

Paragon Christian Academy

233–241 Glyn Road, Hackney, London E5 0JP

Inspection dates

28–30 November 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	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not maintained the school's good standard of education since the previous inspection. Leaders have not routinely supported teaching through effective checks on quality, training and professional development.
- Pupils' outcomes require improvement. Pupils' progress in the core curriculum is inconsistent, particularly in the senior phase. In the additional curriculum, pupils' knowledge and understanding are not well developed. Pupils are not routinely challenged to think hard.
- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. Teaching sometimes lacks the subject expertise to help pupils learn well.
- In early years, the indoor space is used effectively to support children's development well. However, the outdoor space is less well used to promote children's learning. This limits children's progress over time.
- In the past, governors have not checked carefully that the school continues to develop and that the initiatives taken by leaders secure lasting improvements.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and miss little school time. Pupils work and socialise well together across the age range. Bullying is rare. These strengths support pupils' welfare and ability to learn.
- Pupils' personal development is good because pupils gain experiences that prepare them for their future lives. Leaders have worked hard to supplement the curriculum with opportunities for pupils to consider and understand the values and opinions of others.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management, including governance of the school, by sharpening leaders' evaluation of the school's performance and implementing strategies to improve the school more rapidly.
- Develop the use of the early years outdoor space to better support children's development.
- Improve teaching and learning by providing staff with training and professional development to enhance their skills and raise pupils' outcomes, particularly in the additional curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that the school has improved since the previous inspection. Leaders' plans for development are not sharply informed by rigorous evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Recent training and the introduction of new routines are helping leaders to improve their checks on the school's performance, but it is too soon to see the effects of these improvements.
- Checks of the quality of teaching and support for teachers' performance have not been effective in identifying areas in need of development. Consequently, staff lack the skills required to raise pupils' outcomes. In particular, they do not identify accurately where pupils need additional stretch or extra subject-specific support.
- The curriculum has been planned so that the core curriculum, which includes English, mathematics, science, social studies and Bible reading, is supplemented by additional lessons. These aim to support pupils' development by learning in other subjects such as personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and creative writing, while also stretching their core knowledge and skills. As yet, the additional curriculum is not as effective in supporting pupils' broader learning as leaders had planned. This is associated with weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge.
- The curriculum increasingly prepares pupils well for their subsequent education and life in modern Britain. Leaders have ensured that pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of British institutions and global affairs. Pupils understand and are prepared for their next steps in education and employment.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Pupils have opportunities to consider views and beliefs that differ from their own. This includes, for example, learning about Darwinian evolution through additional literature work. Leaders actively encourage respect for all people, regardless of their faith, race, gender, disability, age and sexuality. Equality, including gender equality, is promoted well here.
- Leaders have ensured that staff receive regular training that underpins their secure knowledge of safeguarding arrangements and health and safety, including first aid. Consequently, staff are proactive in supporting pupils' development and welfare.
- Leaders have ensured that the school meets all of the independent school standards.

Governance

- Since the previous inspection, governors have not held leaders rigorously to account to ensure that the school has sustained and improved on its existing strengths. Plans for development have not been scrutinised carefully to confirm that the right priorities have been identified and acted upon.
- Recent training has helped governors to develop their skills. The headteacher welcomes the greater challenge and scrutiny that governors are now providing.
- Governors know the school well and visit regularly. The involvement of the chair of the governing body in curriculum development means that she is well placed to check that it

