

# Paragon Christian Academy

233–241 Glyn Road, London, E5 0JP

## Inspection dates

4–6 February 2013

## Overall effectiveness

**Good** **2**

Pupils' achievement Good 2

Pupils' behaviour and personal development Good 2

Quality of teaching Good 2

Quality of curriculum Good 2

Pupils' welfare, health and safety Good 2

Leadership and management Good 2

## Summary of key findings

### This school is good because

- It is well led and managed with all leaders and governors committed to continually improving the quality of education and, in particular, teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Teaching provides incisive challenge and guidance to help all pupils achieve well, both in individual lessons and over time.
- Pupils behave well, are self-motivated and readily take responsibility for how well they learn and make academic progress.
- Arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety are much improved since the last inspection and are now good. A strong sense of community envelops the school and pupils show respect and tolerance for the wide range of cultures and ethnic traditions that are represented there.
- Pupils leave the school as well rounded individuals, both academically and socially, who are more than ready to face the next challenges of their academic lives.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are not yet sufficiently systematic and embedded to have the best impact on improving pupils' achievement.
- The school does not analyse pupils' performance data rigorously enough, thus limiting the information available to teachers to improve teaching and learning.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements.

- The school requires improvement and must take action to meet schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards)(England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

## Information about this inspection

- The school was inspected with a half day's notice.
- The inspector observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons. All teachers and support staff were observed. The inspector heard pupils read and looked at a wide range of pupils' books. He looked at documents including those relating to the curriculum, pupils' welfare, teaching, safeguarding, leadership and pupils' progress.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher and other staff, and a telephone conversation and a meeting took place with the proprietor.
- The inspector took account of 10 responses from Parent View and 10 responses from the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Martin Newell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Paragon Christian Academy is a co-educational Christian day school for pupils aged four to 18 years.
- The school offers the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) curriculum which is a highly structured and individualised programme of learning. This programme seeks to incorporate the teachings of the Bible into all aspects of pupils' education so that the pupils grow spiritually, morally and academically. There is an after school homework club.
- There are currently 41 pupils on roll. The school caters for pupils between the ages of three to 18. Currently, the eldest is 15. There are seven children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a small number of disabled pupils and special needs pupils who do not have statements. There are no pupils in the school with a statement of special educational needs.
- Pupils attending the school are from a wide range of ethnic minority backgrounds. However, there are no pupils currently attending the school who are at an early stage of acquiring English. The school was last inspected in October 2009.
- The school does not provide any alternative or additional provision for its pupils.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management and teaching further by:
  - ensuring the headteacher consolidates procedures for appraising teachers' performance so that they are an effective tool in bringing about further improvements in teaching
  - ensuring that the headteacher's regular observations of lessons and teaching are more frequently supplemented by written feedback
  - sharing the best practice in teaching, such as highly effective questioning, so that all staff can learn from each other.
- Analyse the data relating to pupils' progress more thoroughly to identify areas of weakness better within individual subjects and use the information to help accelerate pupils' achievement at a faster pace.
- The school must meet the following regulation.
  - Provide suitable changing accommodation and showers for pupils aged 11 years and over at the start of the school year who receive physical education (paragraph 23A (1)(c)).

## Inspection judgements

### Pupils' achievement

**Good**

Pupils' achievement is good. This owes much to the good quality of teaching and the focused curriculum that ensure that, from an early age, pupils acquire a good range of skills and knowledge that are systematically built on as the pupils move through the school. The highly structured and individualised nature of the ACE curriculum means that pupils progress through the different sequential levels at their own pace. However, it is an expectation that pupils set themselves challenging targets as to how many pages they will complete each day and for each subject. The pupils readily respond to these expectations and make good progress as they move through the school.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve well. A strong emphasis is given to the development of early numeracy and communication skills, including phonics (the links between letters and the sounds they make), alongside other areas of learning.

In the lower and upper juniors, pupils are confident, expressive readers who also write well, have good levels of general knowledge and who handle numbers with confidence and ease. This trend continues into the seniors.

