

Inspection of a good school: Parayhouse School

Hammersmith and Fulham College, Gliddon Road, Fulham, London W14 9BL

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

Outcome

Parayhouse School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are keen to come to school every day, meaning that attendance rates are high. This is because they are surrounded by kind and caring adults who meet their specific needs well and in an enjoyable manner. Staff do all they can to develop pupils' communication and social skills. Pupils are helped to make friends and get on well with each other. They behave attentively in class and maturely during social times. Pupils have the confidence to share any worries that they may have with a trusted adult and feel that their concerns will be addressed. This helps them to feel safe.

The school aspires to provide all pupils with a broad curriculum. It is adapted appropriately to meet each pupil's needs. Learning combines and interweaves both academic and social elements. There is a sharp focus on giving the pupils the knowledge and tools they need to develop independence and to live successfully in the community. They leave the school well prepared for entry to post-16 specialist provisions.

The school creates several opportunities for pupils, staff and governors, as well as parents and carers, to share experiences together as a community. For example, every year they spend a day together at a specialist theme park for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

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

The school has, over the past few years, worked diligently to review and revamp the curriculum. A lot of thought has gone into this process. Leaders and staff have drawn on research, visited other schools and commissioned external experts to support them in their work. Much has been achieved. Staff receive quality training on how to teach the well-sequenced subject curriculums effectively. The teaching teams and therapists work extremely closely together. They inform each other's practice in a very coherent manner, always in the best interests of the pupils. Together they assess pupils' starting points on arrival. They keep a regular check on how well pupils are achieving against their

academic, social and therapeutic targets. They make appropriate adaptations to teaching and resourcing to meet pupils' individual needs.

School leaders have also broadened the curriculum offer considerably. Additions include a series of vocational courses, taught across the school. These focus on giving pupils functional knowledge and real-life experiences. Topics covered include relationships, health, employment and the community. As a result of the ambitious curriculum and its implementation, pupils' overall achievements are strong. However, the school's review of the curriculum is still a work in progress. Leaders have correctly identified that, in a few curriculum areas, some aspects of their work are not yet completed. Where improvements to the curriculum are not fully established, pupils' learning is less strong.

Pupils who join this school experience language and communication difficulties. Developing pupils' communication and reading skills is, therefore, a very high priority. All staff are trained and supported in using a range of communication strategies. They deploy these well. This ensures that all pupils are included and enabled to access the curriculum successfully. Staff have the expertise to teach the phonics programme effectively. As per their needs, pupils learn phonics systematically. They develop their reading confidence and fluency well. Staff carefully choose texts from a range of genres for reading with and to pupils. This promotes a love of books. Staff also use texts to develop and expand pupils' vocabulary.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. From the start, staff set clear routines. They apply the school's agreed strategies for promoting and celebrating positive behaviour. Staff are adept at analysing and getting to the root causes of any misbehaviours. They arrange support for pupils and their families to address these identified underlying needs. This leads to much improvement in a short period of time. Pupils engage positively in lessons and are friendly towards one another at social times. Their attitudes make a strong contribution to the calm, purposeful school environment.

The school provides pupils with a wide range of enrichment activities as part of its high-quality work on personal development. Pupils are helped to engage with the community. They help to tidy up local parks, for instance. They also visit places of worship, museums and art galleries. All classes go on residential trips. These give pupils experiences of dining out and of taking on responsibilities, such as looking after their clothes. Every week, pupils take part in an activity of their choice, with dance, art, sport, games and a salon club on offer. Pupils participate in work experience within the school, and sometimes out of school, such as working in an allotment. Older pupils also undertake enterprise activities. They learn how to budget, make and sell products and calculate profit.

Leaders and governors pay a lot of attention to staff well-being. Staff said that they appreciate leaders' openness and consideration for their personal circumstances. They value the many opportunities that they receive for professional development and career progression. Work demands are not onerous. Staff spoke about how they are able to channel their energies into teaching and looking after pupils' welfare.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some work remains to be done, in a few subjects, to refine and embed the school's recent improvements in curriculum design and implementation. This means that there are some instances where pupils do not achieve as highly as they could. The school should ensure that its curriculum thinking, implementation and approaches to assessments in all subject areas are embedded effectively.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2014.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years,

looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	135175
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10290149
Type of school	Special
School category	Non-maintained special
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	49
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Daniela Schwartz
Headteacher	Holly Bristow (co-headteacher) Verity Carnevale (co-headteacher)
Website	www.parayhouse.com
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties. Some also have moderate learning difficulties or severe learning difficulties and a few have a diagnosis of autism.
- The current co-headteachers took up their posts in February 2019. The new chair of governors was appointed in June 2022.
- The school does not make use of any alternative education.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading and communication, physical education and development and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered other subjects as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke with the co-headteachers and other senior leaders. They also spoke with the chair of the governing body and two other governors.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation and had meetings with staff and with pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey. They also spoke on the telephone with a few parents. Inspectors also considered the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nell Nicholson

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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