

The Park School

Onslow Crescent, Woking, Surrey, GU22 7AT

Inspection dates 25–26 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Leaders, including governors, have maintained and built upon students' outstanding achievement since the previous inspection.
- Members of the governing body have improved their skills through high quality training. As a result, they hold leaders to account rigorously for the school's outcomes.
- Governors have made sure that those students who are eligible for additional funding benefit from it, so that they make similar progress to their classmates, and sometimes better than this.
- Students across the school make outstanding progress in English and mathematics. Achievement in reading is exceptional. Students also make extremely good progress in science and art and design.
- Students all acquire some functional skills accreditation by the time they leave Year 11. The most able students acquire GCSEs at A* to G. Students all go on to college, take on apprenticeships, find employment or join a local sixth form.
- Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire are very pleased with their children's progress and behaviour. Almost all would recommend the school to others.
- Therapies are very effective in ensuring that students improve their communication skills, their confidence and self-esteem.
- The wide range of topics and subjects caters for students' needs and abilities exceptionally well. As a result, students work hard, enjoy school very much and make outstanding progress.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional.
- Students greatly improve their personal skills through, for instance, learning to play an instrument, providing regular presentations in assemblies and learning about life in other countries through visits.
- All of these activities help to prepare students extremely well for their future lives in modern Britain.
- Behaviour is impeccable in classrooms and around the school. Students feel very safe and secure.
- The attendance of students has risen rapidly, enabling them to catch up quickly with their learning.
- Teaching is outstanding. Lessons are exceptionally well planned, so that they engage students' interest and build on their previous learning. This ensures that students achieve their very best.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed students' learning in 13 lessons, all jointly with the senior leaders. The inspectors also listened to some students reading during their daily reading sessions.
- Inspectors spoke to several different groups of students about their work and about their school. Inspectors had lunch with some of them.
- Meetings were held with the two co-headteachers, other senior and middle leaders, the chair and the chair of finance from the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documents. These included the school's own information about students' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and students' work.
- The inspectors took account of 13 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. The 34 responses to the staff inspection questionnaire were also considered.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Michael Buist

