Park Lane Academy

Park Lane, Exley, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 9LG

Unique reference number (URN): 143115

Monitoring inspection report:	22 September 2026

At the most recent graded inspection, the following areas were identified as needing to improve:

- Over time, pupils have not achieved the qualifications that they are capable of attaining in external assessments, such as GCSEs. This reduces pupils' options when moving on to the next step in education, training or employment. The school should improve the quality of education offered for pupils throughout key stages 3 and 4, to ensure that pupils receive the support needed to achieve better academic outcomes.
- The quality of the implementation and delivery of subject curriculums is variable. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they should. The academic progress they make is not as strong as it should be. The school should further develop staff subject expertise so that the intended subject curriculums are delivered consistently well.
- The school's inconsistent approach to assessment is not supporting pupils to make the intended progress. This means that some pupils have unidentified gaps in learning that are not addressed or resolved before starting new subject content. The school should ensure that assessment is linked to the content taught and is used effectively to identify and close gaps in pupils' learning.
- Some staff do not fully use the information provided to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This means that, on occasion, pupils with SEND are not fully supported to access and understand the important knowledge content. The school should ensure that staff use the precise information shared about each pupil with SEND effectively to allow these pupils to access learning fully and thrive.

Leaders and trustees are taking effective action to improve the school but continued work is needed to remove the requires significant improvement designation.

During the monitoring inspection, inspectors focused on the following evaluation areas:

- Leadership and governance
- Curriculum and teaching

Leadership and governance

Leaders continue to improve the standard of education that pupils receive. Since the previous monitoring inspection, leaders have restructured the school's approach to inclusion and further developed the professional learning programme for all staff. Leaders' actions to improve the school are well matched to the priorities identified at its previous graded inspection. Although some actions are relatively recent and still embedding, the initial benefits are becoming evident. For example, staff feel increasingly confident in applying agreed approaches to teaching, and they value the opportunities to develop their expertise further.

Staff are well supported in their roles. Some note that current changes are creating additional workload. However, most recognise the importance of these improvements and consider them to be an investment in the long term. Leaders consider the impact of their decisions on the wellbeing of staff.

Trust and school leaders hold a shared, accurate view of the school. They recognise where improvements are being secured and are realistic about where standards still need to improve further. The trust board makes appropriate checks on the impact of leaders' actions. It has effective oversight of the work of school and trust leaders. Trustees support the school effectively. They also continue to scrutinise those aspects of provision that do not yet reach their expectations, such as GCSE outcomes in mathematics.

Generally, parents and carers are supportive of the school and of leaders' actions. Most parents recognise that aspects of their child's education are improving.

Safeguarding

At the previous graded inspection, safeguarding was evaluated as being effective.

Curriculum and teaching

Since the previous monitoring inspection, leaders have accelerated the school's work to strengthen standards of teaching. In particular, leaders are focused on ensuring that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach the curriculum well. Leaders have refined the staff training programme and improved the information that staff receive about pupils' individual needs. These actions are enhancing teachers' understanding of leaders' expectations and of how to implement the school's agreed teaching strategies effectively. Teachers commonly apply these strategies in lessons. For example, important vocabulary, including subject-specific terminology, is taught in a more structured way across subjects. However, variation remains in how skilfully staff use the agreed teaching approaches to support pupils to learn successfully.

Where teaching is most impactful, teachers carefully explain and demonstrate new concepts before carefully checking pupils' understanding. However, practice remains inconsistent. For example, in some lessons, teachers do not use information from checks on learning to inform their teaching as well as they could. This affects how securely pupils' knowledge builds from their starting points and limits how swiftly any gaps in their

understanding are closed. Leaders know where variation in the standard of teaching between subjects and phases exists. They are taking appropriate steps, including securing guidance from external experts and others within the trust, to address these inconsistencies.

The school has broadened its range of targeted support for those pupils who need some extra help. Recent additional training has enabled staff to provide this support with assurance. This includes provision for those pupils at an early stage in reading. Initial analysis suggests that this support is having a positive effect on pupils' learning.

About this inspection

The inspector carried out this monitoring inspection under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005, and it was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require significant improvement following the graded inspection that took place in May 2025.

The school's previous inspection was carried out under the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) at that time. The renewed EIF took effect from 10 November 2025. The areas for improvement identified at the school's graded inspection have been cross-referenced to the relevant evaluation areas in the inspection toolkit for consideration on this monitoring inspection.

The purpose of this monitoring inspection was not to determine grades for any of the evaluation areas set out in the school inspection toolkit. The purpose was to identify and report on the school's progress in addressing priorities for improvement since the school's previous inspection.

Since the school's first monitoring inspection in April 2026, there have been a number of significant changes to the school. Several staff, including some leaders, are new to the school since that time. The trust's director of education and other directors continue to be deployed routinely in the school to support the principal and other leaders. The current vice-chair of the trust continues to act as interim chair.

During this inspection, meetings were held with the principal and other senior leaders, including the chief executive officer of the trust. The inspector visited lessons and spoke with groups of pupils and staff. He also met with the interim chair of the trust to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the first monitoring inspection.

Lead inspector

Thomas Wraith — His Majesty's Inspector

About this school

School capacity	600
Number of pupils on roll	524

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