

Inspection of Park House School

239 Andover Road, Newbury RG14 6NQ

Inspection dates:	7 and 8 May 2025
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is James King. This school is part of the Greenshaw Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), William Smith, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anne Spackman.

What is it like to attend this school?

A culture of high expectations ensures that pupils achieve exceptionally well. Pupils learn a broad and ambitious curriculum, which prepares them with the important knowledge and skills needed for success. A wide offer of well-taught subjects enables pupils to be well prepared for further education and employment. This also includes students in the sixth form. When making decisions about their future, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive additional guidance to help them make suitable and ambitious choices. Pupils with SEND receive effective help to learn. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve very well and make excellent academic progress.

Pupils benefit from an exciting range of clubs and activities that develop their talents and interests. A highlight in each pupils' week is 'Fun Friday', when they take part in a whole range of purposeful activities such as making seed bombs to encourage biodiversity in the school grounds. Pupils are incredibly polite to each other. They feel safe in school, as any unkindness is not tolerated, and staff swiftly address any concerns well.

Pupils recognise the rapid changes that have instilled calm and order in school life. Many of them value the positive impact this has on their education and well-being.

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

The school realises its unrelenting ambition to see pupils achieve exceptionally well. The curriculum has been carefully designed to provide pupils with the cultural capital they need to understand concepts deeply. Trips and visits are carefully threaded through the curriculum to help pupils apply learning outside of the classroom. Staff teach with clarity. They ensure that pupils learn in a carefully ordered way. This enables pupils to build on prior understanding incrementally. Teachers methodically check for gaps in pupils' understanding. They swiftly address misconceptions so that pupils learn with accuracy. Pupils with SEND achieve well, as teachers identify and put support in place that enables pupils to learn effectively. Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress alongside their peers.

Pupils read every day from an interesting and exciting range of books that expose them to different perspectives and cultures. Teachers enable pupils to understand what they are reading, stopping to explore any challenging new vocabulary. Pupils who need additional help to read receive effective support. This means that pupils read and write with fluency and confidence.

Students in the sixth form receive an exceptional education, which enables them to thrive academically and personally. They appreciate the wide offer of courses taught by expert teachers. Students show a deep commitment to their learning. They behave and study effectively with impressive maturity and independence. They achieve very well, enabling them to go on to ambitious destinations. Roles such as being a mentor for younger pupils foster a sense of collegiate community in the school. The wider curriculum, encompassing finances, relationships, sex and health education, enables students to be very well prepared for future life.

Clear expectations of behaviour and consistent routines mean that pupils know exactly what staff expect of them. Pupils attend very well and are punctual to lessons. They arrive well prepared for lessons, ensuring no learning time is lost. Most pupils feel that the school behaviour system is fair. They respond well to staff instructions and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. There has been a rapid reduction in the use of behaviour consequences and suspensions. However, a smaller minority of pupils find it a challenge to comply. They do not receive the targeted support that they need to manage their behaviour positively. These pupils experience repeated suspensions, leading to disrupted education.

The school enriches pupils' personal, social, health and economic education and supports their character development through a comprehensive wider curriculum. Pupils are kind, socialising cooperatively during breaktimes. They learn about current affairs and are knowledgeable about challenging topics such as toxic masculinity. This prepares pupils well for life. While the school has many pupil leadership opportunities, some pupils do not know how to express their views through this forum. Pupils learn about a wide range of ambitious careers options in preparation for adulthood.

Every member of the school community recognises the rapid improvements achieved through effective leadership. Trustees and governors ensure that leaders' actions are sustainable, effective and in the best interests of pupils. Many staff welcome the consideration the school makes around workload and well-being. Parents are typically positive about the culture of high expectations.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not put in place effective strategies to support the small minority of pupils who find it more difficult to manage their behaviour. Some pupils receive regular suspensions that potentially risk further disengaging them with education. The school must further refine its approaches to ensure these pupils have the targeted support they need to help them manage their behaviour positively.

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	149435
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10379946
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	979
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	78
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anne Spackman
CEO of the trust	William Smith
Headteacher	James King
Website	www.parkhouseschool.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Greenshaw Learning Trust.
- The school uses one registered and one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 evaluation 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 met with senior leaders, staff and pupils. The inspectors also met with representatives from the board of trustees, including the chair, and representatives from the local governing body, including the chair. They also met with the CEO of the trust.
- The inspectors met with a representative from West Berkshire local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, modern foreign languages and computing. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at other aspects of the school's curriculum, visited additional lessons and looked at further samples of pupils' work on the second day.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey and gathered the views of staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- 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 and scrutinised a range of the school's documents, including leaders' plans for improving the school, minutes of trustee and governor meetings, and records of attendance and behaviour incidents.

Inspection team

Michelle Payne, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul McKeown	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Serridge	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Lowing	Ofsted Inspector

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