

Inspection of a good school: Park Hall Junior Academy

Park Hall Road, Walsall, West Midlands WS5 3HF

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 March 2022

Outcome

Park Hall Junior Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils in this school are happy and enjoy their learning. The relationships between pupils and adults are positive. Pupils respect one another's opinions.

The school is calm and orderly. Pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. If behaviour occasionally interrupts learning, there is a fair system in place to address this. Bullying is rare. If it does happen, staff deal with it effectively.

Leaders have high aspirations for what pupils can achieve. They want pupils to do their best in their schoolwork, and to develop into caring, active citizens. Staff support these aims by teaching pupils how to behave responsibly. For example, pupils can collect food for a local food bank or take on a role in the school. This role may be a house captain, a member of the school council or a librarian. Pupils speak with pride about these jobs.

Pupils enjoy the activities and trips the school offers. These include clubs in sports, art and photography. In the past, trips have included going to a local art gallery. Year 6 pupils are now looking forward to a residential trip.

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

Leaders think carefully about the curriculum that pupils follow. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), follow a broad and balanced curriculum. Subjects are well planned and well sequenced. Leaders make sure that pupils know and remember more by revisiting key knowledge. In history, for example, leaders identify key concepts for each topic. They make sure that pupils revisit these concepts in other topics during the year and across year groups. This helps key knowledge to stick in pupils' minds.

Leaders use a range of assessments well to identify any gaps in pupils' learning. This includes self-assessment. Pupils assess what they think they know and understand at the

start of a topic, and then repeat this at the end of the topic. Staff use this to identify if they need to repeat any learning.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. Work in books shows that pupils are making progress through the curriculum.

Classrooms have a range of resources to support pupils' learning. However, in mathematics, learning resources are not used as well as they could be in all classes. For instance, during the inspection, some pupils, including those with SEND, were learning about fractions. Although resources were available in the classroom to support this learning, staff did not make them available for pupils to use. This meant that some pupils found it difficult to grasp key concepts. Consequently, they did not learn and remember as much as they might have done.

Leaders promote reading well, and have an effective reading programme in place. This includes a specialist programme for pupils with SEND. The school has two libraries that have many books. Staff arrange for authors to visit the school and pupils write book reviews for the school newsletter. Leaders regularly check how well pupils are reading. If any pupils fall behind, leaders act quickly to put support in place. As a result, pupils become fluent, confident readers who enjoy reading.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. Lessons usually run smoothly. Leaders encourage pupils to maintain active lifestyles by providing a range of equipment for them to use at breaktime. This includes skipping ropes, bats and balls. Pupils enjoy these activities and play cooperatively together.

Leaders look after the staff. During the inspection, staff gave many examples of how leaders consider their workload. Staff describe leaders as having an 'open door'. In their responses to Ofsted's survey, all staff say that they are proud to be members of the school.

Trustees and governors are committed to the school and its pupils. They provide an effective balance of support and challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff take pupils' welfare seriously. When they report concerns, they are confident that leaders will take the appropriate action. Staff have regular safeguarding training. The school completes the appropriate checks on all adults who work at, or visit, the school.

Leaders know about the risks pupils may face in the local area. For example, they make sure that pupils learn about water safety because there is a lake and canal nearby. Through assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including online. As a result, pupils say they feel safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Resources in mathematics are not always used effectively to support pupils' learning. This means that teaching does not enable some pupils to understand some mathematical concepts as well as they could. In addition, it restricts pupils' opportunities to work independently. Leaders need to ensure that adults use resources in mathematics with greater consistency and effectiveness, so that all pupils achieve the best possible outcomes.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2012.

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.

If you are the school and you are 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	137797
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10211204
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	410
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Dawn Hendon
Headteacher	Gerry Healy
Website	www.parkhalljuniorac.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides a before- and after-school club.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since COVID-19 began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken this into account in her evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher; other senior leaders; staff; members of the governing body, including the chair; trustees; and pupils.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector talked to pupils at unstructured times during the day.
- The inspector evaluated a range of school documents, and looked at information on the school's website.

- The inspector checked the single central record and the procedures for the recruitment of staff. She also met with the school's safeguarding leaders.
- The inspector reviewed the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and pupil survey, and considered the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses.

Inspection team

Lesley Yates, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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