

Parklands Primary School

Spinney Hill Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 6DW

Inspection dates

31 October – 1 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and managers have not demonstrated the capacity to improve teaching, learning and assessment in the early years. Too few children attain a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year.
- Provision in the early years does not meet the different needs of children well enough. Learning is not sufficiently challenging or stimulating.
- Leaders have not acted with enough urgency to recruit and train middle leaders effectively to lead well their areas of responsibility.
- Too few boys in key stage 2 attain the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of key stage 2, pupils do not make enough progress in writing. Leaders have not acted on previous weaknesses to improve outcomes.
- The appraisal of teachers' performance lacks rigour. Leaders have not provided robust training and support for staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in the early years.
- Governors do not challenge school leaders rigorously about the school's performance.
- The most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and make less progress than they should.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low.
- Leaders have not fully evaluated the impact of the use of funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. These pupils make weak progress in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 2.
- Leaders and governors do not evaluate effectively the impact of their use of the pupil premium funding. As a result, disadvantaged pupils' poor progress in writing continues.
- Pupils do not sufficiently develop their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum.

The school has the following strengths

- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development and welfare is good. There is a strong ethos of respect and care for the welfare of others.
- Safeguarding is effective and pupils feel, and are kept, safe.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered. They have positive attitudes to learning.
- The wider curriculum provides pupils with an effective range of sporting and musical opportunities.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - setting out plans to improve the quality of teaching and leadership which precisely enable leaders and governors to effectively check that actions taken have been successful
 - providing good-quality training for all staff to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in the early years and in writing
 - developing the role of middle and subject leaders so that they can support colleagues to improve the quality of teaching and learning
 - improving the appraisal process for teachers so that it is more rigorous
 - fully evaluating the impact of the use of the funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and acting on the findings
 - evaluating the impact of how the pupil premium funding is used to accelerate progress of disadvantaged pupils and acting on the findings
 - carrying out frequent and detailed analysis of pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and using findings to raise standards.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the early years by:
 - improving the knowledge and skills of leaders and staff and ensuring that they work together more closely to plan effective learning for children
 - ensuring that assessments in the early years are based on thorough evidence of children's achievement and skills
 - training adults to support children in their learning successfully, through effective questioning and good modelling of language
 - ensuring that the teaching of phonics is well structured, of high quality and sharply evaluated for its impact on children's learning
 - setting out plans to improve the quality of teaching and leadership which precisely enable leaders and governors to check that actions taken have been successful.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have the knowledge and skills to teach English grammar, spelling and punctuation effectively across the curriculum
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations for the standard of pupils' written work across the curriculum
 - reviewing the effectiveness of the quality of teaching and learning of phonics to

ensure that attainment continues to improve and more pupils attain the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check

- ensuring that the work teachers set provides sufficient and appropriate challenge for all groups of pupils, particularly the most able.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have not acted effectively since the previous inspection to address the decline in the quality of teaching and learning. Outcomes for pupils are not high enough.
- Leaders have not thoroughly checked the progress of different groups of pupils as they move through the school. Boys in particular do not make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Consequently, a very high proportion of boys leave the school inadequately prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The leadership of teaching is ineffective. Leaders' evaluations of teaching are not informed by sharp analysis of the impact of teaching on pupils' progress and outcomes. As a result, school leaders have an overgenerous view of the quality of teaching.
- School leaders have experienced significant difficulties in recruiting staff. Middle leaders have lacked capacity to bring about urgent change and raise standards.
- Leaders' action plans to improve the effectiveness of different areas of the school's work, such as boys' writing, are not precise or focused. Leaders lack clarity in the actions they should take to drive improvements.
- Leaders who are new to their roles this year have received support, but this has not had the necessary impact on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. Leaders' monitoring of teaching has not led to sustained improvements. Consequently, achievement in the early years has continued to fall and standards at the end of key stage 1 in 2017 declined in reading, writing and mathematics. In writing at the end of key stage 2, pupils made below-average progress.
- The lack of capacity in middle leadership has led to senior leaders taking on a significantly increased workload, which is not likely to be sustainable or advantageous to the future of the school.
- The appraisal process for teachers has not been used well enough to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The targets set for teachers have not been precise or rigorous enough to lead to improved outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders do not evaluate well enough the impact of the use of the pupil premium funding. The school provides additional support for disadvantaged pupils but leaders do not robustly monitor the quality of this support. Partly as a result, disadvantaged pupils underachieve.
- Leaders have not evaluated the impact of additional support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Leaders track the progress of individual pupils but do not have an overall evaluation of how well the funding for these pupils is used. This group of pupils did not make good progress in 2016 and 2017 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Members of the governing body regularly visit the school and join in some of the leaders' monitoring activities, such as conversations with pupils and analysis of pupils' work in books. However, governors have not challenged leaders enough to improve outcomes for pupils, particularly in the early years.
- Newly qualified teachers are positive about the guidance and programmes of support that they receive. They speak highly of the quality of mentoring and identify how

training has helped to improve their skills in behaviour management, for example. Nevertheless, inspectors recommend that the school does not appoint newly qualified teachers at this time, as the school lacks the capacity to support them adequately.