By the time pupils leave the school they are well-rounded individuals both academically and socially and are well equipped with knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. This is reflected in the high number of pupils that attain the International Christian Education Certificate of Education (ICCE). This enables many pupils that leave the school to attend further and higher education institutions both locally and further afield. Senior pupils' success in English and mathematics is often good.

The school's data, supported by lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work during the inspection, show that many of the pupils are working beyond age-related expectations. However, the school has rightly identified the need to analyse these data more rigorously so that any weaknesses in individual subjects may be addressed more swiftly, and in doing so accelerate pupils' progress at an even faster rate than currently. This is the main reason why achievement is not outstanding.

The small number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well and as a result make good progress. Evidence also indicates that pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their classmates.

### Pupils' behaviour and personal development

**Good**

Pupils' behaviour and personal development are good. Pupils generally behave well in class and around the school. Just occasionally some of the junior boys are a little boisterous. However, all pupils show good levels of respect to one another and to adults.

A particular strength is the manner in which pupils take responsibility for their own learning. The ACE curriculum depends on pupils being self-motivated, self-assessing their work and being ready to learn from mistakes. Pupils respond very well to this high bar of expectation and work studiously for sustained periods, including at the after school homework club.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage children work just as hard and participate enthusiastically in all that the school offers. Attitudes to learning displayed by the senior pupils are equally as strong. They provide good role models for the younger pupils.

Across the school pupils enjoy learning and are keen to do well, and pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance. The school plays an important role in developing pupils' self-confidence and esteem and promoting a genuine aura of tolerance and respect for all. This is strengthened through the good provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Pupils of all ages demonstrate a good understanding of right from wrong and of taking responsibility for their own actions and behaviours. This helps the school to function as a caring, close-knit learning community. The school teaches pupils well about other faiths, cultures and

traditions, as well as providing them with a good general knowledge of public institutions and services in England. This all results in pupils being well prepared for life in a society that celebrates cultural diversity and recognises the values of British democracy.

### Quality of teaching

**Good**

The quality of teaching is good; it has a strong, positive impact on learning and achievement. Across the school, relationships between adults and pupils are good and this helps to create an atmosphere that is conducive to effective learning. The small size of classes means that teachers know the needs and abilities of the pupils very well.

The majority of teaching is based on learning units called Packages of Accelerated Christian Education (PACES). Work is closely matched to the individual needs of pupils and pupils work independently of others at their own work station. Teachers closely supervise pupils' learning and provide guidance and help when needed. This is at its best when teachers pose questions to clarify pupils' learning or set off a trail of thought that requires pupils to research further or to think the answer through for themselves. Some outstanding examples of this were undertaken by senior pupils and the lower juniors.

At the end of each PACES booklet pupils do a self-check test and a formal test overseen by the teacher. Pupils can only progress if they reach a certain percentage and there are also incentives to encourage them, which pupils are very enthusiastic about. This strong partnership between teaching and self-learning contributes much to pupils' good progress. However, best use is not always made of observations and evaluations of learning to improve teaching to the next level, which is why the quality of teaching is good rather than outstanding.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught well. Teaching is lively, linked closely to the early learning goals and engages and enthuses the children. On occasions questioning could be more challenging to push children's learning further. The good teaching of phonics in this class, continued when pupils move to the next class, results in the development of good reading and writing skills at an early stage.

A small number of lessons are taught away from the ACE curriculum for subjects such as music, physical education and British history. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to work together in a more relaxed manner and readily put the skills learnt in the ACE curriculum to good use.

### Quality of curriculum

**Good**

The curriculum is good and contributes well to pupils' good progress. The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage meets requirements because it ensures that national learning requirements and aspects of the ACE curriculum dovetail neatly together to provide the youngest children with an enriching start to their educational lives.

