

Inspection of Park High School

Thistlecroft Gardens, Stanmore HA7 1PL

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Colette O'Dwyer. The school is a single academy trust. The school is overseen by a governing body, chaired by Sangita Patel.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, at Park High are welcoming and polite to visitors. They show respect to the adults who work with them and consideration towards each other. They understand and embody the school's 'character virtues' of curiosity, integrity, resilience, teamwork and compassion. They are helped to be the best version of themselves and expected to achieve well, which most do.

Pupils are kept safe. They can identify trusted adults and know who to go to for help if they need it. A small number of pupils say bullying happens, but staff are effective at helping to resolve it swiftly.

Pupils say this is a place where everyone is welcome and included. They are proud of the diversity at the school and how differences are celebrated. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures through dedicated lessons, tutor time, cultural events and festivals.

Pupils are grateful for all the opportunities the school provides for them to develop their confidence, talents and interests. These include music lessons, a range of sporting fixtures and training, team-building activities and visits to the theatre and museums. There are lots of opportunities to take on responsible roles, such as being 'character ambassadors' or reading with younger pupils.

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

The school has ensured that pupils access a curriculum that matches the breadth and ambition of what is expected nationally. In the sixth form, students have access to a broad range of subjects and qualifications. This is provided on site and through a sixth-form partnership in the local area.

The curriculum in each subject is well designed and coherently structured so that pupils learn the knowledge they need. For example, in music, pupils learn to play simple five note pieces with their right hand before adding in a left-hand accompaniment. Older pupils build on this knowledge when performing more complex pieces incorporating flat and sharp notes on the keyboard. Similarly, in computer science, younger pupils develop their understanding of programming language and commands. This helps them to tackle more complex programming as they move through the curriculum.

Emphasis is placed on pupils securing a rich academic vocabulary. In some subjects, this is embedded throughout the curriculum and pupils demonstrate increasing confidence in using the right terminology. However, opportunities to reinforce pupils' technical language are sometimes missed. As a result, pupils are not consistently able to use subject-specific vocabulary fluently and accurately when speaking or writing about their learning.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They present new learning clearly and demonstrate subject expertise. Although assessment is generally used well to check what pupils have learned and understood, this is not consistent. There are times when opportunities are missed to identify and address pupils' misconceptions. In these

instances, some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge and are not as well prepared to tackle more complex ideas.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified accurately, typically access the same curriculum as their peers and achieve well. Reading is prioritised across the school. Those at the earlier stages of learning to read are given appropriate support, including phonics-based interventions, to develop their reading accuracy, fluency and confidence.

The school has created a calm and orderly environment. Pupils understand and respect the rules. They behave well in classrooms and at breaktimes, moving around the site safely. The school has expanded staffing capacity and is rigorous in how attendance is monitored. The school seeks to understand and support individuals and their families to overcome any barriers to attending school. This has had a positive impact on attendance, including for those who are persistently absent. The school has cultivated a proactive approach to addressing punctuality in attending lessons, although lateness does occasionally persist.

The comprehensive and carefully designed 'character curriculum' helps pupils to learn about the importance of physical and mental health and what constitutes safe and respectful relationships. Pupils receive individual advice to help them make informed decisions for their future. The school has a positive record of students successfully attending and completing courses at universities or other types of further and higher education.

Pupils benefit from a range of activities and visits to enrich their cultural capital. The school tracks and supports attendance at additional activities and visits to ensure all pupils benefit from them. This includes pupils and students with SEND and those who are identified as disadvantaged.

Since the previous inspection, the school has been on a significant improvement journey. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have addressed the key areas for improvement outlined in the last inspection report. They have identified appropriate next steps for their ongoing improvement work. This work has been underpinned by effective support that has been used well to improve aspects of the school's work. Staff feel well supported and value the opportunities they have to develop professionally. The school considers staff well-being and takes effective steps to manage workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is not used consistently. This means that some pupils are not as well supported to secure the knowledge they need to tackle the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that assessment is used consistently to identify and address misconceptions.
- In some subjects, pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to learn, practise and apply subject-specific vocabulary. In these instances, some pupils do not use appropriate terminology accurately when talking or writing about their learning. The school should ensure that regular opportunities are provided for pupils to rehearse, recap and retrieve the ambitious vocabulary identified in the intended curriculum.

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 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	137075
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	10345923
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,480
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sangita Patel
Headteacher	Colette O'Dwyer
Website	www.parkhighstanmore.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 June 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school currently uses two registered providers for alternative provision.
- The school is a member of the Harrow Sixth-Form Collegiate partnership.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school’s education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, computer science, music and history. To do this, they met with subject leaders, held discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils’ work. Other subjects were considered as part of this inspection.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders’ evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- The inspection team met with senior leaders, a selection of subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair of the local governing body. They also spoke with a representative from the local authority and school improvement partner.
- 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.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and their responses to Ofsted’s online surveys.

Inspection team

Una Buckley, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Eliot Wong	Ofsted Inspector
Janina Aitken	Ofsted Inspector
Gareth Cross	Ofsted Inspector
Alan McDougall	Ofsted Inspector

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