

Parlaunt Park Primary Academy

Kennett Road, Langley, Slough, Berkshire, SL3 8EQ

Inspection dates

12–13 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since it opened in September 2014, the school has been affected by numerous and sometimes repeated changes of staff at many different levels, including governance. Against this backdrop, the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils have not been good enough.
- Gaps in key leadership positions have reduced the capacity to secure more consistent improvements in this large school.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching in English and mathematics are not secure in some classes. In other subjects, teaching, the curriculum and pupils' outcomes are variable and weaker overall.
- The quality of education in early years is similarly mixed. Children's progress is not tracked and analysed well enough.
- White British boys do not do as well as other pupils nationally or in school.
- Less-able pupils are not supported consistently well to catch up with their peers as quickly as they could.
- Leaders and staff have not made sure that pupils' experiences outside at lunchtime are sufficiently positive. Some pupils do not consistently treat each other with respect. Fixed-term exclusions are high.
- Pupils' understanding of important values in Britain, such as democracy and tolerance, lacks depth.
- Parents express very mixed views about the school. Leaders and parents agree that communication is not good enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher, supported by a very small but effective senior team, has driven rapid improvement. A relentless focus on safeguarding, improving teaching and raising standards is paying off.
- Standards in English and mathematics are rising. Pupils' progress and attainment in writing have improved markedly this year.
- Trustees and governors check closely that the school is improving. They provide leaders with the right balance of challenge and support.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving. Trustees have sensible plans to seek external expertise to help them to assess precisely the difference made by their use of pupil premium funding.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching, learning, assessment and outcomes, including in early years, by:
 - ironing out remaining inconsistencies between classes
 - securing effective teaching and strong pupil progress across a wide range of subjects beyond English and mathematics
 - ensuring that less-able pupils are consistently well supported and challenged
 - accelerating the rate of progress of White British boys so that they catch up more quickly with other pupils nationally.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - securing greater capacity and sustainable leadership at different levels so that more responsibility for improvements can be successfully delegated
 - making sure the curriculum is consistently effective in all subjects so that it promotes the strong development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding
 - promoting deep understanding among pupils about fundamental British values, including equipping them with the language to reflect about, discuss and act on this learning
 - developing systems to evaluate and improve pupils' behaviour, personal development and well-being at lunchtimes
 - improving communications and links with parents
 - evaluating more precisely the difference made by particular uses of additional funding
 - finding an accurate and meaningful way to assess and track children's capabilities right across early years.
- Improve pupils' experiences on the playground and field so that they are consistently respectful of each other and incidents and exclusions reduce.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Hampered by considerable turbulence at all levels, trustees, governors and leaders have not secured a good quality education for pupils. Strong, deep-rooted and conflicting views among the school's community about the right actions to take have added further complexity. Feelings were already running high during the last years of the predecessor school.
- Although still not fully settled or completely united, over the last year there is clear and convincing evidence that the school is improving quickly. However, teaching and outcomes for current pupils are not consistently good.
- Gaps in key leadership positions, including in early years and for special educational needs, have reduced the capacity for driving improvement. Consequently, senior leaders have not been able to delegate more responsibility for securing and maintaining the consistency and effectiveness of practice.
- Despite the considerable challenges, this is an improving school. The headteacher has triggered a significant shift in the school's culture. Her passion and drive shine through with a determination that 'every child has a right to learn'. She is relentless in her approach.
- Through clear strategic planning, leaders have prioritised the aspects of the school that needed the most urgent attention and improvement. Safeguarding, teaching and standards were correctly at the top of the list.
- Leaders are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They admit with an uncompromising frankness aspects of the school that they know still require improvement. Leaders are clear-sighted about what to do next. The school improvement plan has a clear emphasis throughout on disadvantaged pupils. Leaders' evaluation of the difference made by their actions leads to diagnoses of next steps in a cyclical approach. Necessary actions are planned within tight but manageable timeframes.
- Leaders have implemented a reliable and useful way of tracking pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. They have begun to use this information well to raise standards through precisely targeted, short-term action plans. However, the system has not been in place for long enough to have enough impact on reducing differences in outcomes for different groups of pupils.
- The trust has invested heavily in developing year group leaders. These leaders are positive about their growing roles and responsibilities and value the intensive support that they have received. Some year leaders are newer than others in their posts, and some positions are covered by senior leaders. Consequently, the potential impact in terms of securing consistent improvements across classes within a year group is not yet fully realised.
- The dovetailing of rigorous performance management and effective professional development has led to improvements in the quality of teaching over the course of the last year. Leaders do not tolerate underperformance and tackle it robustly. Newly

qualified teachers due to start in September are already undergoing rigorous induction to become familiar with the ethos and policies of the school.

