

Brookvale High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120269
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	360797
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Michelle Parker HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	633
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julian Heubeck
Headteacher	Katie Rush
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The team observed 29 lessons and saw 28 teachers; meetings were held with parents, groups of students, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at whole-school planning, teachers' planning, the staff handbook and school policies. They also considered the questionnaire responses from 243 parents and carers and 101 students.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The attainment of those students known to be eligible for free school meals, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and students from an Indian heritage and students who are looked after.
- The attainment of all students in mathematics.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management in tackling any under-performance and sustaining improvement.

Information about the school

Brookvale High School is a specialist language college which is held jointly with the upper school that shares the same site. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average, as are the proportions of students identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who speak English as an additional language. The school has achieved the International School award, Healthy Schools status, Sportsmark, Eco-school status and Artsmark.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It is rapidly improving because of the outstanding leadership provided by the headteacher and senior leadership team and their passion for making the school even better. As a result the school's promotion of equal opportunities is outstanding. This is summed up in the school's mission statement, 'strive for excellence, value everyone and learn together' and seen in a number of areas, for example in the significant improvement in behaviour in lessons. Teachers now manage effectively the rare incidences of behaviour which fail to meet the high expectations set by the school. It is also apparent in the good use the school makes of a wide range of data to set challenging targets, track students' performance and monitor how effective interventions are. Thus, it has a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses linked to appropriate steps to sustain improvement, and so a strong capacity to improve.

Attainment is above average for all groups of students including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, students who speak English as an additional language, those from an Indian heritage and those who are looked after. Progress seen in lessons was good and reflected that teaching and learning are good. This is because teachers' good subject knowledge coupled with a range of different teaching styles make learning interesting and engaging for all. However, students have insufficient opportunities for independent learning and this limits the proportion of outstanding teaching. Not all students have sufficient opportunities to assess their own work.

The specialism has been carefully planned to have a whole school impact. Thus, the curriculum is outstanding overall and ensures that activities are stimulating and engaging across years, subjects and aspects.

The preparation of students for their future economic well being is outstanding. There are opportunities to develop vocational qualifications, and lessons in life skills promote students' capacity to think about and respond to real life issues and situations. Extensive opportunities enable students to have leadership responsibilities in school.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding and contribute well to helping students succeed in school.

The school

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning by ensuring that good practice in classroom assessment is shared
 - to enable all students to assess their own work, and so

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- improve students' skills to work more independently in lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The school responded effectively to its analysis of progress data by putting in place strategies to boost the progress of students known to be eligible for free school meals, students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and students from Indian heritage. As a result, achievement is now good for all groups of students.

The majority of teachers ensure that work is well matched to students' capabilities. They have high expectations of students and plan activities which are interesting and motivating. This leads to a good pace of learning and high levels of engagement in their work. Students enjoy learning and this is reflected in the excellent relationships observed in lessons. Thus, group work is highly effective with students supporting each other in their work and respecting each others' points of view. This is accompanied by high levels of talk about their work during lessons. Bullying is rare and the school has robust systems in place to respond quickly and effectively. A small number of students wanted more ways of reporting incidents that concerned them. The school is appropriately investigating how to do this.

Students' contribution to the wider community is good. They respond well to the impressive range of opportunities provided for them to take responsibility and think about issues facing their locality and society more generally. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and they are well supported by the language specialism. The school's international awareness raising activities, such as the Africa day, have encouraged all students to develop clear views on other people and places. Students also take an informed interest in issues of global concern such as poverty and climate change. The practical application of social skills and awareness is keenly developed as part of everyday school life, for example through the regular link with a special school.

Attendance is high and the school has improved punctuality so that it is now good. The school effectively identified those groups of students who had poor attendance and put in place a range of strategies which addresses their needs well and ensures they attend.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good overall with much that is outstanding. The school's monitoring of teaching and learning is accurate. Good support and coaching ensures that the school's good practice is shared. Through this, staff have developed classroom strategies and interventions that help all students to make good progress. In lessons the use of probing questioning helps students to explain their understanding and allows teachers to remedy any misconceptions. All students know their own targets. Marking is regular but written comments do not always explain the next steps in learning. In outstanding lessons, National Curriculum levels are used very effectively to enable students to assess their own work and to explain their strengths and weaknesses in learning. However, not all students have the opportunity to take steps to improve their work themselves in this way.

