

# Brookfield School

Fouldrey Avenue, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire, FY6 7HE

**Inspection dates** 26–27 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The leadership and management of the school are good. As a result, all aspects of the school, including teaching and students' achievements, have improved since the last inspection.
- Students almost always have good attitudes to their learning. Their behaviour is usually good in class and around the school. Occasionally, behaviour is outstanding. Students develop well personally and are prepared for moving on to the next stage of education or of their lives.
- Students are safe here and report that they feel safe in school. Leaders and managers use their considerable experience in safeguarding matters to help protect them.
- Teaching is good and improving rapidly. Some teaching has an outstanding impact over time on students' progress, particularly in English recently. The staff promote positive relationships with the students and this supports their behaviour and learning.
- From a wide range of different starting points most students make at least good progress. For some, their progress is outstanding. Throughout the school students improve their skills in reading and spelling rapidly.
- Students are provided with a good range of experiences that increase their interest and enjoyment in school and, as a consequence, their attendance has improved.
- The good governing body are extremely supportive of the headteacher. They carefully and constantly check the work of the school to ensure it continues to improve.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons the work provided for students is either too difficult for them or is insufficiently challenging.
- Occasionally, the targets for learning set by teachers in lessons are too general, and students do not always know exactly what is required of them.
- Staff are not always consistent and confident in supporting students' numeracy developments.
- On a very few occasions, students' behaviour is not managed well enough in lessons.
- The classrooms, corridors and workspaces are not as welcoming and conducive to learning as they should be and students' work is not always displayed effectively.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited six lessons and a whole-school assembly, almost always accompanied by the headteacher. He listened to students as they read during their classes and in dedicated reading sessions. He visited the alternative education provision to observe the students working there.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and other managers in the school, three members of the governing body and the local authority partner. There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted Parent View online survey to include this information but the inspector took account of the school's own surveys done with parents and students. He looked at the questionnaires returned by 14 staff and spoke with two parents by telephone.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and spoke with students in lessons and during break times. He scrutinised school policies, records and other important documents relating to students' achievements and behaviour, records of teachers' work standards and minutes of meetings held by the governing body.