is taught well and fulfils the school's responsibility to prepare pupils for their later lives.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy is published on the school's website. The policy is well supported by a range of helpful additional documentation. All staff understand the importance of their role in safeguarding pupils, including preventing radicalisation and extremism, promoting e-safety and identifying signs of neglect.
- Staff know and understand the procedures to follow should any concerns arise. Leaders work in close partnership with the local authority, including through reviews of safeguarding practice and training.
- Pupils reported to the inspector that they feel safe and happy at school. Pupils said that they can turn to any member of staff for help if they have any concerns. Pupils and staff are aware of potential risks to their safety outside school. Staff are vigilant of these risks. Parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey appreciate the school's strong 'community feel' as a key strength.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Most teaching in the core curriculum takes the form of individual support for pupils and this varies in quality between subjects. For some subjects, staff lack the necessary subject knowledge to support and challenge pupils effectively; in social studies, support is less effective than in English and mathematics, for example. In these subjects, teachers do not use questioning well to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable. As a result, pupils' progress in the core curriculum varies, particularly in the senior phase.
- The additional curriculum supports pupils in developing creative writing, and scientific and technical skills. However, here too there is variability in pupils' progress between subjects. For example, the level of challenge in PSHE education is effective in helping pupils develop new skills, whereas in media and technology it is too low.
- Pupils know and understand the school's system of assessment very well. The structure of the core curriculum means that pupils work at their own pace. They cannot progress to further learning until a check on their work confirms that they have acquired the expected knowledge and understanding. This means that pupils' progress is well monitored by themselves and staff.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are strong. Pupils are able to make decisions about their learning and select particular courses to supplement their core learning. This prepares pupils for their subsequent education and positively reflects leaders' aims of supplementing the curriculum to fill potential gaps in pupils' development.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils develop independence, resilience and self-confidence through the curriculum.
- Pupils regularly socialise and engage in extra-curricular activities with pupils from across the age range. Opportunities to perform in shows and work collaboratively allow older pupils to take responsibility and younger pupils to learn from them as role models.
- Pupils learn how to engage positively in conversation about the values at the core of their faith, as well as those of others. Consequently, pupils have respect for equality and human rights.
- Pupils have good opportunities to consider and think about the potential risks to their well-being, including those related to online activity.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct throughout the day and over time is typically calm and orderly. Pupils and staff create a warm and welcoming environment.
- Pupils value their education and work diligently, both in their workbooks for core subjects and when learning in the additional curriculum sessions.
- There is little off-task behaviour. Pupils are quick to follow instructions and understand school rules well. Their behaviour only occasionally slips below expectations during unstructured social times.
- The school is a calm and welcoming environment. Pupils are proud of their school and this is reflected in the respect they give to adults and one another.
- Pupils attend school very regularly. Very little learning time is lost through absence or lateness.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement. The small numbers make analysis of trends over time unreliable. Assessment information suggests that progress through the core curriculum has been variable. In the senior school, last year, pupils' progress and attainment in English were better than in mathematics, for example. Pupils in the primary phase are on track to achieve the expected outcomes this year.
- The additional curriculum sessions are aimed at supporting pupils' preparation for their education after leaving school. There is variability in the extent to which additional sessions stretch pupils as well as intended. For example, senior pupils' creative writing is strong but their understanding of social studies is more limited.
- Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are well developed in early years and lower school. Handwriting, grammar and the accurate use of key words are particularly well supported throughout the school.
- Pupils who attain the general certificate in the core curriculum at the age of 16 typically

move on to A-level and vocational courses at other local schools and colleges. Pupils understand how their learning prepares them for their next steps in education. They receive useful advice and guidance to support their choices. They understand the skills that they need to develop in order to be ready for 16 to 19 study programmes.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children in early years learn through a range of structured and unstructured activities. The outdoor space is not as well used to support children's development as the indoor space.
- Overall, by the end of early years, children reach standards of development similar to those of their peers nationally. Activities are most effective where practitioners have considered carefully how to teach phonics, writing skills and mathematics and develop children's physical skills and social interactions. Sometimes, however, links between children's physical play and developmental learning are not well made. This slows children's development.
- The development of children's literacy is a strength. Children typically learn to read quickly and the development of children's understanding of letters and sounds is strong.
- Leaders have ensured that children's well-being is supported through effective safeguarding procedures. Leadership in early years is effective in ensuring that children's developmental and welfare needs are the focus of the provision's work.
- Parents receive regular reports on how well their children develop the skills and learning expected for their age.

School details

Unique reference number	100301
DfE registration number	204/6389
Inspection number	10026269

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	22
Proprietor	World Vision for Christ
Chair	Abigail Chambers
Headteacher	Sharon Curry
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,300 to £3,600
Telephone number	0208 985 1119
Website	http://pca-education.co.uk
Email address	secretary@pca-education.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–6 February 2013

Information about this school

- This is a small all-through school. It has a Christian faith ethos.
- Currently, there are pupils aged from four to 16 years on roll. A small number of children attend the early years provision.
- No pupils are placed by the local authority or have an education, health and care plan.
- The early years and lower school are situated at 233–241 Glyn Road and the senior school at 243 Glyn Road.
- The school follows Christian Education Europe's programme, known as Accelerated Christian Education (ACE). This is the core of the school's curriculum. It is supplemented by additional lessons in music and drama, additional science, physical education,

technology and media, and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. The school plans to deliver Japanese next term.

- The school uses the following off-site settings:
 - Kings Hall Leisure Centre E5 0NU is used for swimming
 - Millfields Park, E5 0AR is used for physical education and visits by the early years provision.
- The previous inspection found that the school did not meet one of the independent school standards. This related to the provision of showering and changing facilities for pupils aged 11 or over. The school produced an action plan, which was deemed acceptable in April 2013.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in early years, and the lower school and senior school. The inspector scrutinised pupils' work, discussed pupils' learning with pupils and staff and evaluated the school's assessment information relating to each pupil.
- The inspector held meetings with leaders and the chair of the governing body and had conversations with staff.
- The inspector held telephone conversations with a representative from the Hackney Learning Trust and a representative from the City and Hackney safeguarding children board.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of the school's documentation including: policies and procedures, particularly those related to safer recruitment of staff; records for behaviour and attendance; schemes of work and plans for learning; records of staff training; and records of the health and safety, fire, electrical appliance and first-aid checks and training.

Inspection team

Matt Tiplin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017