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school caters for students who are supported by a statement of special educational needs for their moderate learning difficulties and associated speech and language difficulties.
- A few students also have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder and a very few have severe learning difficulties and/or social, emotional and behaviour difficulties.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage. A small minority are White European or from Pakistani backgrounds.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is above average. This is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after.
- The school provides outreach support to primary and secondary schools in Surrey.
- The nearby Brooklands College provides off-site training in vocational education for students in Years 10 and 11 for half a day each week.
- The school is led by two co-headteachers who share the role.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Complete the development of the school's preferred approach to assessment, ensuring that all staff are trained in its use.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Innovative leadership by the two co-headteachers has led to a culture in which teaching is nearly always outstanding and where the excellent achievement, behaviour and personal development of students have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- Staff are very proud to work at this school. Leaders have an accurate view of the school because of their daily learning walks and high quality relationships with students and staff.
- Middle leaders provide an additional layer of support for staff. They are instrumental in managing and supporting students' behaviour and promoting their personal development. They provide high-quality role models, ensuring that lessons are calm so that students can learn without interruption. They regularly monitor students' progress and check the quality of teaching in their subject areas.
- Effective management of staff performance and carefully chosen training meet the needs of individual staff and help to maintain high quality teaching and provision. Targets are set for all teachers that relate closely to students' progress. Increases in salary are linked to whether teachers fully meet these targets.
- A very broad range of subjects is available to students. They particularly enjoy the high quality music, sport and arts provision. They benefit from the range of subjects offered so that they all quickly improve their skills and expand their knowledge.
- Students told inspectors that they never thought they would be able to undertake activities such as playing the guitar or going on the recent skiing trip to Italy. These and other activities contribute exceptionally well to students' academic achievements. They also support students' physical skills and their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school provides a wide range of activities that develops students' awareness of British values and prepares them very well for life in modern Britain. An example of this is the regular visit to the Houses of Parliament to see democracy at work. It is also evident in the school council, where students have responsibility to make changes that they believe will make their school safer and better. These opportunities help to improve students' attitudes and awareness of safety.
- Leaders check students' individual achievements frequently to ensure that the students achieve or exceed their targets. If any student falls behind, they are given extra tuition and help. This strategy helps students to catch up rapidly and achieve extremely well in English, mathematics and science.
- Leaders check students' progress regularly, although, as yet, they have not developed their preferred method of assessment without using National Curriculum levels. Leaders work closely with four other similar schools to check the accuracy of their assessments.
- Leaders monitor the achievement, behaviour and attendance of students rigorously during off-site activities, college provision and work experience.
- Older students in Years 10 and 11 have very good opportunities for work experience in local shops, businesses and in the school. For example, they run a school cafe and undertake jobs around the building. Careers guidance is provided for all students, which they say is helpful.
- Leaders make sure that all students have equal opportunities to succeed. These are provided by the rich curriculum. Students learn about different cultures and faiths through assemblies and through the curriculum. For example, the school has developed a faith garden which is regularly visited by people of different faiths in the community. Leaders foster good relationships and ensure that there is no discrimination of any kind.
- The school provides outreach support to primary and secondary schools in Surrey, offering strategies to help teachers improve students' behaviour and progress. This helps schools to maintain students in mainstream settings wherever possible.
- The local authority provides high quality support to the school, including regular visits to check students' progress.
- Parents who responded to the on-line inspection questionnaire are extremely pleased with the behaviour at the school and with their children's progress.
- Leaders make very effective use of pupil premium funding to provide additional support and extra resources for eligible students, including a range of therapies. These students receive exceptional support and guidance from teaching assistants. This ensures that they achieve at least as well as other students, and often better in English and mathematics.
- Safeguarding procedures at the school fully meet current requirements and are very effective. All staff receive training in identifying students at risk of harm, and procedures to ensure students' safety are rigorously applied. Risk assessments are regularly used for all external trips and visits.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Members now have the high levels of skill required to support the school very effectively and hold it to account. They are regular visitors, fully supportive and take their roles seriously. Governors have excellent understanding of the quality of teaching and fully ensure that the performance of staff is regularly checked and monitored. They know that achievement is outstanding and that high quality behaviour has been maintained. Members fully understand the school's performance data and they regularly compare it with other similar schools. Financial management is highly effective. Governors make the best use of additional funding to support those for whom it was intended. Governors fully understand the procedures for setting targets for teachers and they use these to make sure that the most effective teachers are rewarded.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. School records indicate that behaviour incidents and short-term exclusions have decreased rapidly since the last inspection. This is due, in part, to some internal segregation to aid improvement, but also to students' growing self-awareness and control of their own behaviour. Rigorous tracking and closer links with parents have also contributed significantly to the decrease in exclusion rates.
- Outstanding behaviour is evident in all areas of the school. Students themselves said that behaviour in school is really good. School staff are overwhelmingly supportive of students. In their inspection questionnaires, staff agree that behaviour is almost always exemplary. The large majority of parents also agree.
- The recording of incidents that do occur is extremely thorough and any information about actions taken is checked rigorously and regularly.
- Students' attitudes to their learning and to staff are exceptionally positive because teachers make lessons interesting and motivate students to learn. Students value and strive to achieve the rewards that are offered for good behaviour and effective learning.
- There is a strong ethos of tolerance and respect throughout the school. This is given high priority in the anti-bullying day and the weekly reflection time. Students told inspectors that, although there is sometimes a little bullying at the school, staff deal with it quickly. One student said, 'Staff talk to you, explain why you shouldn't bully and listen to everyone's opinion.' Students know what to do and who to ask for help if they need it.
- Through tailored support for individuals and well-planned assemblies, the school fosters students' personal development exceptionally well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students know about right and wrong and fully embrace the school's balanced approach to a broadly Christian religious education which also includes other world faiths.
- Students regularly raise money for charities. They take part in Red Nose Day, for example. They are involved in social media workshops, a motor project, and perform to high levels in music, drama and dance.
- Attendance has risen steadily over the past three years. Students come to school very regularly so that their attendance is now above other special schools, and above mainstream secondary schools nationally.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 attend regularly and behave very well in lessons and when attending their college courses.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Policies and procedures to ensure the safety and welfare of students are highly effective. As a result, students feel completely safe.
- The school works hard to ensure that all students have a very clear awareness of risk and know how to deal with it. Detailed risk assessments make sure that any individual needs are fully planned for, both in school and when out on visits.
- Students have a very good understanding of risks and quickly learn how to deal with them, for example when riding a bicycle or travelling to school independently.
- Students told inspectors that they fully understand how to stay safe on the internet. They showed the inspector their e-safety notice board and could explain the diagrams and illustrations that show them how to be 'smart' when using computers or mobile phones.