## Inspection team

Terry McKenzie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Brookfield provides education for students with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. All have a statement of special educational needs. Some have multiple learning difficulties and a few have very complex needs.
- Students come to Brookfield from a wide area of Lancashire, some travelling considerable distances to attend. The very great majority are of White British origin and around 11% are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is very much above average with over half of students eligible free school meals. The pupil premium is government funding for students who are looked after by the local authority or who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school currently uses one provider of alternative education: 4Tech Moto, Preston. Students are not entered early for GCSE.
- There have been significant changes to the senior leadership team and to the membership of the governing body.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and students' achievements to be more consistently outstanding by:
  - ensuring that teachers always match tasks in lessons to students' needs, abilities and interests
  - providing students with small steps of learning so that they understand exactly what is required of them in each lesson
  - providing staff with further training so that they become more confident in supporting students' numeracy developments.
- Eliminate the occasional incidents of unacceptable behaviour in lessons from students by leaders and managers reviewing and revising the policies and procedures for behaviour management in the school, and ensuring that staff have the necessary support to implement them.
- Leaders and managers should work with the local authority to improve the learning environment of the school by:
  - ensuring that the decoration and décor of the classrooms and corridors are of an appropriate standard
  - removing broken furniture from the classrooms and replacing it
  - ensuring that the equipment used by teachers works as it should
  - making better use of students' work for display.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has created and maintains a positive ethos in the school, wholly focused on enabling students to overcome the difficulties that get in the way of their learning. As a result students improve their attendance and generally take part in lessons with a good attitude.
- Since the last inspection leaders and managers have made good use of performance management to eliminate any weak teaching and reward higher-quality teaching through linking it to pay and promotion. Consequently, teaching has improved and now almost always encourages good or sometimes outstanding progress.
- The morale of the staff is high and they report they feel valued here. From the small staff group the headteacher and governing body have recently appointed some to be senior or middle managers. New appointments have been made from outside the school. The roles of those new in post are emerging but the school is already benefiting from a wider range of management skills.
- Students' standards have improved with the quality of teaching. Students now aspire to higher levels of public qualifications, they generally make more progress in their classes and they have good attitudes to learning. Except in a very few cases, students' behaviour is managed well in classes and around the school. Groups of students are always accompanied by a member of the school staff when they go to the alternative education provision. Consequently, school leaders and managers maintain a constant check on students' attendance and behaviour there.
- Learning about the world of work takes place through lessons in personal, social and health education. Students are also helped to make decisions about moving on from school through receiving careers advice from the staff and experts who come into school.
- Judicious use of the pupil premium has been instrumental in ensuring students are helped and encouraged to improve their literacy. For example, additional staff have been employed to provide extra support for the students entitled to the pupil premium. Furthermore, the funds have been used to help tailor courses of study to the individual students. This has encouraged some of the hardest to reach students to attend more regularly. The options available to them help to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all and that none are discriminated against in their studies.
- The wide range of learning opportunities that take place prepare students for life in modern Britain. For example, there are plenty of chances for them to meet with others from different backgrounds and communities when they go out of school on trips and visits. Visitors from the different communities in the north-west of England are invited into school to speak with the students.
- Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have ensured that previously fragile relationships with the local community have been repaired. Students now interact much more positively with the local and wider communities through undertaking voluntary and charity work and by being placed in local businesses for work experience.
- The headteacher and governing body have employed staff specifically to work with students and families who traditionally find it difficult to maintain regular attendance at school. As a result the overall rate of attendance has risen and is now close to the national expectations for secondary schools.
- The senior leaders of the school are experienced in safeguarding matters. They work closely with the governing body to ensure that all of the requirements for safeguarding are met.
- The local authority provides good support for the school through its advisers. They have undertaken training with staff and helped leaders and managers introduce new systems to understand how well students are doing in their studies. However, the local authority has not supported the school in ensuring that the premises and accommodation are of a suitable standard. Parents, students and staff all commented on the fact that the poor quality of the décor and the environment of the school were factors that needed to be overcome in encouraging all to attend regularly.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body keep a close eye on how the school is doing. During their meetings they study information provided by the headteacher and ask questions about its meaning. Members scrutinise and understand the records of students' academic performance and their behaviour records. In so doing, they support the headteacher in making improvements to the school.
  - The governing body regularly receives reports from the headteacher about the standards of teaching and the targets that have been set to help teachers improve further. Members have supported the headteacher in linking teachers' performance to pay. They have fulfilled their responsibilities with regard to setting targets for improvement for the headteacher.
  - Several members of the governing body are trained to a higher level of safeguarding. They are effective

in overseeing the child-protection arrangements in school.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is because the work done by the school to encourage them to come to school regularly and take part in lessons is effective. The staff are extremely patient with students and are largely successful in defusing potentially difficult situations.
- Since the last inspection the headteacher has introduced new systems of behaviour management that encourage staff to be firm but fair in their dealings with students. In the main, these work well. Staff model high standards for the students, for example, as was seen by the inspector in the dining room when the adults insisted on polite conversation at the table. Occasionally, however, less-experienced staff are sometimes ineffective in preventing unacceptable behaviour from occurring in classrooms. This results in a very few students refusing to work and using bad language to staff. Nevertheless, students improve their behaviour substantially in their time at the school and this allows them to take productive part in lessons and gain useful qualifications. These are vital in helping them to move on to the next stage of education or of their lives.
- Parents report that they are very pleased with the way their children's behaviour changes following placement here. A parent told the inspector that her child had changed considerably since joining the school, and that this had made a huge difference to family life. She spoke with great enthusiasm about the commitment of the staff and said, 'I can't thank them enough!'
- The students that spoke with the inspector said that behaviour has improved in the last few years and they feel that the school is a safer place as a result. Students were always polite and welcoming to the inspector, demonstrating many good personal attributes. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, during lunchtimes and break times their social interactions with each other are very positive. Mainly, they follow the rules of the school.
- The school council is an active body. One member reported to the inspector that the council has recently been involved in helping to redesign the lunchtime menus.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. This is because all staff are trained appropriately in safeguarding and the senior staff are extremely experienced in child-protection matters. A number of senior staff have undertaken the higher levels of training required by the local authority and recommended by the government.
- Students learn in class about how to keep themselves safe, such as in their personal, social and health education lessons. Here they learn about e-safety and staying secure when using the internet. Risk assessments are undertaken when students take part in practical activities such as technology and science. At the alternative education provision there is a great emphasis on ensuring that students are safe in their motor mechanics work and including them in considering potential hazards.
- Records concerning students' behaviour are kept by managers and completed in a timely fashion. Improved behaviour management systems have resulted in a reduction in the use of restraints. Exclusions have been almost eliminated with the result that the school keeps students safely on site.
- Brookfield maintains links with the police and fire service so that students understand better the role of the public services in a democracy, and their role in helping all to stay safe.