- In terms of raising standards, leaders have focused heavily on English and mathematics. They are now starting to turn their attention to other subjects. Currently, the overall quality of education in subjects other than English and mathematics lags behind.
- The varied promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in rich displays throughout the school. Pupils study a wide range of faiths in detail, including visiting different places of worship. Pupils, staff, governors and trustees spoke with great enthusiasm about the recent 'museum learning' project about the Traveller community. The life-size horse and caravan made from plastic milk bottles was an impressive symbol of this work.
- Despite the evident promotion of fundamental British values, pupils' understanding of key concepts such as democracy and tolerance is limited. Some pupils do not recognise or use the language and vocabulary necessary to fully reflect on or express their ideas.
- Sensible use of additional funding, such as pupil premium or special educational needs funding, contributes to the improving picture overall. The rate of progress of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is accelerating. Sport premium spending has broadened the range of sports that pupils can access. As a result, more girls are participating in team sports, and pupils enter a greater number and range of local competitions. However, leaders have not measured and evaluated the difference made by particular uses of additional funding precisely enough.

Governance of the school

- Governance has strengthened, particularly in the last year. Following an extremely challenging second year of the school's operation, the trust took decisive action to deal with what they viewed as ineffective governance at a local level.
- Trustees and governors undertake a series of systematic and thorough checks to oversee and challenge the rate of improvement. This oversight includes regular visits to the school to gather information to assess whether leaders' strategies are securing the necessary improvement. Governors maintain a strong focus on school improvement priorities and strike the right balance between challenge and support.
- Governors are committed to improving outcomes for all pupils, including a clear emphasis on disadvantaged pupils. Minutes of governing body meetings provide clear evidence of regular robust debate and challenge. They detail the regular review and analysis of how well current pupils are doing and whether standards are rising quickly enough.
- The trust provides helpful and sometimes vital support, for example in terms of finance or personnel advice, enabling school leaders to focus strongly on improving the quality of education. The support that the trust brokered for early years contributed to swift improvements in Reception Year despite frequent changes of teaching staff. Trustees have already discussed and agreed to commission an external review of the use of pupil premium funding. Inspectors support this decision.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher has worked tirelessly to tighten the school's safeguarding procedures and make sure that safeguarding pupils is always an unrivalled top priority. Effective training for staff means that they are familiar with procedures and use these well to protect pupils. Governors and leaders do not leave this to chance. They have implemented a system of checking that staff have not just attended training, but have a secure understanding too.
- The school's safeguarding policy is comprehensive and easy to navigate. It sets out individual responsibilities clearly, together with the necessary actions to take in different situations. The single central register details all of the necessary checks on the suitability of adults to work with children. It is checked regularly by the trust.
- Leaders are proactive in working with other professionals and agencies for the safety and welfare of pupils. They are tenacious in following up on concerns if not satisfied with the response that they get.
- A number of parents responding to Parent View commented about how the school is better at safeguarding its pupils now. Leaders have sought the views of parents and pupils through recent surveys. Work to strengthen links with particular groups of parents, such as the Traveller community, is proving effective. Pupils understand the importance and seriousness of aspects of the school's work to safeguard them, such as the regular fire drills.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The frequent and sometimes repeated changes of teacher that have affected some classes have hindered leaders' efforts to secure consistently good teaching. Within an overall improving picture, leaders' own monitoring of teaching and learning shows a variable picture over the course of this year.
- Teaching does not meet the needs of less-able pupils consistently well. Sometimes these pupils lack, or cannot recall, the previous learning they need to be successful in tackling the tasks that they are given. These pupils do not consistently receive timely support to address gaps in their learning.
- In some classes, the teaching of science and some foundation subjects is too sporadic to promote pupils' progress well. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do, and the quality of their work in these subjects, are lower than in English and mathematics.
- Teachers have typically high expectations of pupils when teaching English and mathematics. Raising the pitch in lessons this year is contributing well to raising standards.
- Teachers' close and careful assessment of pupils' writing and helpful feedback contributes well to the improvements made. Most pupils understand how their work is assessed, so feel proud of their improvements and understand what to work on next. This is especially true of most-able pupils and those coping well with age-related expectations.

