

Inspection of Park Junior School

Elm Road, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire GL10 2NP

Inspection dates: 15–16 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a calm and productive place to learn. Pupils conduct themselves well. They feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. Adults care deeply about the pupils' welfare and make sure they are well looked after. Pupils say that most pupils listen and respect each other. They say that bullying is rare. On the rare occasions when bullying happens, pupils say adults deal with it quickly and it stops.

Pupils enjoy school. Teachers help them to understand how to be healthy and the importance of physical activity. They value the clubs and additional activities the school provides, for example Fizz Pop Science, multi-sports and choir. Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they can take on such as being a librarian or a school councillor.

Most pupils are keen to learn and succeed in school, but they do not achieve as well as they should. Some pupils have gaps in their learning, while others do well. The quality of pupils' experiences of school is not yet good. As a result, some pupils find it hard to stick at learning.

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

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Last year, more pupils left the school with the knowledge they need for secondary school than previously. Pupils' attendance has also improved. While leaders have made a lot of changes to the school's curriculum to rectify weaknesses, there has been too much change at once and not enough clarity about what should be taught and when. As a result, some of the changes have stalled. For example, teachers are unsure of how best to assess pupils in some subjects and as a result assessment is not making a big enough difference to supporting and developing pupils' learning. Some of the changes introduced have stalled because there is confusion between the old and new way of working among staff. For example, exactly what pupils should learn and in what order across the school is not laid down well enough. In some subjects, there is a tension between what pupils need to know and the school's choice of published scheme. The content of what pupils learn in some subjects, such as history, is not ambitious enough or well thought through. While subject content is improving, for history and other subjects, pupils do not acquire the essential knowledge they need.

Leaders have prioritised training in mathematics. This has paid off. Teachers' subject knowledge is stronger than in other subjects. There have been marked improvements in how pupils calculate and remember their times tables and number facts.

Teachers' work to develop pupils' vocabulary has also paid off. Staff use high-quality books. These books inspire pupils to read. Pupils who struggle with reading do not gain as much as they could from their reading sessions. Some have gaps in their knowledge of how to read. They lose interest quickly. Too few staff have been trained to help these pupils to catch up.

The words pupils learn in their reading help them to make their writing interesting. Pupils take care to write neatly. However, when teachers' expectations are low, pupils make careless errors. Although pupils learn spellings and punctuation in their lessons, they do not apply these to their writing.

Much successful work goes into meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders follow the advice of outside professionals. Pupils with social and emotional needs develop positive attitudes. However, when work in class does not always help pupils' development, some pupils become over-reliant on support from adults.

The school helps pupils to understand about values such as respect and responsibility. Clubs are well attended and broaden pupils' experiences and talents. However, pupils do not have a strong understanding of different faiths and cultures.

The headteacher has developed a strong and willing team. These relatively new leaders are working productively with the local authority to bring about the remaining changes.

Most parents would recommend the school. However, a few parents express concerns about how leaders respond to their worries.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to spot signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They follow the school's policy and procedure for reporting concerns they may have about pupils' welfare. Staff are clear about who to report their concerns to.

Leaders act quickly when concerns are brought to their attention. They work well with other agencies to make sure pupils get the help they need. Leaders only appoint staff who are suitable to work with children. Pupils know who to talk to if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders need to sharpen their focus on the essential knowledge pupils should acquire. They need to make sure that the curriculum sequence and coverage are clearly identified so that they build pupils' knowledge and skills consistently well over time. This includes helping pupils to gain a strong understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- Where leaders have invested in staff training to develop subject knowledge, there has been much improvement. Leaders must make sure that teachers have strong

subject knowledge. Teachers need to be clearer about the small steps needed to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in all the subjects they teach.

- Leaders need to streamline what it is they expect teachers to assess. Teachers are happy that leaders consider their workload. However, too much of what teachers assess does not help to support pupils' learning and development.
- Leaders have been successful in developing pupils' love for reading. However, teachers' understanding of phonics is not strong enough. There is a heavy reliance on two teaching partners who have some knowledge of phonics. Those pupils who join the school insecure in their phonic knowledge are not getting the right support to help them to catch up quickly. Leaders should make sure that all adults are sufficiently well trained in phonics.
- Many pupils conduct themselves well. However, where teachers' expectations are not high enough, pupils' attitudes to learning are not strong. In mathematics, where teachers' expectations for pupils' mental arithmetic are strong, pupils apply what they know consistently well. However, in spelling they do not. Leaders must make sure that teachers' expectations are high enough. Teachers need to make sure that pupils persevere and apply what they know.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	115539
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10088298
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Keely Folker
Headteacher	Richard Gasser
Website	www.parkjuniorschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28–29 March 2017

Information about this school

- Park Junior School is a smaller than average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is also above the national average.
- Most pupils are from a White British background.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Very occasionally, Ofsted will delay the publication of a report to ensure full consideration of concerns identified during the quality assurance process. In a rare instance, this process may suggest gaps in the inspection evidence base, which will cause Ofsted to conclude that the inspection is incomplete. This happened at Park Junior School. Her Majesty's Inspectors returned to the school in November 2019 to gather additional information to secure the evidence base.

In such cases, the inspection report is not published until Ofsted is satisfied that the inspection is secure.

- We met with senior leaders, curriculum leaders, governors, teachers and pupils.
- We met with a representative from the local authority.
- We undertook deep dives in these subjects: reading, writing, history and mathematics. This entailed meeting with leaders to discuss these areas of the curriculum, visiting lessons to watch these subjects being taught, talking to teachers to find out how they teach these subjects, looking at pupils' workbooks and talking to pupils about their learning in these subjects.
- We took account of 40 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and two responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- We reviewed a wide range of documents relating to safeguarding, including the school's single central record and behaviour and bullying records.
- We talked to different members of staff about the safeguarding training they have received.

Inspection team

Geraldine Tidy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Wendy Hanrahan	Ofsted Inspector
Tracy Hannon	Her Majesty's Inspector
Caroline Dulon	Senior Her Majesty's Inspector

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