The school provides an outstanding curriculum for its students. A key focus is on language and international learning in line with the school's specialism and enlivens all curriculum areas. All students experience interesting and stimulating activities that are tailored to their individual academic and personal needs. Creative innovations include learning citizenship alongside history and alternative provision which includes Asdan qualifications and for talented linguists fast track French in Year 9. Extra-curricular provision is wide and varied including activities in arts, languages, Oasis (social development), sports and a science club. Visits promote students' interests in mathematics, science and religious

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studies. Students value highly these memorable events. In addition, specialist status has reinforced links with local schools, the local community and business.

The quality of care, support and guidance is outstanding. Students state that staff are 'there for them' and that staff are willing to give up time whenever they need any help. The large majority of parents affirm this view, with many citing examples of how the school's care, guidance and support have kept their child, or brought them back, on track. A well designed range of support systems meets individual students' needs including an Inclusion Centre that operates highly effective mentoring and behaviour/anger management programmes. Good systems ensure a smooth transition for potentially vulnerable students as they join the school and for those going to the Upper School so that all make good progress across the key stages.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Excellent leadership provided by the highly effective headteacher, very ably supported by her senior team, has ensured that the school continues to improve and is active in its identification of areas to develop. Data analysis quickly identifies where teaching should improve and staff work together to benefit from sharing good classroom practice. The strategic use of advanced skills teachers to coach colleagues has strengthened the school's culture of sharing good practice and the drive for continuous improvement. The focus on developing the skills of middle managers to hold their departments effectively to account for the progress of all groups of students has ensured that strategies to improve learning are a continual and central part of all departmental agendas.

Governance is good. The governing body is appropriately self-critical and strives for excellence in all it does. It holds the school to account well and uses its good understanding of the school to provide both effective challenge and support. Governors work very effectively with the senior leadership team, to tackle discrimination and promote outstanding equality of opportunity. Thus, there is speedy identification of students at risk of disaffection, exclusions have fallen and time lost in lessons through the occasional incidences of poor behaviour has been significantly reduced. Effective links have been made with external agencies to ensure that students and families with complex needs receive appropriate support.

Safeguarding procedures are robust. Policies are regularly updated. Good monitoring ensures that all staff are appropriately trained to meet responsibilities within job descriptions.

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Community cohesion is good. Links made to other communities in Britain and internationally encourage students' positive views of other cultures and peoples. Whilst consultation with students and parents enables timely and effective action to address issues such as students' negative stereotypes, analyses are not yet sufficiently integrated into the school's longer term development plans.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who spoke to inspectors and those who completed questionnaires were extremely positive about the school and their children's education. Inspectors followed up the concerns of a small number of parents and carers with regard to behaviour, healthy food in the canteen, the regularity and amount of homework set and the effectiveness of communication with them. Inspectors were able to confirm that the school took any concerns of parents and carers seriously and followed them up assiduously. The school has appropriate policies in place with regard to these issues and procedures are followed consistently.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brookvale High School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 243 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 633 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	91	37	140	58	8	3	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	91	37	148	61	4	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	76	31	154	63	7	3	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	71	29	152	63	13	5	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	62	26	165	68	7	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	21	143	59	30	12	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	19	161	66	21	9	4	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	68	28	154	63	5	2	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	58	24	160	66	15	6	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	67	28	137	56	18	7	6	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	17	158	65	11	5	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	74	30	148	61	8	3	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	94	39	137	56	7	3	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 November 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Brookvale High School, Leicester, LE6 0FP

Thank you for all your help and comments throughout the inspection. It was very useful to us. We were very impressed with how smart you looked in your uniform and how well you worked together in lessons. We agree with you that you go to a good and rapidly improving school.

Your headteacher provides outstanding leadership and is very ably supported by the senior leadership team. All staff work hard to make your school a good school and provide you with a wide range of interesting and memorable experiences. You work hard in lessons and enjoy taking up the wide range of learning opportunities provided in school and in the wider community. The language specialism enriches many of your learning activities. The school is highly effective in tackling any unfairness and discrimination and this has helped you to have a mature and caring attitude for others of which you can be rightly proud. A few of you said that you would like some different ways of telling staff about your concerns and the school is looking into ways of doing this. Teaching and learning in lessons are good and teachers tell you clearly what to do to improve. Some teachers ask you to assess your own work and help you to decide the next steps yourself. We have asked the school to help more of you to work independently like this. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school was good and it could improve further if you could encourage each other to behave well at all times. Your attendance is high and it is important for you to maintain this.

We wish you continued success in all you do.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Parker

Her Majesty's Inspector

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