- The questioning skills of adults are well developed. Teachers draw on a broad repertoire of questioning techniques. Sometimes their questions are very precise and targeted, while at other times they are very open-ended. Adults prompt pupils well to draw on previous learning, or share and expand on their ideas. Teachers listen carefully to pupils' responses to steer them to any key learning points they may have missed.
- Teachers typically deploy the additional support provided by teaching assistants effectively. Teaching assistants have positive relationships with the pupils that they support. They are reassuring, including to those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which helps develop the confidence of those who are more reluctant to engage in tasks initially.
- Recent work by leaders and teachers to lift levels of challenge for the most able pupils is paying off. For example, most-able pupils tackle a wide range of increasingly challenging concepts in mathematics. There are frequent opportunities for pupils, including the most able, to gain a deep understanding by using their mathematical skills to reason or solve problems. In some classes, lower-attaining pupils are supported similarly well to take the next steps they need to in their learning.
- A number of parents understandably expressed concerns about the turnover of staff. They expressed mixed views about the value of the information that they receive about their child's progress. Current leaders have been very open in sharing information about where they found that pupils were behind in their learning. Written reports, due out shortly after the inspection, give a clear overview of how well pupils are progressing and attaining in relation to age-related expectations.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The supportive culture that exists between pupils in class does not extend well to the playground and field. Pupils report that some other pupils make derogatory comments outside of lessons, sometimes of a racist nature. Pupils also say that they do not like the rough, physical or boisterous conduct of some pupils, observed by inspectors.
- Although pupils know adults in school that they can go to with any concerns, pupils have mixed views about how well adults respond to these. In particular, they lack confidence in the ability of lunchtime supervisors to resolve issues properly. Pupils and parents express mixed views about whether incidents amount to bullying and whether this is tackled well. The school's bullying and racist logs suggest that incidents are not frequent and dealt with robustly when they occur. However, low-level incidents that occur outside at lunchtime are not recorded.
- Strong relationships are evident within school. Pupils engage well in lessons and clearly understand what is expected of them. The school has a calm and orderly atmosphere. There is a positive and productive climate for learning within the school building. Pupils are confident to ask questions of their teachers in class.

- Parents mostly report that their children are safe and feel safe. In the personal, social and health education lessons observed, pupils demonstrated empathy and were able to appreciate each other's points of view. Pupils develop an understanding and respect for other cultures in their work and engage in events such as Bollywood dancing.
- Pupils that attend enjoy the healthy and positive start to the day provided by the breakfast club.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- With the exception of the most serious incidents, there is no system in place to record or monitor behaviour on the playground and field.
- The rate of fixed-term exclusions is higher than is typically seen in primary schools.
- Behaviour in lessons is typically positive and sometimes highly focused. At times, pupils are very enthusiastic and excited about their learning. In lessons, pupils quickly respond to teachers' requests. Most pupils view behaviour in lessons as much better than outside. School records show that disruptions in lessons due to poor behaviour are rare.
- Most pupils attend school regularly. A number of positive and proactive strategies, including the work of the family support worker and attendance officer, mean that the numbers of pupils that miss too much school are falling. However, leaders recognise that there is still work to do to bring attendance in line with national figures, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the school opened, the two years of available published data about pupils' outcomes at the end of each key stage have not been favourable in a number of areas. There is convincing evidence that outcomes for current pupils are improving in English and mathematics, but current pupils do not make consistently strong progress across a wide range of subjects.
- Less-able pupils do not catch up with age-related expectations consistently well enough. For example, they lack sufficient understanding of specific vocabulary. Tasks that they are given do not help them to take the most important next steps in their learning often enough. Pupils try their best to do the work, but sometimes do not understand what they are doing.
- Pupils' learning in science is disjointed and sometimes limited. The quality of topic work does not reflect pupils' true capabilities when considered alongside work in English and mathematics. Pupils do not use their often strongly improving writing skills when doing work in other subjects.
- The way that teachers and leaders assess pupils' attainment and progress has changed this year. Consequently, it is not possible to see trends in pupils' performance over a longer period, such as since the school opened in September 2014. However, available

information indicates that there is variability when comparing outcomes for different groups of pupils. For example, White British boys typically make less progress than their peers.

