's planned programme of events. Pupils are taught to care for and respect all people, regardless of their beliefs and backgrounds. Consequently, pupils have good attitudes to equality and diversity – discrimination is not tolerated. One pupil said, 'It's all about tolerance and respect.'
- Senior leaders know the school very well and have identified the appropriate improvement priorities. They have included actions to address them in school development plans. However, the plans do not include sufficient measurable success criteria and clear milestones to enable leaders to fully evaluate the impact of their actions, particularly on pupils' outcomes.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Members of the school advisory board have an appropriate range of skills to carry out their role effectively. They understand the school's needs and provide high levels of challenge and support to leaders. Members understand information relating to the school's performance and make appropriately focused visits to check on progress.
- The advisory board is well supported by the wider governance arrangements of the trust. Relevant training and support are regularly provided.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Procedures for checking the suitability of adults working with children meet statutory requirements.
- There is a culture of vigilance throughout the school. Staff are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding and they know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. The safeguarding team is meticulous in its response to any concern raised. Procedures are followed rigorously, and records of incidents and concerns are carefully maintained. The team takes the appropriate actions to keep pupils safe and provide families with the support that they need. Staff work very effectively with external agencies and are relentless in following up on cases to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors feel safe at school. They have regular opportunities to learn about fire safety, internet safety and anti-bullying, and so develop the skills and knowledge they need to keep themselves safe. The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View, and those who spoke to the inspector on the playground, agree that the school keeps pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They plan lessons that are generally well matched to pupils' abilities and that encourage them to master the subject content before moving on. This is effective in ensuring that all pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who have fallen behind, are accessing age-appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well to assess pupils' understanding, probe their misconceptions and extend their thinking. Pupils are encouraged to explain their reasoning in full sentences using the prompts on display in classrooms. For the most part, they do this confidently, using a range of technical terms, and with increasing success.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' writing. Handwriting is taught well and most pupils in key stage 2 use an efficient, joined handwriting style. Pupils write frequently and at length in all areas of the curriculum. They present their work well and are suitably proud when chosen to 'showcase' their work in special displays around school.
- Relationships are warm and supportive, both between pupils and between pupils and adults. Classrooms are calm and orderly places. Pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to ask and answer questions. Teachers provide them with strategies for when they are stuck so that they are able to get on with minimal fuss.
- Teaching assistants are highly effective. Support in classes is highly skilled and appropriate to the needs of pupils, especially those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Teaching assistants play an important role in ensuring that the needs of disadvantaged pupils are met effectively. Pupils' individual barriers to learning are identified and measures to address them are put in place. As a result, they are making increasingly good progress.
- The teaching of reading has improved. Teachers effectively develop pupils' early reading skills through the systematic teaching of phonics and by ensuring that pupils' reading books are closely matched to their abilities. Reading lessons are well planned and resourced. Teachers effectively model and develop pupils' higher-order responses. Leaders identified that pupils needed more practice in answering test-type questions in key stage 2 and this is now an integral part of weekly teaching.
- Teachers are developing their use of challenges to extend and deepen pupils' thinking and reasoning skills once they have mastered the key concepts. However, these challenges are not used effectively in all classes, particularly in mathematics. At times, the challenges do not build sufficiently on the preceding tasks and, at others, too few pupils complete the main part of the lesson and so do not access the challenge task(s). As a result, some most able pupils do not make the progress they could.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They enjoy a wide range of subjects, such as learning to play the ukulele, and are keen to learn more. They appreciate the challenges that they encounter in lessons. One said, 'We don't do easy in this class, we make easy happen through hard work.'
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors say they are happy at school. Inspectors confirmed this as they visited classrooms, the lunchroom and the playgrounds. Pupils have confidence in the adults to keep them safe around school. Parents agree that their children are safe and happy at school.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to take on positions of responsibility, such as being a representative on the school council, eco-council or learning council. They respond very well to these. Pupils show great pride in being the class ambassador as they explain to visitors what their class is learning that day.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that bullying is very rare. As a result of the ongoing discussions that they have in school, they have a very good understanding of what bullying is and is not. When it does happen, pupils are confident that all staff will deal with it quickly and effectively. Leaders keep meticulous records of any such incident and pupils are supported by the pastoral team to ensure that issues are addressed.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons and around the school, pupils behave well. They listen well to the teacher and to each other. They are kind and considerate to each other and to adults, holding doors open and offering cheery greetings.
- The rewards and consequences system is well understood by pupils, parents and staff. This helps pupils of all ages to develop appropriate behaviour. A few pupils present more challenging behaviours. These are managed very effectively by the highly skilled staff, both in lessons and during unstructured times of the day. Inspectors saw no disruption to learning during their visit.
- Most pupils attend school regularly. Attendance rose in 2017 as a result of the school's actions, although it was still below the national average. Despite continued support, attendance rates have fallen this year, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, pupils' attainment in the key stage 2 national tests was broadly average in writing and mathematics. In mathematics, this represented a big improvement from outcomes in 2016.
- In the 2017 key stage 1 assessments, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was also broadly average. The proportion of pupils who reached at least the expected standard was much higher than it had been at the end of the early years. This represents good progress. A greater proportion of pupils than in 2016 reached the higher standard in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment in the phonics screening check has improved over time and was just above the national average in 2017. In lessons, pupils were seen to be making good progress in their acquisition of letter sounds and their ability to blend these into words.