For other pupils in school the core ACE curriculum covers English, literature, mathematics, creative writing, word building, social studies, science and Bible studies. Additional subjects such as music, art, physical education and information and communication technology (ICT) add to pupils' learning experiences. A strong consideration is given to pupils acquiring good reading, writing and mathematical skills. This is successful and pupils use these skills well in other subjects. The senior pupils choose from a wide range of 'electives' covering numerous subjects, including modern foreign languages, business studies, Bible studies and website design. Older pupils can achieve the ICCE at levels appropriate to their age and abilities. These qualifications are accepted by colleges and universities and enable pupils to fulfil their aspirations to attend further and higher education. The school provides increasingly good careers guidance opportunities for pupils and is rightly seeking to increase the number of trips out of school for older pupils to better match the number on offer for younger ones. Good provision is made for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Good support enables them to fully access all aspects of the curriculum and school life. Pupils joining the school at an early stage of acquiring English receive targeted support and quickly catch up with other pupils.

**Pupils' welfare, health and safety****Good**

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. Pupils are well supervised at all times and feel safe and secure whilst at school. Good policies are in place for promoting good behaviour and they are consistently applied by all staff. Discussions with pupils indicated that behaviour is typically good over time and that bullying is a rare event. Parents and carers also support this view. Pupils are aware of different types of bullying and are adamant that should bullying occur it would be dealt with quickly. Pupils are eager to point out that there is always an adult to turn to if they have any concerns at all.

The procedures for checking the suitability of staff to work with children are robust. Similar checks are also made on volunteers. The designated person responsible for overseeing safeguarding, including child protection, has attended the appropriate training at the required level and ensured that all staff have been trained to the correct level.

Good procedures are in place to ensure the safety of pupils when taking part in off-site visits. Detailed risk assessments are carried out and parental permission is always sought. Equally thorough health and safety audits of the school premises are carried out on a regular basis and any concerns are dealt with swiftly.

A significant number of staff are suitably trained in paediatric first aid. Good procedures are in evidence for the recording of any accidents. The buildings have recently been inspected for fire safety and the minor shortcomings are being addressed. Fire-fighting equipment and portable electrical appliances are checked regularly by qualified external contractors.

**Leadership and management****Good**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads the school well. She has the confidence and respect of pupils, staff, governors and parents and plays a pivotal role in continually seeking to improve the quality of education provided. There is a very strong sense of team spirit that wraps around the school.

Staff and governors share an ambition and commitment to continually improve teaching and achievement to enable the school to move to the next level. The headteacher and staff know the school's strengths and areas for development well. These are well articulated and accurate. Staff, at all levels, are reflective and ready to accept constructive criticism that helps improve their own performance and that of the school. The headteacher has recently introduced formal arrangements for the appraisal and performance management of staff. These have not had sufficient time to demonstrate the best possible impact.

The headteacher is a regular visitor to classrooms, observing practice or supporting and working alongside teachers. Teachers greatly value the pointers for improvement and support the headteacher provides. However, such visits are not always recorded and opportunities are lost to more closely monitor the rate of improvements in teaching and learning and to disseminate good and better practice amongst teachers.

The headteacher and governors ensure that good professional development opportunities are available for staff who in turn put new training to good use. This is a school that embraces equality of opportunity for all and gives pupils and staff alike the chance to succeed.

Parents are provided with an appropriate level of information about the school and their child's progress, and effective procedures are in place for handling complaints. The school's accommodation is adequate overall and effective use is made of available space and resources. However, the school does not meet the regulation in relation to providing appropriate changing accommodation and shower facilities for pupils aged 11 and over. The school is currently evaluating whether available space in the senior building could be modified for such accommodation.

The governors have ensured that all but one of the independent schools' regulations are met.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100301
<b>Inspection number</b>	408701
<b>DfE registration number</b>	204/6389

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

<b>Type of school</b>	Co-educational Christian Day School
<b>School status</b>	Independent School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–18 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	41
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	World Vision for Christ
<b>Chair</b>	Albert Chambers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sharon Curry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 October 2009
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£2760–£3000
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 985 1119
<b>Fax number</b>	0208 553 9855
<b>Email address</b>	pca@wvfc.co.uk



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