

Brookvale High School

Ratby Road, Groby, Leicester, LE6 0FP

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The school provides a very positive environment for learning which successfully supports the excellent academic and personal development of the students.
- Students' achievement is outstanding because they make excellent progress during their time at the school and attain exceptionally high standards by the end of Year 9.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding, so students make rapid progress. There is a buzz of activity in lessons, and teachers show that they have high expectations of all students.
- The school uses excellent procedures to set demanding targets for students, track their progress and provide additional support to ensure their rapid progress.
- Students' behaviour is excellent. They feel very safe, are polite and respectful, and have very positive attitudes to learning.
- The school is led and managed exceptionally well. The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have overseen significant improvements in the quality of teaching and students' achievement over the last two years.
- A wide range of extra activities, particularly in the creative arts and sport, greatly increase students' enjoyment and experience of the school.
- Governors are fully effective in holding the school to account for students' progress and the quality of teaching.
- The school acknowledges that the key challenge is to make even more teaching outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 33 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, an additional governor, senior leaders, staff and groups of students.
- Inspectors took account of the 58 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire and the 53 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors examined a range of evidence, including the school’s analysis of its own performance and resulting development plan, the systems to track students’ progress, and records relating to behaviour and attendance. They also looked at records of lesson observations by senior leaders, staff performance information, safeguarding documentation and a sample of students’ work.

Inspection team

Stephen Walker, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Jowett	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Needham	Additional Inspector
Wendy Davies	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Brookvale High School converted to become an academy school in July 2012 and is run by the Brookvale Education Trust. When its predecessor school, Brookvale High School, was last inspected by Ofsted in 2010, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is situated on the north west edge of Leicester and shares the same campus as Groby Community College, which is the partner upper school.
- The school mainly serves the local villages around the Groby area, although a significant number of students come from the city of Leicester.
- The school is larger than the average middle-deemed-secondary school.
- The school was built in 1975 and has been extensively refurbished.
- The large majority of students are from White British backgrounds. A small number come from minority ethnic backgrounds, principally from an Indian heritage.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- A smaller-than-average proportion of students are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, students with a parent in the armed forces and students known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. So, too, is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- No students study alternative courses on other sites, although a couple of classes are taught by teachers from Groby Community College.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain students' high rate of progress and attainment by using all possible strategies to further increase the amount of outstanding teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Attainment at the end of Year 9 is well above average, which demonstrates excellent progress from students' above-average starting points. Over 85% of the Year 9 students gained at least Level 6 in their English and mathematics assessments in 2013. This indicates an impressive rise in attainment and represents outstanding progress for the vast majority of students. The proportions of students making and exceeding expected progress are high in relation to the challenging targets set by the school.
- Students' current work and lessons show that the majority are making rapid and sustained progress in most subjects and reaching standards which are well above national averages. The school has been successful in accelerating the progress of less-able students in Year 7 and 8 through the 'catch-up' programme. The school is presently providing considerable additional support in numeracy and literacy for small groups of students.
- The school is using additional funding very effectively to eliminate the gap in attainment between students eligible for the pupil premium and other students in the school. Money is allocated for extra teaching time and teaching assistants for extra support in reading, writing and mathematics. School records show that in Year 9 there is now no significant attainment gap in English and mathematics, and eligible students are making outstanding progress.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress in line with their classmates, because effective additional support from teaching assistants helps them overcome barriers to learning and take part in lessons with the other students. The small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also make outstanding progress.
- High quality teaching is leading to excellent standards and progress in all subjects, including English and mathematics. The school has been very successful in ensuring that students develop positive attitudes to learning which are supporting the higher standards of work. Clearly defined tasks and a greater emphasis on the completion of work have ensured that boys are now making excellent progress in line with girls.
- Standards in reading are well above average in each year group. Leaders are very active in ensuring that all subject teachers take some responsibility in developing confidence and skills in reading. Similarly, standards in mathematics have increased since the school developed more problem solving in lessons and organised the curriculum into ability staged learning.
- There has been a strong emphasis on challenging the more-able students so that they make rapid progress. Teachers are successfully developing students' higher level thinking skills by asking them challenging questions. Over a quarter of the students in Year 9 now gain Level 7 or 8 in English and mathematics.
- The well-developed tracking system and range of support strategies are used exceptionally well to identify and help any pupils who are at risk of underachieving. Together with demanding attainment and progress targets in all subjects, this is greatly raising aspirations and supporting impressive improvements in their performance.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- In the lessons observed, teaching was never less than good and much was outstanding. This

pattern matched the school's own records of teaching. As a result, students are making exceptional progress over time in most subjects. Students respond well to the high expectations set in all subjects and are eager to improve their work.

