

# School inspection report

24 to 26 February 2026

## **Park School**

43 Queens Park South Drive

Bournemouth

BH8 9BJ

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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## Summary of inspection findings

1. The proprietors are proactive in overseeing all aspects of school life. They ensure that leaders have the relevant knowledge and skills for their roles. Proprietors visit the school regularly to monitor procedures.
2. Leaders have a clear vision for the school. The school values that promote politeness, ambition, resilience and kindness (PARK) are central to school life. Leaders adopt a systematic approach to ongoing development. They involve members of the school community when planning for future projects.
3. Leaders implement a cross-curricular model and align content to the national curriculum. This ensures that pupils study all required areas of learning.
4. Leaders have refined the assessment process to help staff gain a greater understanding of pupils' prior attainment. This helps teachers plan lessons that engage pupils and enable them to make good progress. However, pupils with higher prior attainment are not always provided with opportunities to extend their learning.
5. The school successfully promotes effective pastoral care and wellbeing. Pupils know who to turn to with any concerns. The decision by leaders to provide pupils with access to pets, such as the school dog and turtle, helps pupils to regulate their emotions.
6. Staff with responsibility for the early years understand the specific needs of children. They plan appropriate activities across all areas of learning. The setting is well resourced and meets the needs of the children. Staff help children to sustain interest in their learning. Leaders use internal and external specialists to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively.
7. Pupils develop a secure understanding of social responsibility. They value rules and understand democracy through voting for pupil leadership roles. The school council makes positive contributions to change, such as the recent redevelopment of the adventure playground.
8. Leaders maintain well-established safeguarding arrangements. They respond promptly to concerns and engage with external agencies. Staff receive regular training and know how to raise concerns. Leaders ensure that pupils are educated in safeguarding matters. Safer recruitment procedures are robust and well documented.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

### Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure teachers consistently provide challenge across the curriculum to enable pupils with higher prior attainment to deepen their knowledge and extend their skills further.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

9. Leaders demonstrate the skills and knowledge required to fulfil their roles. They foster a culture of responsibility and implement effective management processes. Leaders ensure that staff follow policies carefully to meet the Standards consistently.
10. The proprietors maintain effective oversight and support leaders. They ensure that leaders have the resources and training needed for their roles. Proprietors provide appropriate scrutiny and monitor the school's provision. They provide opportunities to share best practice, such as training for the early years staff. The leaders' digital literacy strategy helps to develop the use of technology across the curriculum.
11. Leaders successfully embed the values of politeness, ambition, resilience and kindness (PARK). Staff reinforce these values to help pupils develop their character. Leaders recognise pupils' efforts through awards and weekly 'PARK star' events.
12. Leaders thoroughly evaluate the school's provision. They adopt a collaborative approach to planning for future development. This includes involving pupils in decisions, such as in menu planning and budgeting. Leaders have an ambitious vision for future development. They identify areas that require improvement and have an appropriate plan to develop these. Leaders put plans into action effectively and enact positive change, such as recent improvements in assessment.
13. Leaders implement robust systems to assess and manage risk. Staff with responsibility for risk assessments complete formal training. These assessments identify risks and include measures for mitigation. Leaders use a rigorous system for assessing risks on trips. Pupils receive training before using the adventure playground and children in the early years begin to develop an appropriate understanding of risks in their outside area. Leaders demonstrate an awareness of emerging risks and take timely action to address them.
14. Leaders make all required information available to parents through the school's website. They provide an annual account of income and information for the annual review of education, health and care plans (EHC plans) to the local authority.
15. Leaders develop effective links with external agencies, including speech and language therapists and charities. Leaders provide information to the local authority about any pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard transition times. This occurs within the required timescales.
16. Leaders ensure that the school fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010 by implementing an accessibility plan. Leaders have designed a strategy to remove barriers to learning. This supports participation for all members of the school community. Leaders carry out reasonable adjustments specifically tailored for pupils who have SEND. Leaders ensure that both physical and curricular access are monitored and improved to create an inclusive environment.
17. Leaders foster effective partnerships with parents. They seek the views of parents through surveys and maintain a visible presence at the school gates. The complaints policy outlines the three stages of the process. This includes clear timescales for resolution. Leaders log all complaints systematically and maintain well-organised records.