- Leaders' plans to ensure that the teaching of mathematics continues to improve across the school are in place but are not urgent or precise enough. For example, staff training has begun to improve the teaching of mathematics. Pupils' books, particularly in key stage 2, show that this is beginning to have a positive impact. However, this is not consistent between classes and year groups.
- The physical education (PE) and sport funding is used effectively to increase pupils' participation in sport and improve their rates of progress in PE. Leaders closely check the impact of the actions taken on improving pupils' confidence and skills, as well as staff expertise. Pupils value the increased opportunities, clubs and competitions provided by the school and are knowledgeable about how to eat healthily and exercise regularly to keep fit.
- School leaders' recent recruitment of teachers who are new to the profession is showing a positive early impact on the quality of teaching. However, leaders have not yet had time to effectively evaluate and share this practice to ensure more consistency in the overall quality of teaching and learning.
- Middle leaders who were new to their roles in the previous academic year made some improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, progress in mathematics by the end of Year 6 improved and the proportion of pupils attaining the Year 1 phonics screening check rose.
- The school's curriculum ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is developed well. Displays around the school show pupils' aspirations and their good work on behalf of charities. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of people of different faiths, cultures and lifestyles are ensuring that they are well prepared to be citizens in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- The governing body does not adequately hold school leaders to account for the school's performance. For example, governors have not compared the progress made by boys at the school against the progress made by other pupils nationally. Consequently, the governing body has an overgenerous view of how well the school has performed.
- Members of the governing body have discussed with leaders how the pupil premium funding is allocated. Nevertheless, governors do not know enough currently about the progress that this group of pupils is making.
- Members of the governing body regularly visit the school and join in some monitoring activities. However, they have not challenged leaders effectively to improve outcomes for several groups of pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- Leaders have ensured that clear procedures and systems are in place. Leaders keep precise records to ensure effective work with external agencies. Staff and governors receive relevant training and regular updates.
- Staff are alert to the potential risks to pupils. The school works well with external agencies and rigorously pursues support for families to ensure that their needs are met.
- The school ensures that potentially vulnerable pupils receive social and emotional support to meet their needs. The family support worker is highly valued by pupils and engages very effectively with families to provide specifically targeted and appropriate support for pupils.
- The culture of safeguarding within the school is evident in the way in which pupils feel safe. Pupils representing the school council talk knowledgeably about how the school keeps them safe, including how to keep safe online. Pupils trust adults in the school and say that they always have someone to talk to if they feel the need.
- Leaders have taken effective action to reduce episodes of poor behaviour. Pupils say that bullying is now rare, but if incidents do happen, they are dealt with quickly and efficiently by staff. Pupils appreciate the school's use of restorative justice to solve disagreements and say that this works well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching and learning in the early years is inadequate. Teachers do not use assessment information to plan learning effectively for the different needs of children. As a result, too few children make the progress that they should by the end of the Reception Year.
- The quality of teaching and learning in key stages 1 and 2 is inconsistent. Teaching across classes and year groups is often not sharply focused to ensure that pupils make good progress. Frequently, teaching does not enable pupils to develop good writing skills, their ability to write at length or an understanding of different styles of writing.
- Teachers do not develop effectively pupils' English grammar, punctuation and spelling skills. The quality of pupils' handwriting varies and adults do not consistently reinforce high expectations for the quality of writing.
- Teaching is not matched well to the needs of pupils to ensure that they are effectively challenged to make the best possible progress. As a result, pupils – particularly boys, the most able and disadvantaged pupils of all abilities – do not make as much progress as they should, especially in writing. Evidence in pupils' books shows that pupils, particularly in key stage 2, often complete work to a standard below that expected for their age.
- Pupils have opportunities to write for different purposes across different subjects, but teachers do not reinforce high expectations for presentation and the correct use of grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Pupils do not have regular opportunities to use and apply their mathematics skills across the curriculum to deepen and extend their understanding. Opportunities to practise their skills in subjects such as science are missed.

- Initiatives to improve the teaching of phonics have had some success. Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2017 improved, but remain below national expectations. However, the teaching of phonics in the early years is less effective and lacks structure and focus.
- Training for staff has improved the teaching of mathematics. Pupils now have more opportunities for challenge and to solve problems. This is more evident in upper key stage 2. Although still inconsistent, the impact of this training is increasingly evident in pupils' work and in their improved attainment at the end of Year 6.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are taught to respect each other and their school environment. The majority of pupils show pride in their school.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in different situations and can explain the steps taken to look after them at school. Pupils talk about the ways they keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet. They trust school staff to deal with any fallings out quickly and effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying.
- Leaders promote healthy lifestyles effectively. Pupils explained to inspectors how to stay healthy by eating well and exercising regularly. They say that they enjoy the range of sporting, musical and other activities provided by the school. One pupil enthusiastically explained, 'We can go on residential trips, play dodge ball, play in the brass groups or sing with the choir. I like to play in the band when we have concerts.'
- Pupils are proud to hold positions of responsibility in school. Elections for these positions have helped pupils to understand fundamental British values, such as democracy and the importance of law. Year 6 pupils explained how recent discussions in class have helped them to understand important issues in British and American politics. For example, one pupil explained how his class had debated the main 'Brexit' arguments and then carried out their own ballot. Another pupil explained that democracy is important because it 'makes things fairer'.
- There is a strong ethos of friendship and tolerance. Pupils demonstrate their ability to empathise with others from different cultures, backgrounds or lifestyles. As pupils explained, 'We accept everyone. New children won't be teased in our school because Parklands is not like that.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered, and their conduct is good at different times of the school day. They are confident to express their opinions. The majority of pupils respond quickly and appropriately to adults' instructions.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They show respect and consideration for others. They enjoy receiving rewards and understand the sanctions should they choose to

misbehave.

- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. Attendance is in line with the national average, with pupils arriving punctually and ready for the day ahead.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are mostly good, but where learning is incorrectly pitched to pupils' abilities or needs, they take longer to settle to tasks.
- Pupils enjoy working towards achieving 'smiley' stickers in recognition of their good choices in connection with the school's values. Pupils are reflective and have a good understanding of the responsibilities of being good citizens.
- The majority of parents consider that relationships between staff and pupils are positive. As one said, 'Staff set good examples for the children and always do the very best they can to support families in the school.'

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Outcomes at the end of key stage 2 have steadily declined over a period of four years since the previous inspection. In 2016, pupils' attainment at the end key stage 2 was below national averages in writing, mathematics and English grammar, spelling and punctuation. Unconfirmed data for 2017 suggests that this remains the case.
- By the end of key stage 2 in 2016, the progress that pupils made in writing was below that seen nationally. Current information indicates that this remained the case in 2017.
- Boys in key stage 2 make poor progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, in 2017 by the end of Year 6, the vast majority of boys were not well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In 2016, pupils' progress in writing by the end of Year 6 was below the national average. Leaders did not act promptly to improve the quality of teaching of writing and, as a result, progress and attainment in writing further declined in 2017.
- Disadvantaged pupils in particular do not make good progress across the school. No disadvantaged pupils attained the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics (combined) at the end of key stage 2 in 2016 and 2017.
- The most able pupils do not achieve as well as they should. A below-average proportion of these pupils have achieved highly in reading, writing, mathematics or in English grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because the quality of teaching and support are not effectively evaluated to ensure good progress.
- In 2017, outcomes at the end of key stage 1 declined in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders did not react quickly enough to effectively provide additional support for pupils to catch up and make good progress.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check improved as a result of improved teaching and learning strategies. However, leaders do not have precise plans to further improve outcomes in phonics to above national expectations.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics in key stage 2 improved in 2017, but was still below

national expectations. Leaders introduced new teaching approaches to improve outcomes. This has seen improvements in the end of key stage 2 national assessments.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The majority of children leave the Reception Year without reaching a good level of development. As a result, most children do not have the skills needed to ensure that they are ready for Year 1.
- The quality of assessment is not good enough. Teachers do not have a clear understanding of what children need to learn and why. Consequently, children do not make good progress by the end of the Reception Year.
- The quality of teaching is not effective. The learning experiences provided are not sufficiently challenging or focused to improve children's understanding and ensure their good progress in the different areas of learning. The progress of the most able children is particularly limited due to the lack of challenge.
- Adults do not make a consistently strong contribution to children's learning. Opportunities are missed for adults to enhance children's learning through questioning and discussion.
- The impact of the use of the additional funding for disadvantaged children is not monitored closely. As a result, school leaders do not know if, or how, this funding is making a difference to outcomes for these children.
- Leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. There are no precise plans in place to improve the proportion of children achieving a good level of development or for specific ways in which provision should be improved.
- School leaders and teachers do not demonstrate a good understanding of assessment data or of the different groups of children across the two Reception classes. They do not use evidence gathered from assessments effectively to accurately plan next steps to move children on in their learning. Staff in the Reception classes have recently started to use a new electronic assessment tool, but have not yet monitored the effectiveness of this on improving teaching and learning.

School details

Unique reference number	121925
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10037595

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	416
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Josie Vass
Headteacher	Sally Gedney
Telephone number	01604 491769
Website	www.parklands.northants.sch.uk
Email address	head@parklands.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	29–30 January 2013

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the averaged-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for their SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school has experienced great difficulty recruiting teaching staff and leaders.
- The school receives support from the Kingsthorpe cluster of schools.

- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups, including joint observations with the headteacher and assistant headteacher. They observed the teaching of reading and listened to pupils reading. Inspectors talked with pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, several middle leaders, the family support worker, representatives of the governing body, including the chair, and the local authority adviser.
- Inspectors spoke with newly qualified teachers and their senior mentor and had conversations with several members of staff.
- The inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day. The inspectors also considered the 44 responses to the free-text service to parents and the 45 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspectors considered the 16 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupils' survey.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation of current performance and plans for improvement; the mathematics action plan; the English action plans; the school's most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils; information relating to the safeguarding, behaviour and attendance of pupils; the headteacher's reports to the governing body and minutes from a number of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Becky Ellers	Ofsted Inspector
Yvonne Watts	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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