- The supportive atmosphere in lessons and the consistently high quality of the work set ensure that students are fully engaged in their learning. Students behave very well in classes and this provides a very purposeful atmosphere for learning. Displays in classrooms provide a stimulating environment for learning and celebrate students' work.
- Students display great enthusiasm and sustain high levels of concentration because lessons involve a range of interesting and meaningful activities. Students learn particularly well because activities are very well matched to their different abilities. They offer students challenging and achievable tasks that help them learn. Technology is used very well by teachers as a tool for learning and supports the excellent engagement and progress of the students.
- There are excellent examples of marking across the school which commend good work but also make sure that students know exactly what they have to do to improve their work and gain the higher levels. Students complete regular homework which helps them reinforce and develop their learning.
- Students who require additional help with their work are very well supported and challenged by teaching assistants in class or withdrawn on a regular basis in small groups for extra help in reading, writing and numeracy. Teaching is excellent in these small group sessions.
- Teachers encourage pupils to work without constant adult support. Solving problems in groups develops their social and thinking skills, and helps them listen to other students' ideas.
- Teachers generally ask questions skilfully to engage students, check their understanding and challenge them to develop their understanding further. Supportive questioning enables all students to make contributions to class discussions, and a number of teachers are very skilled at getting pupils to explain their understanding of concepts to the rest of the class.
- A particularly good example of the impact of outstanding teaching was seen in Year 7, where students were fully engaged in developing their speaking and listening skills as they worked in small groups to critically evaluate and improve their scripts for a presentation to the whole class. The teacher skilfully challenged them with questions that were also supportive, to ensure that students made rapid progress during the lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of students in lessons and around the school is outstanding, and this contributes to a calm and orderly environment for learning. In lessons, students consistently meet the school's expectations and, typically, respond well to teachers' good use of praise and encouragement to promote high standards of behaviour. Students want to learn and this has a strong impact on their progress in lessons.
- The vast majority of parents and carers are highly positive about behaviour in the school. Students as a whole are highly proficient in managing their own behaviour in lessons and around the site. For example, students could be trusted to work on their own, move around the school and socialise at break and lunchtimes with a reasonable level of supervision.
- Students are considerate, polite and courteous to staff and each other, and this has a very

positive effect on learning. The house system and tutor groups help younger students to fit into the school quickly and feel welcomed by the other students. All students adhere to the uniform regulations and look after their school buildings and grounds.

- Students are very aware of the different forms of possible bullying such as cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to sex, gender, race and disability. Although bullying of any kind is extremely rare, students, parents and carers say that any unkind behaviour, such as teasing and name-calling, is dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students feel very safe and display an excellent understanding of the issues relating to safety. They talk confidently about how they would keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, such as using the internet and talking to strangers. They confirmed that they are provided them with detailed information on sex education and the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drugs.
- Teachers and other adults take good steps to ensure that all groups of students have an equal chance to thrive in an atmosphere of fairness and trust, and without fear. The Life Skills programme is greatly supporting self-confidence and respect for others so that all students feel valued as an individual. Attendance is above average and this reflects students' commitment to education and enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is providing exceptionally effective leadership, which is driving the significant improvements in the school. She is well supported by the senior leadership team, which is overseeing the high standards of achievement and personal development of the students. All staff are clearly dedicated to the further improvement and continued success of the school.
- Leaders have a very accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school development plan is a comprehensive, working document with clear actions and targets that are focused on improving the quality of teaching and the rate of students' progress.
- Senior and middle leaders are very effectively leading the improvement of teaching. The rigorous systems for monitoring the quality of teaching are successful in promoting students' excellent progress. Staff are continually reflecting on how to improve their practice, although leaders acknowledge that the key challenge is to continue to increase the amount of outstanding teaching.
- The school encourages outstanding teachers to act as coaches to support other teachers. Heads of subjects are developing their skills as middle leaders and are fully involved in monitoring and supporting their colleagues. Senior leaders and teacher coaches are regularly asked to provide training and support in neighbouring schools.
- Regular lesson observations by senior staff provide clear feedback to teachers on strengths and areas for improvement. The system of setting targets for teachers is rigorous in ensuring that they are held to account for the progress of their students. Decisions made about teachers' movements up the salary scale are robustly based on the quality of their teaching and the progress of their students.
- The school has developed an imaginative curriculum that includes a very good range of interesting activities. It is particularly strong in languages and the creative arts. Students have

the opportunity to study a second foreign language in Years 8 and 9. A range of outside visits extends the work in lessons, along with a large number of additional activities which greatly supports students' enjoyment and experience of school. The broad range of experiences contributes well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- . The school has worked closely with the local authority to develop a model for evaluating students' progress in the Leicestershire Key Stage 3 schools. The school also works very closely with neighbouring primary and secondary schools to share good practice in teaching. Excellent transition arrangements with Groby Community College ensure that students are well prepared for their new school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

The governing body is well informed about the school's progress and areas for development. Its members are fully involved in monitoring progress and in holding the leaders and staff to account. Senior leaders ensure that governors have a good understanding about students' achievement and the quality of teaching so that they can make confident decisions on pay rises and promotion. Governors make sure that the procedures for safeguarding meet current national requirements and underpin the academy's very caring approach. Governors are proactive in overseeing the use of the pupil premium funding and ensuring that it is spent effectively to improve the achievement of eligible students. They have recently initiated the use of additional resources to boost the mathematical skills of less-able students in Years 7 and 8.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138323
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	425063

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	640
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chairs	Gill Okuniewski and Anthony Whitfield
Headteacher	Katie Rush
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0116 2876914
Fax number	0844 4773148
Email address	office@brookvalehighschool.co.uk

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