## The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

**18. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

19. Leaders design a broad and balanced curriculum based on the national curriculum. It covers all required areas, including linguistic, scientific, technological and creative studies. Taught on a two-year cycle, leaders have designed the curriculum in a manner which provides opportunities for cross-year group engagement. Leaders ensure that activities mirror each other so that pupils in parallel classes experience a consistent curriculum.
20. Leaders monitor the implementation of the literacy curriculum. They check that pupils acquire skills to support their learning across all subjects. Teachers select appropriate texts for pupils to study. They provide pupils with opportunities for vocabulary development and discussion. Pupils in Year 2 recognise the progress they have made in handwriting. Teachers develop pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum. For example, in history, pupils in Year 6 explore different writing styles before writing a poem on Henry VIII.
21. Leaders track pupils' attainment in mathematics. They act on findings, for example by introducing a daily programme of practising times tables. This has increased pupils' confidence in multiplication. Extra opportunities, such as mathematics competitions and 'mathematics day', provide pupils with enrichment and challenge beyond classroom teaching.
22. Staff in the early years provide a wide range of meaningful activities. Children develop confidence in early literacy and numeracy. They write letters and simple words. For example, children share their knowledge of predators when listening to stories. Staff in the early years ask thoughtful questions to help children recall previous learning. Children make good progress and are well prepared for the transition to Year 1.
23. Leaders have a structured approach to monitoring teaching. They monitor classroom activities through visiting classrooms, termly checks of books and discussions at weekly staff meetings. This helps to embed a consistent approach to teaching and assessment. Staff use data to inform seating plans and lesson plans. This demonstrates a deep understanding of pupils' needs and aptitudes.
24. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. They deliver lessons appropriate to pupils' ages and aptitudes. Pupils listen to each other and speak confidently. They are self-motivated and eager to learn. Teachers normalise the making of mistakes into mathematics teaching as a necessary part of learning. This helps to develop pupils' confidence.
25. . Teachers explicitly teach reasoning skills from Year 3. This contributes to pupils becoming analytical learners. Teachers provide activities which provide additional challenge, such as 'green folder' tasks. However, in some cases, tasks for pupils with higher prior attainment are less well matched to pupils' needs.
26. Teachers receive regular training to support pupils who have SEND. Teachers monitor pupils' knowledge and understanding to help them plan effectively to meet their needs. Staff routinely undertake tests to help ensure that needs are identified. For example, pupils in Year 3 are screened for dyslexia.
27. Leaders implement appropriate measures for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). They use a language acquisition checklist to identify pupils' specific needs. Teachers use assessment data to tailor support sessions for these pupils.

28. Leaders implement a regular and thorough assessment system. They evaluate data to identify trends and address any variability in pupils' progress. For example, leaders' analysis of data led to new approaches for times tables and spelling. Teachers provide pupils with helpful feedback on their work. This enables pupils to improve their skills.
29. The school provides a range of extra-curricular activities. These include chess, sign language, hockey skills and coding clubs. Specialist clubs are also offered, such as karate and music lessons, that are run by external instructors. Activities are well attended and held both before and after the school day. This helps to ensure that they are accessible to all pupils. These clubs help pupils to develop their social skills and deepen their interests in a range of subjects outside of lesson time.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation**

