

# Inspection of Parmiter's School

High Elms Lane, Garston, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 0UU

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Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Sixth form provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

The headmaster of this school is Michael Jones. This school is a single academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Chris Partridge, and a governing body, chaired by Andy O'Brien.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since September 2011.

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

Throughout the school, including the sixth form, pupils thrive. They receive an exceptional standard of education. Not only do pupils achieve high academic success, but they also develop into well rounded, active members of society. This does not happen by chance. Pupils prosper, in large part, because they are so well integrated into the Parmiter's family.

The remarkable co-curricular offer, which is an integral part of school life, helps to create this thriving school community. Pupils make significant contributions to their school. Many students volunteer to support their younger peers in lessons. Others run clubs such as the Afro-Caribbean society, where differences are celebrated. This involvement in wider opportunities plays a notable role in enhancing pupils' well-being. They build excellent friendships with their peers and greatly value these high-quality relationships.

The school's purposeful 'pursuit of excellence' and academic rigour enables pupils to excel. Pupils quickly learn the skills they require to be successful in their studies. They love completing the challenging work that they are given. Many become accomplished musicians or athletes. Pupils swiftly become disciplined, organised learners. They are active participants in their learning and consistently demonstrate high levels of focus.

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

From the moment pupils join, typically in Year 7 or Year 12, they quickly settle in. The curriculum is expertly designed to be challenging for all. It builds on what pupils already know and engages them in interesting content from the start.

In Year 7, pupils study well-planned 'bridging units' which ensure they all have the foundational knowledge they require to forge ahead with their learning. Across all years, including sixth form, there is a strong focus on making sure pupils have the cultural knowledge they need to appreciate the richness of the curriculum. Teachers explicitly teach pupils the vocabulary they require to access the high-quality texts they read. They plan a wealth of interesting experiences, such as a trip to Normandy, to supplement what pupils learn in lessons. Most pupils attend lunchtime clubs, such as for music or design technology, that further enhance their understanding and enjoyment of their subjects.

Across all year groups, pupils' enthusiasm and excitement towards their learning is evident. Teachers are experts in the subjects that they teach. They skilfully use highly effective questioning to draw out pupils' prior learning and to deepen and challenge their thinking. Teachers continually check what pupils know and do not move on if there are any misconceptions. They have an excellent awareness of how well pupils are achieving. Any gaps in understanding are immediately addressed. These highly effective strategies support all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve extremely well.

The school quickly identifies any pupils who do not read as fluently as they should. They put in targeted support that specifically focuses on the precise areas that pupils need to develop. Subsequently, any gaps in pupils' vocabulary knowledge, comprehension or reading speed are quickly and effectively addressed.

Pupils' conduct and manners are exemplary. They help and support their peers to do well. It is common practice to hold doors open for others and behave in a friendly, courteous manner. Adults enforce clear learning routines. Pupils sensibly transition between activities, moving seamlessly between their laptops and other resources without losing learning time. Any disruption to learning is incredibly rare. However, there are effective pastoral systems in place to support any pupil who may need it.

The school's motto, 'nemo sibi nascitur' (no one is born to him or herself alone), is expertly achieved. This belief drives the high-quality personal development opportunities that all pupils benefit from. Pupils hone their leadership skills through sports or subject leadership positions. The diverse enrichment offer includes 'jam jar' band room, choir, Attenborough club, book to film, as well as a wide range of sporting clubs. As well as the annual careers fair and university and apprenticeship fair, the school has a skilled careers adviser and hosts a wide range of well-considered careers events. Students talk animatedly about the positive impact of their work experience opportunities. They are extremely well equipped to make informed decisions about their future.

Trustees, governors, and leaders are highly skilled and knowledgeable in their roles. They share the same clear strategic vision. This ensures pupils achieve the high aspirations they have for them. Staff are extremely positive about the support they receive from leaders, particularly around their professional development and well-being. Parents are effusive about the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **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>	136899
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288493
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,430
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Chris Partridge
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Andy O'Brien
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Jones (Headmaster)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.parmiters.herts.sch.uk">www.parmiters.herts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 September 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provider. As part of their support for pupils, this provider also uses one unregistered provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement 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.

- 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, music, economics, and design and technology. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in other subjects, including business studies, geography, and physical education, as well as other curriculum enrichment lessons.
- 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.
- The lead inspector met with those responsible for governance, including trustees, governors, and the chair of governors. She also reviewed documentation relating to governance and school improvement.
- Inspectors reviewed attendance records, held discussions with leaders about pupils' behaviour and observed pupils' behaviour around site.
- Inspectors met with leaders to discuss the school's approach to pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for careers and sixth form provision.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders, as well as a representative from the virtual school, to discuss the support the school provides for disadvantaged pupils.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and reviewed plans relating to supporting pupils with SEND.
- The inspectors met with groups of pupils from different years to hear their views about school, including single-sex groups.
- The inspectors considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, one letter and one email. They also reviewed responses to Ofsted's staff survey and Ofsted's pupil survey.

### Inspection team

Bessie Owen, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Suzanne Thrower	Ofsted Inspector
Aimee Bray	Ofsted Inspector
Yvonne Chisholm	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Fowler	Ofsted Inspector

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