## The quality of teaching is good

- Staff act as excellent role models for students and their high expectations encourage students' good behaviour and good learning in classrooms. The impact of teaching over time becomes outstanding when students make exceptional progress as has happened recently in English.
- Staff support for students' literacy and numeracy developments through specific lessons timetabled each week is outstanding. The guided reading, attention to spelling and focus on punctuation in these sessions have proved highly successful in promoting students' progress in literacy because staff have been so well trained. The result is that most students have recently made exceptional progress in English.
- Similar support for numeracy is helping students to gain skills. However, these sessions are less successful because non-specialist staff are not as confident in this area of study as they are in literacy. Consequently, students' developments in mathematics are slower.
- Teachers do not always display students' work to best effect. As a result, there is little opportunity for

students to experience public recognition for their efforts and opportunities are missed for displays to be used to help make the school more attractive.

- Mostly, teachers plan their work very thoroughly and they make good use of the information about how students have previously achieved. Sometimes, however, the tasks given to students are not matched as well as they should be to their needs, abilities and interests. Additionally, many of the challenges set for students are too broad and spread over too long a period. As a result, students do not always understand exactly what is expected of them and they sometimes find the work too difficult or too easy. This can lead to them becoming unsettled in lessons.
- Teachers use practical work in many lessons to help students keep their concentration and maintain their behaviour. When asked by the inspector, several students reported that they particularly enjoy practical lessons. An example of this was seen in science where students made parachutes to study the effects of air resistance. Students are also enthusiastic about the practical opportunities presented to them at the alternative education provision.
- In many lessons, teachers are hampered by poor-quality equipment. For example, in many classrooms the projectors used to place information on to whiteboards from computers do not have sufficient power and students' learning is affected because they cannot easily see what is on the board. Some rooms have broken furniture in them and this detracts from the teaching and learning.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students can arrive at Brookfield at any stage of their secondary school career. There is a wide range of ability amongst the new students but almost all have great gaps in their education through having missed significant amounts of schooling. For this reason, the published information about students' progress and achievements does not reflect the gains they make in the school from their starting points.
- Achievement is good because all groups of students make at least good progress here from their starting points in English, mathematics and other subjects. This includes students with additional learning difficulties and complex needs, those supported by the pupil premium and those in the care of the local authority.
- Following their induction most make exceptional initial progress, particularly in English, and begin to catch up rapidly in reading, writing and spelling. By the end of Key Stage 3 the more able students who started at Brookfield in Year 7 are almost level in English with their peers in mainstream schools.
- Throughout the school students mostly make good progress in mathematics but their achievements in numeracy are lower than in English because the general support from staff is less effective.
- In Key Stage 4 students are challenged to gain five GCSEs including English and mathematics and this is a great improvement since the last inspection. However, the GCSE grades gained next year are likely to be lower than for students in mainstream schools.
- The qualifications gained by the current Year 11 students, particularly the more able, are likely to be significantly better than in previous years and will cover a much broader range of subjects, including vocational qualifications. This is because the quality of teaching has improved and is sometimes outstanding in its impact on achievement, particularly of the most able.
- The small number of students supported by the pupil premium who take GCSE examinations means that it is not possible to make meaningful statistical comparisons between their attainment and that of other students.
- High levels of concentration and excellent attitudes to learning are evident in the many lessons that successfully inspire the students to achieve their best. When lessons are slow-paced and the equipment is poor, achievement weakens.
- Nevertheless, students' motivation has increased because of the new and exciting range of courses offered to them since the last inspection. Most now attend very regularly and take full part in learning. Students who attend the alternative education provision are all likely to gain an additional qualification that would otherwise not have been available to them.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119895
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	448010

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	35
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Louise Marham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Fallon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01253 886895
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