- The school's assessment information and the work in pupils' books and in lessons show that, over time, current pupils are making good progress from their starting points. Evidence indicates that, despite limited progress when they started key stage 2, pupils in Year 6 are now attaining at least in line with national averages in all subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils are also making increasingly rapid progress as a result of the effective use of the additional pupil premium funding. This is also true for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully by teachers and leaders and is discussed in regular meetings. This enables the appropriate support to be put into place.
- Pupils read widely and often. Pupils who read to inspectors showed fluency and comprehension skills appropriate for their age. They enjoy reading. Pupils now benefit from extra reading sessions in school to boost their confidence and ability to tackle questions that are more difficult. At times, pupils lack the breadth of vocabulary needed to fully access the challenging texts that they choose.
- In the 2016 and 2017 key stage 2 national assessments, the proportion of pupils attaining at the expected standard was below the national average in reading. Attainment in the 2017 national test was well below that indicated by other tests the pupils had taken in school. Pupils in both of these cohorts made weak progress when they were in Years 3 and 4. More rapid progress was achieved in Years 5 and 6 but was not sufficient for pupils to catch up with their national peers.

Early years provision

Good

- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They make good progress from starting points that are below, or well below, those typical for their age in language, reading, writing and number. In September 2016, the on-site pre-school became part of the school itself. There is now closer and more effective liaison between the pre-school and Reception classes. As a result, children who attend the pre-school are now entering the Reception Year with skills closer to those typically expected for their age.
- Leaders are highly skilled and knowledgeable. They have a good and accurate understanding of the provision's strengths and relative weaknesses. As a result, they are well placed to lead further improvements.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year has increased over time, although it remains below the national average. Leaders have recognised the need to improve children's literacy skills further. All three Reception classes now start the day with children quietly applying their phonic skills as they write. Because phonics teaching is systematic and effective, children are increasingly successful in this endeavour.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities are making rapid progress from their starting points. Staff are very skilled at assessing what children can do, what the gaps are in their learning and what they need to learn next. Additional provision, such as speech and language support, is very effective in ensuring that pupils' needs are met well.
- Teachers are using their assessment knowledge to identify increasing numbers of children who have the potential to exceed the early learning goals, and are ensuring

that they plan appropriately challenging learning activities. As a result, they expect this proportion to increase again this year.

- Teaching is highly effective. Staff work well together as a team. They use children's interests and views to plan rich and motivating activities across all areas of the curriculum. The different zones, such as the construction area with its real bricks, entice the children to explore and extend their understanding and experiences. There is a high focus by all adults on ensuring that dialogue is purposeful and contributes to improving children's thinking and spoken language skills.
- The early years classrooms are calm and well organised. Children behave well. They know and understand the rules and expectations, and follow them with little fuss. Children are happy and developing in confidence. They cooperate well with each other and adults, and sustain their interest in learning for extended periods of time.
- Staff place great importance on developing and improving communication with parents so that they know how well their child is doing at school and how they can help at home. Staff use electronic and paper-based ways of celebrating and sharing children's achievements.
- Staff ensure that the children in the early years provision are kept safe. They are extremely vigilant and liaise closely with the pastoral team when they have concerns. They carry out thorough risk assessments of the setting to identify where additional safety measures might be needed.

School details

Unique reference number	138348
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10041601

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	573
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	David Williams
Headteacher	Sarah Bishop
Telephone number	01162 782 142
Website	www.parklandprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin@dsatparkland.org
Date of previous inspection	21–22 May 2014

Information about this school

- Parkland Primary School is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The number on roll is increasing. The school has three classes in each year group and a pre-school, which became part of the main school in 2016.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above that seen nationally. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school became part of the Discovery Schools Academies Trust in 2012.
- The headteacher took up her post in December 2015.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning throughout the school. Most observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher, executive headteacher or deputy headteachers.
- The inspectors heard pupils in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 read. Together with the headteacher, executive headteacher and deputy headteachers, the inspectors looked at pupils' work in their English, mathematics and topic books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, executive headteacher, other leaders, the chair of the school advisory board and a representative of the trust.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including minutes of a range of meetings, assessment information, records of the school's monitoring activities, the school's self-evaluation of its effectiveness, improvement plans, and behaviour, attendance and safeguarding records.
- The inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils and observed them at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The 29 responses to Parent View were considered. The inspectors took into account text comments provided by parents through Parent View and an inspector spoke with parents on the playground before the school day started.

Inspection team

Joanne Sanchez-Thompson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Talbot	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Mace	Ofsted Inspector

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