- 30. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

31. Leaders' promotion of PARK values, which align with British values, helps to develop pupils' respect and kindness. Pupils are accepting of others' differences. They behave well towards one another in class and during play. Regular lessons in woodland areas and on the beach help pupils to gain an appreciation for the non-material aspects of life.
32. The combined personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum equips pupils with age-appropriate knowledge. For example, pupils learn about respectful friendships. First aid training for older pupils has a tangible impact. Pupils apply these skills beyond the school environment. Teachers monitor pupils' attainment in PSHE and RSE through dialogue, reflection and teacher review.
33. Leaders provide a broad and inclusive physical education (PE) curriculum. Pupils participate in a wide range of sports and competitive fixtures. Teachers track pupils' participation to maximise inclusion. In the early years, staff plan activities to help children acquire physical skills. For example, children develop core strength by wheeling wheelbarrows and fine motor control through rolling activities.
34. Leaders prioritise pupils' emotional wellbeing. Teachers deliver twice weekly 'Time to Thrive' lessons. These sessions successfully teach pupils relaxation techniques and strategies for managing difficult emotions. Celebration systems, such as house merits, help to build pupils' self-esteem. Teachers encourage pupils to view mistakes as positive opportunities for learning.
35. Staff in the early years provide a broad range of opportunities to support children's personal and emotional development. For example, teachers encourage children who speak EAL to teach adults and their friends, words from their home languages. This helps to celebrate each child's identity and promotes cultural confidence. Children understand how to keep themselves safe during mealtimes. For example, they wait for an adult to sit with them before they begin eating.
36. Leaders implement effective policies and procedures to manage behaviour and bullying. Staff implement the behaviour policy fairly and consistently. Leaders monitor logs and behavioural data to identify emerging trends. Staff with responsibility for pastoral education use emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA) sessions, and individual behaviour plans to support pupils. Pupils are taught about respectful relationships and online conduct. Teachers adapt the content of sessions in response to pupils' individual needs.
37. Leaders implement a 'plan, do, check and act' process for health and safety. Staff prioritise the care and welfare of pupils. The premises and accommodation are well maintained. Leaders ensure fire safety procedures are robust. A suitable number of staff complete fire warden training. Daily checks take place on escape routes and signage. Pupils engage in termly fire drills that help them understand what to do in the event of a fire emergency.
38. Pupils are well supervised. For example, staff wear high-visibility jackets when on duty. Leaders assess the risks associated with learning activities and use additional staff for support.

39. The school maintains accurate admission and attendance registers. Leaders monitor attendance carefully in line with statutory guidance. Staff remind pupils of the importance of prompt arrival to encourage regular attendance.
40. Leaders promote a culture of care and vigilance. Staff understand pupils' medical needs and emergency procedures. They provide specific support to pupils who require it and undertake specialist training, when required, as well as collaborating with external agencies.
41. Pupils embrace leadership roles across the school. Pupils in Year 6 act as house captains and prefects. These responsibilities foster independence, a sense of belonging and help to develop pupils' confidence.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing**

- 42. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

43. Leaders embed British values across the school and pupils understand their meaning. Pupils learn about social responsibility. They develop an understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils understand the importance of rules. They explain why laws exist by making links to safety and fairness. Teachers agree class rules collaboratively with pupils. This encourages pupils to demonstrate personal responsibility.
44. Pupils show respect for diversity. They learn about different religions and cultures through the religious education (RE) and PSHE curriculums. Visiting speakers share their experiences of festivals such as Diwali and Lunar New Year. This provides pupils with cultural insight. Pupils learn about discrimination and prejudice through the study of historical figures, such as Mahatma Gandhi. Pupils understand the importance of listening to others' views. For example, pupils explain the importance of respectful disagreement.
45. Teachers help pupils to gain a secure understanding of democracy. Pupils describe it as 'everyone having a say.' A visit from the local member of parliament reinforces pupils' respect for public institutions. Pupils vote for school roles such as school council representatives, sports captains and eco-warriors. The school council provides a structured opportunity for pupils to contribute ideas to improve the school.
46. Leaders use cross-curricular projects to develop pupils' skills in teamwork and collaboration. For example, the 'beach school' curriculum enables pupils to learn first-hand about local environmental issues. As part of this, teachers give pupils the opportunity to work together in a 'beach clean-up' to improve the natural environment.
47. Staff in the early years enable children to develop social skills. Pupils in Year 6 are buddies to younger pupils and act as positive role models. They help younger children to develop relationships with pupils across the school. Staff in the early years set clear boundaries and use effective strategies to promote positive behaviour. For example, each child takes a turn to complete 'helping hands' tasks in the classroom.
48. Leaders implement a financial literacy strategy. This enables pupils to gain a greater knowledge of money management. Pupils demonstrate a developing economic awareness. They learn about money and budgeting in mathematics and PSHE lessons. They can describe how to plan a holiday within a budget.
49. Pupils show a secure understanding of social responsibility. Teachers provide leadership opportunities for pupils, including as part of the school council, sports, charity and the house systems. These encourage pupils' active participation. Pupils contribute to the wider community through charity fundraising and visits. Teachers encourage pupils to develop respect and a sense of citizenship. For example, they arrange for pupils to sing at a local care home.
50. Teachers prepare pupils well for the next steps in their education. Pupils take part in a transition morning each summer term. Pupils in Year 6 attend a full transition day at their new senior schools. This builds pupils' confidence for their future lives.

