

# Inspection of a good school: Purbrook Park School

Park Avenue, Purbrook, Waterlooville, Hampshire PO7 5DS

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Inspection dates:

15 and 16 November 2023

## **Outcome**

Purbrook Park School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The school is aspirational for all pupils, both academically and personally. Pupils study a broad curriculum in all years. Staff create inclusive classrooms so that all pupils can learn together effectively. Pupils achieve well generally, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

At the heart of this school's positive culture are its 'character virtues', which permeate the curriculum and the extra-curricular opportunities. These popular activities help pupils to develop their confidence and social skills. Another strong feature of the school's culture is the very positive relationships between pupils and staff. As one pupil said: 'I like the teachers and they like me.'

The 'character virtues' also contribute to pupils' excellent behaviour in lessons and social time. They help pupils to understand how to behave and treat others, and why this is important. Consequently, pupils have a strong sense of self and responsibility. Staff implement behaviour systems consistently very well. Pupils who need help to meet the school's expectations are supported very well. Pupils come to school regularly. They told inspectors how safe and welcome they feel in school. They know how to ask for help if necessary. Parents like the balance struck between care and ambition.

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

The school's curriculum is aspirational and inclusive in each key stage. In key stage 4, pupils can choose from a range of academic and thoughtfully chosen vocational courses. Historically, the numbers of pupils entering languages at GCSE, and therefore the English Baccalaureate, have been low. However, this is starting to improve. The school has robust systems to identify when pupils may have additional needs and to pinpoint how to support them effectively in class. Occasionally, when it is in pupils' best interests, the school puts in place alternative programmes.

The school has clarified what pupils must know at each point from Year 7 to Year 11. Most staff use effective approaches to help pupils learn what has been planned. They also use the information provided to ensure the curriculum is accessible to all. Most teachers introduce new content clearly. They regularly check that pupils have learned this before moving on. They provide helpful feedback to pupils based on this checking. In some lessons, teachers provide extremely well-managed opportunities for pupils to discuss what they have learned more deeply. In these cases, most pupils successfully tackle more complex questions and problems. However, this is not consistent across the school. Consequently, most pupils, including pupils with SEND, learn the content of the curriculum well, but do not always practise connecting and applying their learning. This means some do not achieve as highly as they could, including in public examinations.

The school's reading strategy has prioritised supporting pupils who need the most help. Staff identify gaps in reading knowledge precisely. They then target support for each individual, and these pupils make strong progress. However, the school recognises that its work on reading for pleasure and the use of ambitious texts across all subjects is not yet fully embedded.

Personal development is a strength of the school. The carefully designed programme is delivered by well-trained staff. Pupils learn how to keep themselves and others safe. They learn how to navigate increasingly complex real and online situations. For example, pupils explore with maturity ideas around healthy relationships and issues of equality. The careers programme is very well organised. It involves regular sessions with employers and local education and training providers. The school ensures that personal development and careers education are carefully adapted for individuals where necessary. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their next steps, and to take their place in society and the world of work.

Governors provide effective support and robust challenge to leaders. They take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. They are also very mindful of staff's well-being and ensure that workload is considered in all decisions. Staff feel valued and listened to. They are extremely proud to work at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- There is some variability in how well the curriculum design enables pupils to think deeply and respond to more complex problems. This means that some pupils do not achieve as highly as they could. The school should support staff so they can refine their curriculum thinking further, so that these skills are developed from Year 7 onwards.
- The school's reading strategy is evolving. Currently, pupils do not read widely enough, either for pleasure or within their subjects. This hinders some pupils' development of

vocabulary and cultural capital. The school should embed its reading strategy so that all pupils are exposed to a diverse and ambitious range of texts in different contexts.

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

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2015.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116506
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10287907
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	880
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Shirley Nellthorpe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Foxley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.purbrookparkschool.co.uk">www.purbrookparkschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school uses two registered and two unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 11 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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 held meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff and pupils. The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the governing body and some governors. She also spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the

curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 and puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils to gather their views. They considered parents' and carers' responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also took account of responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Mary Davies, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Simon Potten

Ofsted Inspector

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