- Following unacceptably low standards for Year 6 leavers in 2016, current pupils are being given firm foundations in terms of the basic skills needed before transferring to secondary education. However, they are not well prepared for the expected level of learning across a broad range of subjects, including science.
- The improving quality of teaching means that pupils' rates of progress in English and mathematics are accelerating. Consequently, standards in these subjects are rising.
- Standards have shown considerable improvement in writing. Plentiful writing in pupils' books provides clear evidence of their expanding vocabulary, greater stamina and increasingly accurate use of punctuation. Most-able pupils progressively master a contrasting range of genres, making careful choices of language to create a particular effect, with precise spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to reading. Rising again this year, results of the Year 1 phonics screening check have shown strong improvement since the school opened. The least able pupils develop a reasonable foundation of phonics skills on which to build. They engage well with the texts that they read. They try hard to use the punctuation and their understanding to add intonation and read with expression.
- The proportion of most-able pupils working at greater depth in their work or reaching higher standards is rising in English and mathematics.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving. However, leaders are alert to the fact that where pupils' needs are more complex, such as those who also have special educational needs and/or disabilities, they are doing less well. The evaluation of the difference made by the additional help or support given to individuals or groups is at an early stage of development.
- Overall pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the support they need to make reasonable progress so that they do not fall further behind. The number of pupils with an education, health and care plan has grown rapidly this year. Leaders measure the progress of these pupils regularly against their own individual targets.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The varied quality of teaching and outcomes seen in the rest of the school also exists in early years. Although much better currently, frequent changes of teachers this year in two of the three Reception classes have meant that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time has been variable. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and the environment currently, particularly between the Nursery and Reception Year, shows the lack of oversight of the whole early years by an early years leader.
- The proportion of children well prepared for Year 1, known as reaching a good level of development, dipped below national average figures in 2016. There has been a slight improvement this year, but the proportion remains below previous national average

figures. Differences, comparing disadvantaged children at the end of early years with other children nationally, are not closing consistently well enough.

- Adults start regular assessments of children's capabilities as soon as they arrive. However, leaders do not have a full analysis of this to give them a clear picture of children's starting points against which to evaluate subsequent progress.
- Children and adults share positive relationships. Adults interact with children well as they play. Adults know each child well and adjust their questions and encouragement accordingly. Children enjoy learning about how the emergency services can help them to keep safe, including an exciting visit by the fire brigade during the inspection.
- Reception children explore both the indoor and outdoor environment confidently. Some enticing challenges draw children in. For example, a collection of bulbs, wires and batteries totally engrossed a small group of pupils for a prolonged period, as they tried to make the light flash. Others enjoyed riding their tricycles through the role-play car wash. The environment in Nursery is rather sparse by comparison.
- The consistent and systematic approach to teaching phonics is effective. Targeted teaching meets children's different needs well, with additional support or challenge available for those who need it. Children develop confidence and make good progress as a result.
- Adults gather a range of detailed information about how well each child is doing. The new Reception Year leader has sharpened the focus on learning and the next steps children need to take to be better prepared for Year 1. Leaders have identified the need to work more closely with parents and other professionals, including identifying and meeting the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in a timely manner.

School details

Unique reference number	140994
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	10032825

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	650
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Martin Burford
Headteacher	Polly Bennett
Telephone number	01753 542269
Website	www.parlauntparkprimaryacademy.org
Email address	post@parlaunt.slough.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Parlaunt Park Primary Academy opened on 1 September 2014, replacing a predecessor school on the same site. The school is part of the Langley Academy Trust, sponsored by the Annabel Arbib Foundation.
- The school has been affected by considerable and repeated changes of personnel at support staff, teacher, leadership and governor levels. The headteacher started in May 2016. She was the third person to assume this role since the school opened as an academy.
- This school is considerably larger than the average-sized primary school. There are three classes in each year group and the school includes a Nursery.
- The large majority of pupils are from a range of minority ethnic groups. Nearly half of pupils speak English as an additional language. The largest single group remains pupils of White British heritage.

- At approximately one quarter of pupils, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils is broadly similar to that seen nationally.
- A broadly average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school, or a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club.
- In 2016, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes during the inspection to observe teaching and learning, many more than once. A number of these visits were carried out jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- When visiting classrooms, inspectors observed parts of the lessons that were taking place, but focused particularly on gathering evidence about what teaching and learning is typically like over time. This included scrutinising the work in pupils’ books and on display, talking with them about their learning and hearing them read. Inspectors also took the school’s assessments of pupils’ progress into account and considered leaders’ and external visitors’ evaluations about the quality of teaching over time.
- Inspectors met formally and informally with a wide range of people to gather further evidence. This included pupils, parents, staff, school leaders, governors and representatives of the trust.
- The inspection team reviewed a wide range of the school’s documentation and records, including particular scrutiny of those relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors analysed 65 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. All of the written comments that were added to these were considered alongside other inspection evidence. They also took account of recent surveys of pupils and staff carried out by leaders.

Inspection team

Clive Dunn, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Emma Sanderson	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Christopher Crouch	Ofsted Inspector
Lizzie Jeanes	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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Manchester
M1 2WD

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