## The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

**51. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Safeguarding

52. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are knowledgeable. They implement robust systems to ensure staff are trained. Staff understand their roles and report concerns correctly. Leaders maintain records systematically. They track patterns and provide targeted support when required. The school engages with local safeguarding partners and completes the annual local authority audit. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are reflective and clear in areas they wish to develop further, such as expanding the programme for online safety. There is evidence of plans being implemented, for instance through the recent online safety session that was organised for parents.
53. Proprietors are well trained. They maintain effective oversight of safeguarding. Proprietors hold regular meetings with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and conduct an annual audit. They seek the views of staff and pupils as part of this process. Proprietors provide ongoing guidance and support to leaders.
54. Pupils are aware of safeguarding procedures. They identify members of the safeguarding team by their rainbow lanyards. Younger pupils use correct terminology for body parts. This supports pupils' knowledge and understanding in relation to appropriate physical contact.
55. Leaders have designed an effective online safety programme and respond to emerging themes as necessary. Older pupils use an online programme to learn about online safety. Younger pupils use story-based learning. Pupils know how to keep safe when using technology. They understand risks such as misinformation. The school has an effective internet filtering and monitoring system and leaders take appropriate action should they be alerted to any issues.
56. Staff engage in frequent safeguarding training. This equips them with a secure knowledge of current practice. They understand potential risks and demonstrate a clear understanding of safeguarding requirements. Both teaching and non-teaching staff are proactive and understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff understand the importance of reporting any low-level concerns they have about adults who work with children, as well as the need to make self-referrals.
57. Staff in the early years are aware of the specific safeguarding requirements for children. For example, they understand the strict rules around mobile phone use. Staff in the early years attend regular meetings with leaders to discuss the children in their care. These include opportunities to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
58. Proprietors and leaders implement a robust safer recruitment process. They conduct regular checks to ensure staff take all the required actions before new staff start work. Recruitment records are meticulous and well organised. Dates of checks are accurately recorded on the single central record (SCR). Staff with responsibility for recruitment demonstrate a secure understanding of best practice. For example, they conduct detailed online searches for all new appointments.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

**59. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## School details

<b>School</b>	Park School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	839/6006
<b>Registered early years number</b>	EY2665826
<b>Address</b>	Park School 43 Queens Park South Drive Bournemouth Dorset BH8 9BJ
<b>Phone number</b>	01202 396640
<b>Email address</b>	office@parkschool.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.parkschool.co.uk
<b>Proprietor</b>	Park School (Bournemouth) Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Forsyth
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Nadia Ward
<b>Age range</b>	3 months to 11 years
<b>Number of pupils</b>	373
<b>Number of children in the early years registered setting</b>	133
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 to 23 February 2023

## Information about the school

60. Park School is a co-educational day school located in Bournemouth. The school is owned by Forfar Education, whose directors provide governance. The school comprises: the Nursery; the lower school, for pupils aged four to seven years; and the junior school, for pupils aged seven to eleven years. Since the previous inspection a new headteacher was appointed in January 2025.
61. There are 162 children in the early years, comprising the Nursery, which is a registered setting for children aged three months to four years, and two Reception classes.
62. The school has identified 15 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A small number of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
63. The school has identified English as an additional language for 46 pupils.
64. The school states that its aims are to inspire pupils to become responsible, reflective and successful adults. Underpinning the school's aims are the Park values of being polite, ambitious, resilient and kind.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

24 to 26 February 2026

65. A team of five inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

66. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with a representative from the proprietorial board
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

67. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

**How are association independent schools in England inspected?**

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **[www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)**.

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