- The behaviour and safety of students attending alternative provision, such as at college, at the gym or on trips, are monitored very thoroughly.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Students' learning and achievement in literacy, reading and mathematics are outstanding as a result of high quality teaching that provides for their individual needs. This is maintained due to the very high quality training for staff and rigorous checks by senior leaders.
- Expectations in lessons are high, ensuring that students work at a fast rate and improve their knowledge and skills. This leads to students making rapid and sustained progress over time.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught extremely well. All students receive high quality support and many are supported individually. This results in all students having full access to the help they need.
- The teaching of reading has improved rapidly over the past year due to the very sharp focus on daily reading and taking books home.
- Teachers regularly check and mark students' work. In the main, teachers give verbal feedback to students, but they also provide helpful written comments for those who can read fluently. Students are all given ideas on how to improve their work, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Teaching assistants provide extremely good support for students with additional needs. Regular speech therapy from the therapy team ensures that those students who require it benefit fully from the provision. As a result, these students achieve at least as well as their classmates.
- Teachers are highly skilled in managing students' behaviour in lessons. They monitor and track behaviours regularly to ensure there are very few disruptions to learning.
- Teachers set work for the most able students that challenges them and deepens their knowledge and understanding. This enables them to achieve extremely well in class and on their accredited course.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- When students enter the school, mainly in Year 7, their attainment is often very low, particularly in English. This is because of their learning difficulties and often additional speech and language difficulties. Most come to the school from mainstream primary schools.
- Students settle quickly and start to catch up because of the very small class sizes, the high quality of support and resources, and, in particular, the regular provision of appropriate therapies.
- All groups of students achieve exceptionally well because of the additional high quality support and expertise provided for them. This includes students who receive additional funding, those with additional special educational needs, such as speech and language difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders, as well as students from a range of ethnic backgrounds.
- The progress of disadvantaged students is at least similar to that of other students in the school, and often better than that.
- In the most recent examinations, students in Year 11 attained particularly well in mathematics, science and art and design. Achievement overall is outstanding. Many students acquire entry levels 1 to 3 in English, mathematics and science or GCSEs at A* to G in mathematics and art and design. Students also achieve Bronze art awards, as well as several other qualifications.
- The school's own data show that students across the school make exceptional progress during their time there. This is because all students, whatever their difficulties, receive very high levels of support.
- Students achieve exceptionally well in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 11, students benefit from high quality support enabling them to solve challenging problems in mathematics. Well prepared tasks enable students to use their numeracy skills to make very effective links with everyday living, such as the purchase of food.
- The most able students make outstanding progress in mathematics and in a range of other subjects. For example, work in the art room shows that students who are preparing their portfolios for GCSE have reached a very high standard.
- Progress in reading has improved rapidly since the introduction of a new reading scheme and new approach to teaching phonics (the sounds that letters make). Students read with their ability group every morning. They really like the books they are offered as they are appropriate to age and ability. As a result, students, including disadvantaged students, make rapid progress in their reading.
- Older students benefit greatly from attending off-site provision for vocational education. Those students

who left Year 11 in the past two years have all moved on to college courses, apprenticeships or employment.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	125461
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	449546

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Woodward
Headteacher	Karen Eastwood
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 November 2009
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